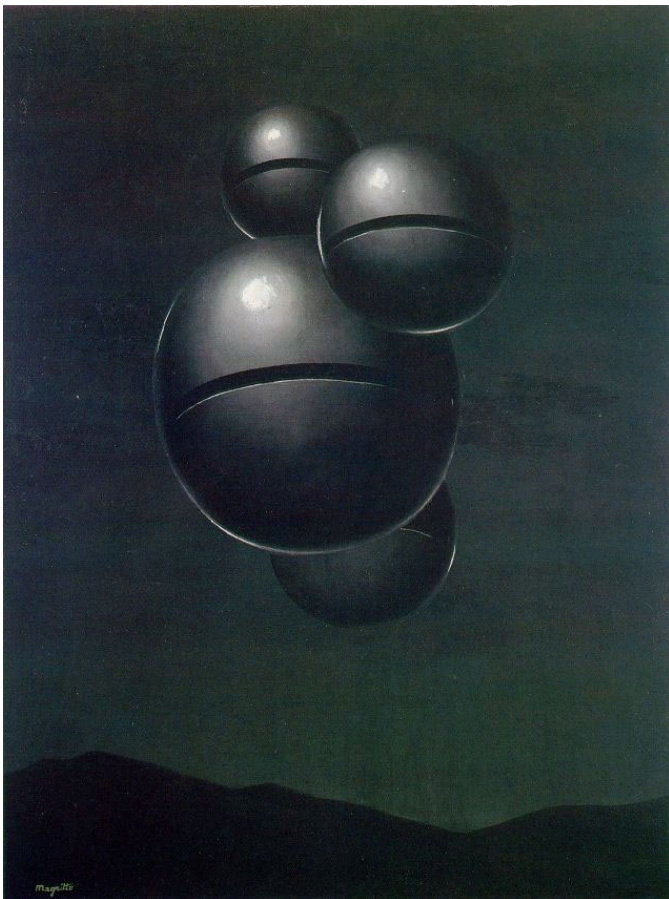


William Quan Judge
The Earth Chain of Globes

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Although H.P.B. gave out to several of those who met her during the period from 1875 to 1878 the very same teachings in respect to the nature of man and of the “worlds” he evolves in as were afterwards publicly expounded in *Esoteric Buddhism* by Mr. Sinnett upon letters received by him through her from her Teachers, the credit of thus publishing those teachings, if such credit is desired, must be granted to that author. But at the time he began his publications, we who had known the doctrines so many years before wrote to H.P.B. complaining that the method adopted would lead to confusion on the one hand and to a materializing of the doctrines on the other, while, of course, no objection was made in general to the divulgement of what at a prior date

had been given us in confidence, for he could not and would not have given the teachings to the public at all unless he had been permitted to do so. And after all these years the confusion to which our letters adverted has arisen among Theosophists, while there has been an apparent lack of attempt to clear it away. In respect to the “Earth Chain of Globes,” the materializing of the doctrine and the confusion in the minds of students have been greater than in regard to any other of the teachings.

¹ Illustration below: *La Voix des Airs* (The Voice of Space), 1928, by René Magritte



This cloudiness I will now attempt to dissipate, if possible, with the help of some of H.P.B.'s own words in her book, the time having arrived and permission being granted, and access being also had to certain plain statements thereupon from the original sources.

In *Esoteric Buddhism*, we find in reference to the "Chain of Globes":

Separated as these are in regard to the grossly mechanical matter of which they consist, they are closely and intimately bound together by subtle currents and forces. . . . It is along these subtle currents that the life elements pass from world to world. . . . The most ethereal of the whole series. . . . As it passes from world Z back again to world A.²

Then follows, for illustrative purposes, the figure of a series of tubs to represent the various globes of the whole series, one filling up from the overflow out of the preceding tub. Further, that the life wave *reaches* Globe A or B, and so on.

All this, in the absence of other explanations, and naturally consequent upon modern habits of thought, has fixed the idea in minds of many that the seven globes through which the evolution of man is carried on are in fact separated from each other; that they have between each other spaces along which currents flow to and from; and although the illustration of the series of tubs might be very well used for even the most metaphysical of problems, it had the effect of additionally deepening the idea of the actual separation from each other of the seven "globes." It has been thought that they were as much apart from each as any visible planet, although connected by "subtle currents and forces."

But the fact is otherwise. The seven globes of earth's chain are not separated at all, and are interblended and mixed with each other. To make it clearer, if we were to develop inner sight so as to perceive on the plane of the next globe, the fifth, it would not appear as a definite ball in the sky or space. Whether it be smaller or larger than this earth — a fact not yet cleared up — it would be seen to possess the earth as the earth holds it.

It may be asked, Why was this not told in the beginning? Because it was useless to tell, no one being at hand to understand it; and also because if insisted on and it was not of enough importance to require insistence the consequence might have been that even Mr. Sinnett would not have published his invaluable and extremely useful book. He confessed in that work that the doctrines propounded were new to him, and seemingly opposed to modern ideas of nature. In great part this was true, though there were very many who did not find them new but who were not sufficient in number to risk then an insistence on a point that might too far violate the materialistic conceptions prevalent. Since then, however, times have altered, and a large and daily increasing number of minds are ready for the destruction of the idea contained in these words from the above quotation: "*Separated as these are in regard to the grossly mechanical matter of which they are composed.*" Strike out this statement, and the rest of the explanation can be construed to agree with the facts as laid down by those who inspired the book.

² Edition of 1884, pp. 77, 78, 80, 81.



The globes of the earth-chain are not “separated in regard to the grossly mechanical particles,” but their particles are interblended. When we pass on to the plane of life which Globe 5 or E represents, it will be and appear to our then senses as gross, while the particles of this one will not be visible although still interblended with the other. It was to this very sentence that we objected in 1875, because it contains the statement of a fallacy growing out of materialistic conception.

On this very subject the teachers of H.P.B. wrote, *Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 166:

Were psychic and spiritual teachings more fully understood, it would become next to impossible to even imagine such an incongruity. . . . In short, as Globes, they are in CO-ADUNITION but not in CONSUBSTANTIALITY WITH OUR EARTH, and thus pertain to quite another state of consciousness.

This should be clear enough, and, as if to draw special attention to it, the very words which give the correct doctrine about our “fellow globes” were printed in capital letters.

“Consubstantiality” means *the state of being the same substance*. This is negated in respect to the globes; but it is asserted that they, *being of different substances, are united in one mass*, for such is the meaning of “co-adunition.” If this be the case, as must be on the original authority, it then follows that the “seven globes of earth’s chain, while differing from each other as to what is commonly called substance, are united together in a single mass. And when one is asked to shake off the dense veil of matter which beclouds the sight so as to perceive another of the globes, it is by no means meant that the companion globe, or globes as the case may be, would be seen rolling in space all by itself”: — and this is from another explanatory letter from the first authority. In the paragraph from *The Secret Doctrine* attention is called to the fact that just because the seven globes are in co-adunition but not in consubstantiality with each other they pertain to a state of consciousness quite other than that we are compelled to be in now.

As H.P.B. used a diagram in which the globes are set down as separated, it only requires to be remembered that the system could not, on a flat surface by mere lines, be illustrated in any other way and be at all clear. Besides, all the diagrams and illustrations must be construed with the quotation on p. 166 in view, as well as the numerous pages of similar explanations.

Every student should make inquiry of himself to see what his ideas are on this subject, and revise them if they are found not to be in accord with what was so clearly explained in the words above quoted. For this lies at the root of many other difficulties. Materialistic conceptions on this will lead to materializing, localizing, and separating of states such as Devachan, and to perhaps dogmas about places that do not exist, when states of consciousness should be dwelt upon. For, as was written in a letter quoted by H.P.B.:

Unless less trouble is taken to reconcile the irreconcilable — that is to say, the metaphysical and spiritual sciences with physical or natural philosophy, “natural” being a synonym to them [men of science] of that matter which falls under the perception of their corporeal senses — no progress can be really achieved.

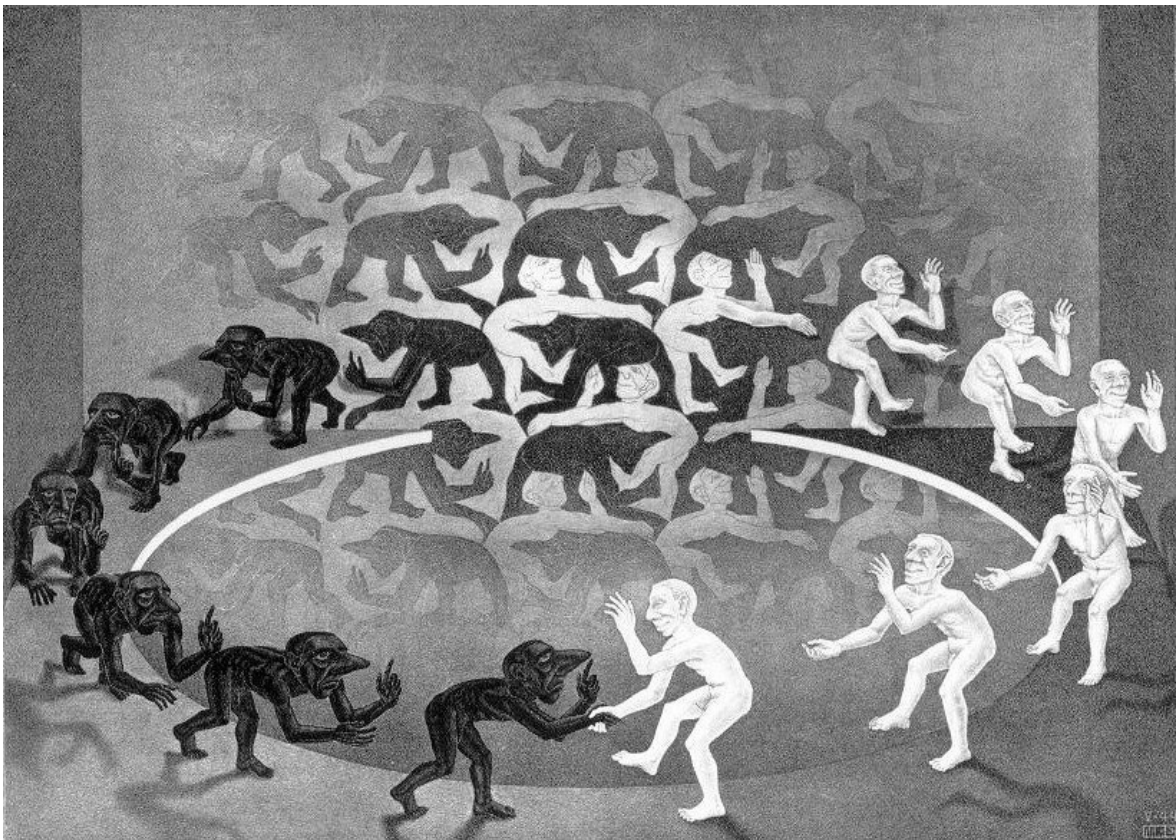


And on page 169 of Vol. I of *The Secret Doctrine* is a sentence not printed as a quotation, but which is really one from one of the same teacher's letters, reading:

To be fully realized [the evolution of the monads on the globes] both this process and that of the birth of the globes must be examined far more from their metaphysical aspect than from what one might call a statistical standpoint.

Although the Lodge has declared through the mouth of H.P.B. that the complete truth on these matters is the heritage of future generations, yet we who are working in the movement now, believing in reincarnation and knowing the force of Karmic tendencies, must not forget that we are destined to return in future years once more to the same work. We should therefore study the pure spiritual, psychic, and metaphysical aspects of the doctrines, leaving disputes with the changing science of the day to those who are amused by it. For those disputes are wholly unimportant, since they will all pass away; but the spirit of truth will not pass, nor shall we who endeavor to find her and to understand what she says to us.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE



Encounter by Maurits Cornelis Escher



Part II

In February *Path* the subject of the *coadunition* but *non-consubstantiality* of the seven globes of the Earth-chain was opened up slightly and discussed in view of certain expressions from the Adepts themselves on the same matter. Since then questions and doubts have arisen, as it seems that — as was suspected — the fundamental principles underlying this doctrine have not been clearly defined in the minds of all. And, indeed, before such clear definition is arrived at most if not all of the naturalistic and materialistic doctrines and modes of thought of the day will have to be abandoned. The true theory of the companion globes of our earth is one which cannot be fully comprehended if we are influenced, as many are, by the education which for centuries has been imposed upon us. When the adepts say that these doctrines must be examined from a metaphysical standpoint, the nineteenth century person thinks that therefore it must be so vague and unreal as not to constitute an inclusion of facts, since “facts” are hard and visible things, so to say.

The first question, coming from one who grasps to a great extent the theory broached in the paragraph from the Master’s pen quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, is whether we will be able to see but one globe at a time as we change our centre of consciousness? That is to say, seeing that we now can perceive the earth with the eye and none of the other companions, does it follow from this that, when the race ceases to function on the earth and has taken up evolution on the next globe in order, we shall see then but that globe and none of the others of the chain among which will then be included this earth? It by no means follows that we then shall be able to see but one, but to what extent our then vision will be stretched or how many other globes we shall be able to see has not been given out publicly by the Masters, and it is held that alone in the keeping of the Lodge is the knowledge on this detail of the doctrine. We are left therefore to our own deductions, to be drawn from known facts. No very substantial benefit could be derived from exact knowledge about it, as it relates to matters and states of life removed from us inconceivably far both as to time and consciousness. Nor would a full explanation be comprehended. One of the teachers has written:

You do not seem to realize the tremendous difficulties in the way of imparting even the rudiments of *our* science to those who have been trained in the familiar methods of (modern science). You do not see that the more you have of the one the less capable you are to instinctively comprehend the other, for a man can only think in his worn grooves, and unless he has *the courage to fill up these and make new ones for himself* [italics are mine] he must perforce travel on the old lines. . . . Such is unfortunately the inherited and self-acquired grossness of the Western mind, and so greatly have the very phrases expressive of modern thoughts been developed in the line of practical materialism, that it is now next to impossible either for them to comprehend or for us to express in their own languages anything of that delicate, seemingly ideal machinery of the Occult Cosmos. To some little extent that faculty can be acquired by the Europeans through study and meditation, — but that’s all. And here is the bar which has hitherto prevented a conviction of the Theosophical truths from gain-



ing currency among Western nations; caused Theosophical study to be cast aside as useless and fantastic by Western philosophers.³

As implied in the foregoing, the reason for not telling all about it is that it would not be comprehended, and not that the Lodge desires to keep it back from the world. The same difficulty has often been encountered by ordinary clairvoyants who have tried to give an account of the little they know of the “occult cosmos” to hearers whose modes of thought were purely materialistic or tainted by that kind of education. And I have met estimable theosophists who said to me that if they really were convinced that I believed certain things which I hinted to them they would be forced in sadness to conclude I was a most superstitious person meaning of course that their ignorance and inability would constitute my superstition.

But as we now reside in a physical body perfectly visible to us, and as the astral body is sometimes seen by certain persons, it follows most surely that some persons can now see another body or form of matter while functioning in their little earth. The fact that all do not see the astral body only proves that as yet the seeing of it is not normal for the whole human race. And looking at the other side of the matter, we know that sometimes persons escaped temporarily from the physical body and functioning wholly in the astral have been able to see the physical one as it slept in trance. From this we may conclude that when the race has gone to some other centre of consciousness called a globe, it may possibly be able to see another of the companions in the sky. This is made more probable from the fact that the Earth is the lowest or at the turning of the circle, and for that reason it is on its own plane and not in company as to plane with any other one. The others might be two at a time on the one plane and then visible to each other.

The next point raised is that if the article of February is accepted, then it results that we consider the companion globes to be only “phases of the Earth.” The letter from the Master above quoted is pertinent here, for this objection arises solely and wholly from a materialistic education leading the objector to give the first place of importance to the earth, just as if it were not possible to say that earth is a phase of the other globes.

The globes are not in any sense phases of each other, but are “phases of consciousness.” The consciousness alters and we function in another state of matter, in the same place, but not able to see the state of matter we have left. And as now the whole race is bound up by its total form and quality of consciousness, the units of it are compelled to remain in the general state of consciousness until the race progress permits an advance or change to another. In the evolution of the race it develops new senses and instruments for perception, but these proceed along with the changing centre of consciousness, and are not the causes for the latter but are effects due to the operation and force of that inner power of perceiving which at last compels nature to furnish the necessary instrument. When the new instruments are all perfected, then the whole race moves on to another plane altogether.

³ [From the words: “Such is unfortunately . . . ,” this passage may be found in *The Mahatma Letters to A.P. Sinnett*, pp. 29-30 in both the 2nd and the 3rd editions. — Dara Eklund]



All this supports and enforces the doctrine of universal brotherhood upon which the Adepts have insisted. For the changing of consciousness as to centre is not for the benefit of the individual, but is permissible and possible when the whole mass of matter of the globe whereon the beings are evolving has been perfected by the efforts and work of the most advanced of the whole number, and that advanced class is man. If it were otherwise, then we should see millions upon millions of selfish souls deserting the planet as soon as they had acquired the necessary new senses, leaving their fellows and the various kingdoms of nature to shift for themselves. But the law and the Lodge will not permit this, but insist that we shall remain until the lower masses of atoms have been far enough educated to be able to go on in a manner not productive of confusion. Here again we trench upon the materialism of the age, which will roar with laughter at the idea of its being possible to educate the atoms.

The doctrine of the interpenetration of the planes of matter lies at the root of clairvoyance, clairaudience, and all such phenomena. Clairvoyance would be an impossibility were it not the fact that what for the ordinary sense is solid and an obstacle to sight is in reality for the other set of senses non-existent, free from solidity, and no obstacle. Otherwise clear seeing is impossible, and the learned doctors are right who say we are all deluded and never did any one see through a solid wall. For while the faculty of imagination is necessary for the training of the power to see through a solid wall, we could not so perceive



merely by imagination, since objects must have a medium through which they are to be seen. This again strikes against materialistic conceptions, for the “objective” usually means that which can be seen and felt. But in the machinery of the “occult cosmos” the objective is constantly changing to the subjective and vice versa, as the centre of consciousness changes. In the trance or clairvoyant state the subjective of the waking man has become the objective. So also in dreams. There, clothed with another body of finer texture, the perceiver finds all the experiences objective as to their circumstances and subjective as to the feelings they produce on the perceiver who registers the sensations. And in precisely similar manner will the race see, feel, and know when it has changed all and begins to function on another globe.

WILLIAM BREHON



Part III

The Editor has handed me a communication from a reader upon this subject which I insert here, as it on the one hand shows a very common defect of students — inaccuracy of reading, thought, and reference, and on the other will serve as a question which arises in other minds. It reads:

Please state in reference to the *Earth Chain of Globes* whether it is meant to be conveyed on page 159 of *S.D.* Vol. I that the “seven globes from the 1st to the 7th proceed in seven Rounds,” that *each globe revolves seven times around the World Chain with its own particular development* [say the Mineral Kingdom,] before the next in order [say the Vegetable Kingdom] appears on Globe A? Or does the Mineral Kingdom only go *once* around the World Chain from 1 to 7? In *Eso-teric Buddhism*, page 91, it is stated that the several kingdoms pass “*several times* around the whole circle as minerals, and then again *several times* as vegetables,” but there is no distinct statement of this in *S.D.* — Yours, IGNOTUS.

Inaccuracies like those in the foregoing are not uncommon. They are constant and all-pervading. It is probably the fault of modern education, accentuated by the reading of a vast amount of superficial literature such as is poured out day by day. Any close observer can detect the want of attention displayed in metaphysical studies in contrast with the particular care given to matters of business and practical affairs of life. All those who are studying Theosophy ought to make themselves aware of this national defect, and therefore give the strictest attention to what they read upon metaphysics and devote less attention to the amount of such reading than to thinking upon what is read.

In the first place, *The Secret Doctrine* does not say on the page quoted, nor anywhere else, what “Ignotus” writes. Instead of reading as quoted, the passage is:

I. Everything in the metaphysical as in the physical Universe is septenary. [p. 158] . . . *The evolution of life proceeds on these seven globes or bodies* from the first to the seventh in SEVEN ROUNDS or Seven Cycles [p. 159].

I insert in italics the omitted words, the word proceeds having been put out of its place by “Ignotus.” The error makes a completely new scheme, one unphilosophical and certainly not given out by the Masters. But though some may wonder why I notice such a false assumption, it is right to take it up because it must have arisen through carelessness, yet of such a sort as might perpetuate an important error. It follows from the restoration of the passage that the Globes do not “revolve around the world chain.” The supposition of the correspondent is not peculiar among the many hurried ones made by superficial readers. He first assumed that the various globes of the Earth-Chain revolved, in some way which he did not stop to formulate, in seven rounds — I presume in some imaginary orbit of their own — in what he called the “world chain,” and then he went on adapting the rest of the evolutionary theory to this primary assumption. By reading *The Secret Doctrine* and the former articles on this subject in *The Path*, the point in question will be made clear. Evolution of the monad, which produces and underlies all other evolutions, proceeds on the seven planetary bodies of any chain of evolution. These seven places or spheres for such



evolution represent different states of consciousness, and hence, as written in *The Secret Doctrine* and attempted to be shown in these articles, they may and do interpenetrate each other with beings on each. Therefore all such words as “round,” “around,” “chain,” and the like must be examined metaphysically and not be allowed to give the mind a false notion such as is sure to arise if they are construed in the material way and from their materialistic derivation. “To go around” the seven globes does not mean that one passes necessarily from one place to another, but indicates a change from one condition to another, just as we might say that a man “went the whole round of sensations.”

As to the other questions raised, *Esoteric Buddhism* is right in saying that the monads pass *several* times around the globes as minerals and vegetables, but wisely does not make the number and order very definite. In *The Secret Doctrine* one of the Masters writes that at the second round the order of the appearance of the human kingdom alters, but the letter goes no farther on that point except to say, as is very definitely put in *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 159, para. 4:

4. [Earth’s] Humanity develops fully only in the Fourth — our present Round. Up to this fourth Life-Cycle, it is referred to as “humanity” only for the lack of a more appropriate term . . . Arrived on our Earth at the commencement of the Fourth in the present series of life-cycles and races, MAN is the first form that appears thereon, being preceded only by the mineral and vegetable kingdoms — even the latter *having to develop and continue its further evolution through man*.

This states quite distinctly (a) that after the second round the order alters, and (b) that in the fourth round, instead of animals appearing as the first moving forms for the monads to inhabit, the human form comes first, preceded by mineral and vegetable, and followed by the brute-animal.

This change always comes on at any fourth round, or else we never could have evolutionary perfection. Other monads come originally from other spheres of evolution. In a new one such as this the preliminary process and order of mineral, plant, animal, human must be followed. But having in two or three rounds perfected itself in the task, the monad brings out ‘the human form at the turning point, so that man as the model, means, guide, and savior may be able to intelligently raise up not only humanity but as well every other kingdom below the human. This is all made very clear and positive by repeated statement and explanation in *The Secret Doctrine*, and it is a matter for surprise that so many Theosophists do not understand it.

For fear that the present may be misunderstood I will add. Although the order of appearance of the human form alters as stated, this does not mean that the whole number of natural kingdoms does not make the sevenfold pilgrimage. They all make it, and in every round up to and including the seventh there are present in the chain of globes elemental, mineral, vegetable, animal, and human forms constituting those kingdoms, but of course the minerals and vegetables of the seventh round and race will be a very different sort from those of the present.

But as what a Master has said hereon is far better than my weak words, I will refer to that. Thus:



Nature consciously prefers that matter should be indestructible under organic rather than inorganic forms, and works slowly but incessantly towards the realization of this object — the evolution of conscious life out of inert material.

WILLIAM BREHON

