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What is meant by prototypes existing in the Astral Light?¹

From *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE) X pp. 360-61.
Frontispiece by Mazhlekov.

Astral Light is here used as a convenient phrase for a term very little understood, *viz*: “the realm of Ākāśa, or primordial Light manifested through the divine Ideation.” The latter must be accepted in this particular case as a generic term for the universal and divine mind reflected in the waters of Space or Chaos, which is the Astral Light proper, and a mirror reflecting and reversing a higher plane. In the ABSOLUTE or Divine Thought everything exists and there has been no time when it did not so exist; but Divine Ideation is limited by the Universal Manvantaras. The realm of Ākāśa is the undifferentiated noumenal and abstract Space which will be occupied by *Chidākāśam*, the field of primordial consciousness. It has several degrees, however, in Occult philosophy; in fact, “seven fields.” The first is the field of latent consciousness which is coeval with the duration of the first and second unmanifested Logoi. It is the “Light which shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not” of St. John’s Gospel. When the hour strikes for the Third Logos to appear, then from the latent potentiality there radiates a lower field of differentiated consciousness, which is Mahat, or the entire collectivity of those Dhyāni-Chohans of *sentient life* of which Fohat is the representative on the objective plane and the Mānasaputras on the subjective. The Astral Light is that which mirrors the three higher planes of consciousness, and is above the lower, or terrestrial plane; therefore it does not extend beyond the fourth plane, where, one may say, the Ākāśa begins.²

There is one great difference between the Astral Light and the Ākāśa which must be remembered. The latter is eternal, the former periodic. The Astral Light changes not only with the Mahā manvantaras but also with every sub-period and planetary cycle or Round.

¹ *Secret Doctrine*, I p. 63

² [For an explanation of this statement refer to “Drawing 1 - Forces and States of Consciousness,” in our *Budhas and Initiates Series*. — ED. PHIL.]

Then do the prototypes exist on a plane higher than that of the Astral Light?

The prototypes or ideas of things exist first on the plane of Divine eternal Consciousness and thence become reflected and reversed in the Astral Light, which also reflects on its lower individual plane the life of our Earth, recording it on its “tablets.” Therefore, is the Astral Light called illusion. It is from this that we, in our turn, get our prototypes. Consequently unless the Clairvoyant or SEER can get beyond this plane of illusion, he can never see the Truth, but will be drowned in an ocean of self-deception and hallucinations.

And what is the Akasha proper?

The Ākāśa is the eternal divine consciousness which cannot differentiate, have qualities, or act; action belongs to that which is reflected or mirrored from it. The unconditioned and infinite can have no relation with the finite and conditioned. The Astral Light is the Middle Heaven of the Gnostics, in which is Sophia Akhamōth, the mother of the seven builders or Spirits of the Earth, which are not necessarily good, and among which the Gnostics placed Jehovah, whom they called Ialdabaōth. (*Sophia Akhamōth must not be confounded with the divine Sophia.*) We may compare the Ākāśa and the Astral Light, with regard to these prototypes, to the germ in the acorn. The latter, besides containing in itself the astral form of the future oak, conceals the germ from which grows a tree containing millions of forms. These forms are contained in the acorn potentially, yet the development of each particular acorn depends upon extraneous circumstances, physical forces, etc.

Points to ponder.

The astral light is projected by glance, by voice, and by the thumb and palm of the hand. Music is a potent auxiliary of the voice, and hence comes the word enchantment. No musical instrument has more *enchantment* than the human voice, but the far away notes of a violin or harmonica may augment its power.¹



Akasha and Astral Light compared and contrasted (Table).

There now follows a table from our Secret Doctrine’s First Proposition Series, first published in 2006 under the title “Proposition 1 - Akasha vs. Astral Light.” — ED. PHIL.

¹ *Transcendental Magic, (THE MEDIUM AND THE MEDIATOR) pp. 233-34*

Akasha and Astral Light compared and contrasted.

Akasha (Alaya)	Astral Light
Undifferentiated, Abstract Space, (noumenal) about to be occupied by Primordial Consciousness.	
Field 1 — Latent Consciousness (1 st and 2 nd Logos)	
Field 2 — Differentiated Consciousness (3 rd Logos, Mahat) ¹	
Dhyani-Chohans, collectively,	or Humanity at large.
Plato's The Good (To Αγαθόν) The Good cannot measure anything.	Man is the measure of all things.
Represented by the Manasaputras, subjectively,	and by Fohat, objectively.
Eternal Unconsciousness i.e., Perfect, Divine Consciousness,	periodically displaying aspects of Itself. to the perception of self-conscious minds.
Ideal Divine Mind	reflected and reversed in human thoughts and aspirations.
Germ within Acorn	Acorn
"So himself was indeed	(his own) son."
Soul of the World, of Thought and Compassion.	Body of the World, of Perception and Action.
Primordial Cosmic Substance.	Aggregate of all possible perceptions (matter).
Vehicle of Divine Thought.	Storehouse of human (psychic) iniquities.
Not Thought-Substance but recorder of every thought and deed of the spiritual man,	and of the animal man.
Spiritual plane	Psychic plane
Reality	Illusion

¹ The noetic word of Mahat consists of four elements, To Agathon, Nous, Psychē, and Hylē. This quaternary, also known as the Pythagorean Tetractys, is reflected in the sensible world of Matter. The elements or *rhizomata* of the lower Tetractys are is Fire, Air, Water, and Earth. Cf. *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 599

The bright spot of light.

Letter to the Editor of “The Theosophist.”

First published in: *The Theosophist*, Vol. III, No. 2, November 1881, pp. 45-46.
Republished in: *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, III pp. 327-28.

Madame,

In the last issue of your valuable Journal, a member of the New York Theosophical Society seeks to be enlightened as to the cause of a bright spot of light which he has often seen. I am also equally curious to have an explanation. I attribute it to the highest *concentration* of the soul. As soon as I place myself in *that* prescribed attitude, suddenly a bright spot appears before me which fills my heart with delight — indeed, that being regarded as a special sign by the Indian devotee that he is in the right path, leading to ultimate success in the Yoga practice — that he is blessed by the special grace of the Almighty.

One evening, sitting on the ground cross-legged, in that state of innate concentration when the soul soars into the high regions, I was blessed with a shower of flowers — a most brilliant sight, and which I long to see again. I moved to catch at flowers so rare, but they eluded my grasp and suddenly disappeared, leaving me much disappointed. Finally two flowers fell on me, one touching my head and the other my right shoulder, but this time also the attempt to seize them was unsuccessful. What can it be, if not a response that God has been pleased with his worshipper, meditation being, I believe, the unique way of spiritual worship.

P.

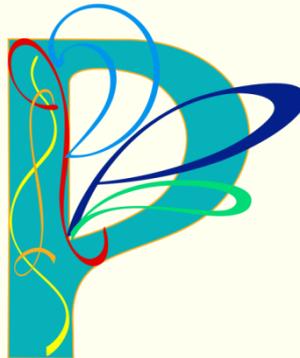
September 18th, 1881

Editorial response by H.P. Blavatsky.

It depends. Those of our orthodox native contributors, who worship some particular God — or, if they so prefer, the one *ĪSVARA*, under some particular name — are too apt to attribute every psychological effect brought on by mental concentration during the hours of religious meditation to their special deity, whereas, in 99 cases out of 100, such effects are due simply to purely *psycho-physiological* effects. We know a number of mystically-inclined people who see such “lights,” and that as soon as they concentrate their thoughts. Spiritualists attribute them to the agency of their departed friends; Buddhists — who have no personal God — to a *pre-nirvānic* state; pantheists and Vedāntins to *Maya* — illusion of senses; and Christians — to a foresight of the glories of Paradise. The modern Occultists say that, when not directly due to cerebral action whose normal functions are certainly impeded by such an artificial

mode of deep concentration — these lights are glimpses of the Astral Light, or, to use a more *scientific* expression — of the “Universal Ether” firmly believed in by more than one man of science, as proved by Mr. Balfour Stewart’s *Unseen Universe*. Like the pure blue sky closely shrouded by thick vapours on a misty day — is the Astral Light concealed from our physical senses, during the hours of our normal, daily life. But when concentrating all our spiritual faculties, we succeed, for the time being, to paralyse their enemy — the physical senses, and the inner man becomes, so to say, distinct from the man of matter, then, the action of the ever-living spirit, like a breeze that clears the sky from its obstructing clouds — sweeps away the mist which lies between our normal vision and the Astral Light, and we obtain glimpses into, and of, that light.

The days of “smoking furnaces” and “burning lamps” which form part of the Biblical visions are well gone by and — to return no more. But, whosoever, refusing natural explanations, prefers *supernatural* ones, is, of course, at liberty to imagine that an “Almighty God” amuses us with visions of flowers, and sends burning lights before making “covenants” with his worshippers.



Suggested reading for students.



More commonly confusing words.

- ADULTERY, LUST, MALICE
- ADYTUM AND ASYLUM
- AETHER AND ETHER
- AGNOSTICISM, ATHEISM, MONISM
- AION, ETERNITY, DURATION
- APPREHENSION AND COMPREHENSION
- AURA AND MAGNETISM
- BUDDHA AND PRINCE SIDDHARTHA BUDDHA
- BUDHISM IS INNER WISDOM
- CELIBACY, CONTINENCE, MONASTICISM
- CHEMIST AND ALCHEMIST
- CHILIASTS, MILLENNIUMISTS, MILLENARIANS
- DARKNESS IS INNER LIGHT
- DEVOTION, WORSHIP, LOYALTY
- EMANATION AND RADIATION
- EMBLEM AND SYMBOL
- GRAIKOS, HELLENE, HELLAS
- HIGHER SELF AND HIGHER EGO
- IMAGINATION AND IMITATION
- JIVA AND JIVATMAN
- JNANA AND YAJNA
- KAMIC VERSUS MANASIC ACTION
- KARMA AND KRIYA
- KARMA, NEMESIS, ADRASTEIA, THEMIS
- KOSMOS AND COSMOS
- KRONOS AND CHRONOS

CONFUSING WORDS SERIES
SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS

- LAUGHTER, SMILES, TEARS
- LIGHT AND HEAT
- LUST, JEALOUSY, PHYSICAL LOVE
- MAGNETISM, MESMERISM, HYPNOTISM
- MATERIALISM, SPIRITUALISM, MONISM
- MUZIRIS, MNIZURIN, MNOUZIRIS
- NIRVANA AND PARINIRVANA
- PANTACLE AND PENTACLE
- RAJA AND RISHI
- REMEMBRANCE, RECOLLECTION, REMINISCENCE
- SKANDHA, SHLOKA, STANZA, SUTRA
- SPIRIT, SPIRITS, SPIRITUALISM
- SPIRITUALISM IS A PHILOSOPHY OF YESTERDAY
- SVABHAVA AND SVAYAMBHU
- TELETE, MYESIS, EPOPTeia
- THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL OCCULTISM
- THEOSOPHIST AND THEOSOPHER
- TRANSMIGRATION, REINCARNATION, GILGULIM
- TRIRATNA AND TRISHARANA
- TRUE AND FALSE PERSONALITY
- UNITY AND DUALITY
- VACH IS NOT MERE SPEECH
- VEDANTA, BUDDHISM, THEOSOPHY
- VRIL AND BOVRIL
- WILL AND DESIRE
- YOGIS AND MAHATMAS

