

existence, the ultimate Reality, the Absolute. All of the Buddhas or enlightened beings exist in that Reality, indeed *are* that Reality. The *dharmakāya* is said to be the Buddha as the Buddha really is, in pure Buddha nature. It is beyond perception but manifests itself as the other two bodies.

Thus, these three bodies are usually understood as three ways in which the Buddha reality can be understood or three ways in which it is expressed. As such, the *dharmakāya* or “body of the Absolute” is unmanifest; it is the Buddha nature as the ultimate, ineffable reality, the Ground of all things. The *sambhogakāya* or “body of realized love” is the Buddha nature as it is seen by enlightened beings, such as the bodhisattvas; it is expressed by all the archetypal, symbolical Buddhas. The *nirmānakāya* or “body of making and changing” is the empirically manifested Buddha, the historical incarnations of the Buddha nature, such as Siddhartha Gautama.

Understood in this way, the doctrine of the *trikāya* or three bodies is that there are three levels of existence: (1) one we are all aware of and experience, an outer reality in which the Buddha nature incarnates as a human being, a teacher (the *nirmānakāya*); (2) one that can be seen by “the eye of faith” or experienced by the imagination, an inner reality in which the Buddha nature is expressed in great archetypal forms (the *sambhogakāya*); and (3) one beyond all experience, the ultimate reality, which is the very Buddha nature (the *dharmakāya*).

Blavatsky’s presentation of the three vestures in subsequent verses and in the last Fragment is somewhat different, as we shall see.

C. MEDITATION.

1. Meditate on verse 136: “Shalt thou abstain from action? Not so shall gain thy soul her freedom. To reach Nirvāna one must reach Self-knowledge, and Self-knowledge is of loving deeds the child.”

2. Envision a blazing star that beams a ray of light into the profound darkness of space. See yourself as a spark of light at the very end of that ray. Then follow the path of the ray back to its origin — to the flaming star — and say to yourself, “I am That.”

To be continued