

Invocatory Prelude
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BOOKS QUOTED FROM OR REFERENCED:

- Plato, *Timaeus*
- Plato, Benjamin Jowett (tr.), *The Republic*
- A.J. Penny, *Studies in Jacob Böhme*
- T. Lake Harris, *Arcana of Christianity*, Vol. 1, Part 1
- T. Subba Row, *A Collection of Esoteric Writings*, “The Twelve Signs of the Zodiac”
- Plotinus, *The Enneads* (MacKenna translation, 4th ed.)

DIAGRAMS appended to this paper:

- FIGURE 1983 0318b-1. Robert Fludd’s Geocentric World-View.
- FIGURE 1983 0318b-2. Heliocentric and Geocentric Views.
- FIGURE 1983 0318b-3. Zodiac.

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NOTES:

- **RETYPE AD PAPER presented in class (V09MP).**
- This is **1983 03/18b, Invocatory Prelude Paper, and the second entry associated with this date. 1983 03/18a = Plotinus; One Class. 1983 03/18c= The Divine Numbers 1-6 Paper. 1983 03/18d = The One: Exposition Paper.**
- This paper is read and discussed in WG Class 1983 0318a Plotinus; One.

INVOCATORY PRELUDE

[Paper as read by AS in WG Class 1983 0318a Begins]

Much of the Platonic opus remains a closed book to anyone who insists upon ignoring evidence that indicates that Plato had a thorough comprehension of astrological first principles. His reference to the sensible appearance of the heavens themselves as the model on which our learning is based is a direct reference to astrology, and we intend to demonstrate that the cosmic soul in the *Timaeus* and the “divided line” for example, cannot be thoroughly appreciated without explicit recognition of the type of astrology that will be explored in the course of this exposition.

The perennially-living philosophy of the Neo-Platonists has a vital meaning for us: it can be unfolded and made to apply to the contemporary situation. These teachings are not merely relics from the past, fit only for respectable entombment in libraries; they are the sculptured breath of living Wisdom. They teach us how to live life, here and now--whether as a clerk, a secretary, a farmer; or whatever. While we should not let the past mesmerize us, we should not hesitate to go forward with its findings. We should amplify the meanings in the writings of those whom the earth and heavens have made wise before us, and we should put our understanding of their teachings to the test of living and understanding life itself.

For the moment we will present a very brief sketch and overall view of this ancient cosmology, with its inherent presupposition of metaphysical principles. [Note: See FIGURES 1983 0318b-1, Robert Fludd’s Geocentric World-View, and 1983 0318b-2, Heliocentric and Geocentric Views, appended to this paper for the following. These diagrams are from *Astronoesis*, pp. 5 and 15 respectively.]

There is a realm beyond the constellations that the ancients spoke of as the World of Ideas. These Ideas or universal substances are not in any place, and they were mythologically represented by the constellations. To help us with our pictorialization, we can imagine the stars as statues of the gods, or the Ideas, that radiate throughout boundless space a guiding influence. This energy of intelligence laid down the basic pattern within which our world, among others, would follow. The idea of the cosmos, the World-Idea, and its inhabitants, evolving and manifesting, can be traced ultimately to this circle of Ideas. The world or cosmos that evolves with the creatures in it is therefore a manifestation of this Nous in the heavens.

Our sensible Sun took its place within this order and with its powers, the cosmocrators, articulated and manifested the predetermined order contained in this incomprehensible intelligence. This intelligence was symbolized by the various animals. Our Sun, which is an individual soul in its own right, comprehends the nature of these intelligences with its intellect and proceeds to unfold the prodigality of this intelligence or Nous. In that process it articulates and manifests our sensible world, its own becoming, with its rational powers. And included within the functioning of this rational soul of the Sun we locate our Mother Earth. Each part--that is, each planet or rational power, is part of the whole and may be considered in its own right, or it may be considered as part of the whole. We consider each of the cosmocrators as functioning power of the rational soul of the sensible Sun.

The Earth is included within this panorama. The geocentric view comes into being when we localize or identify consciousness within one or all of the creatures inhabiting this planet. For the Earth itself is also a recipient of the Ideas, and through the intermediary of the rational powers of the Sun there is gradually organized and manifested a variety of species on the Earth which will partially and imperfectly reflect these Ideas or animal intelligences.

And so all the traces of life left behind by these creatures is retained by the soul of our Earth, and is the content of its memory, which is often referred to in the literature of the ancients as the “Dragon,” that is, the end product as of now of all the life lived on the Earth, the Earth’s memory of all that prior living.

This notion of the Dragon must be kept distinct from the Celestial Dragon, so called, or the constellations which we previously referred to as the encircling Ideas represented by the stars. We might also add that the Earth’s memory is the storehouse of all the images and the intelligence behind the functioning of animal bodies.

“Every sun has a solar spirit.” . . . “Every planetary orb of the terrestrial sort a terrestrial spirit. The spirit of every orb is diffused into, and lives throughout, its mineral, vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms, and is an immortal entity, a living, indivisible, and instinctively conscious existence, but is without human personality, and so abstractly conscious of pleasure or pain, but without power to determine its own sensations. Insphered in every solar, aromal, or terrestrial planetary world, is an appropriate World-Soul, living in the life of all its distinct creations, and permeating alike its atmospheres, its waters, its material crust, and its electro-igneous centre. These World-Souls comprise the first family of God, and their number is as that of the stars.” . . . “They are absorptive organs for the Divine Spirit; and pervading each its own world, and living in all its parts, they distribute throughout matter the Divine vitality.” [T. Lake Harris, *Arcana of Christianity*, Part I, Vol. 1, pp. 100, 101; also A.J. Penny, *Studies in Jacob Böhme*, p. 162]

The organization of these tropes into animal bodies is our inherited mode of functioning, and is what the degree symbolism of the chart refers to. The instant an individual is born, the distribution of planets in signs and houses shows a selection from within the Earth’s memory of the previous tendencies most closely identified with. This predetermination on the part of the soul as to which elements will constitute its psychosomatic organism will constitute the postnatal history of the individual, or its karma. For in essence it will be the vasanas or memory traces which will blossom forth as his life. Now the psychologists refer to this as the subconscious, an intelligence so vast that it would dwarf the conscious mind. Consequently, these inherited modes of functioning constitute a system of beliefs for the soul which inhabits that body. We conceive of this as the psyche of the individual and as the basic presuppositions or attitudes that organize his perceptions and understanding of the world that he lives in. The incarnation of these tropes into an organized psychosomatic organism is the vehicle through which the soul lives and learns, or transcends and liberates itself from.

One of the most original contributions made into the meaning of the Zodiacal signs was done by T. Subba Row in a small, obscure essay included in a book called *Esoteric Writings*. We strongly recommend to our readers an acquaintance with this essay. Some indication as to the meaning of the mythological zodiac is expounded. He makes an attempt therein to interpret the underlying idea behind each of the signs. Through a semantic analysis of their names and a sort of prescribed kabbalistic procedure into these old Arian myths, he intuited the meaning of the Idea which each zodiacal sign embodied. Of course, the presupposition would be that the mystical experiences of certain exalted beings were deposited in these myths. That the universe is an Idea within the Self, and various portions of that Idea were explored and described by these ancient seers, who then associated these specific types of primal intelligence with the zodiacal signs. This intelligence was pictorialized as an animal--intelligence

personified--which would ultimately be traced back to an Idea. [Note: See FIGURE 1983 0318b-3, Zodiac, appended to this paper. This diagram is from *Astronoesis*, p. 13]

“Let us make an image of the soul... . . . An ideal image of the soul, like the composite creations of ancient mythology, such as the Chimera or Scylla or Cerberus, and there are many others in which two or more different natures are said to grow into one. // There are said to have been such unions. // Then do you now model the form of a multitudinous, many-headed monster, having a ring of heads of all manner of beasts, tame and wild, which he is able to generate and metamorphose at will. // You suppose marvelous powers in the artist; but, as language is more pliable than wax or any similar substance, let there be such a model as you propose. // Suppose now that you make a second form as of a lion, and a third of a man, the second smaller than the first, and the third smaller than the second. // That, he said, is an easier task; and I have made them as you say. // And now join them, and let the three grow into one. // That has been accomplished. // Next fashion the outside of them into a single image, as of a man, so that he who is not able to look within, and sees only the outer hull, may believe the beast to be a single human creature.” [Plato, Benjamin Jowett (tr.), *The Republic*, Book IX, 588b]

So that in a sense the stars are a theophany of radiating intelligence, distributing their presence or informing the universe through patterns of intellectual energy. Each and every one of these intelligences is a universal substance correlated to a sign, and these reason-principles--the signs--are the paradigms of all living forms or species symbolized by the archetypal zodiac or the inerratic sphere, which in turn represents the immutability of the Ideas. So that the stars, which are the bodies of the Gods, sensibly represent Ideas which are being transmitted from the Universal Soul to the cosmos.

It is not possible for the profane mind of man to acquiesce to these truths, but knowledge and devotion may bring him to that realization wherein the rising and setting of worlds is a terrestrial incident in eternal consciousness.

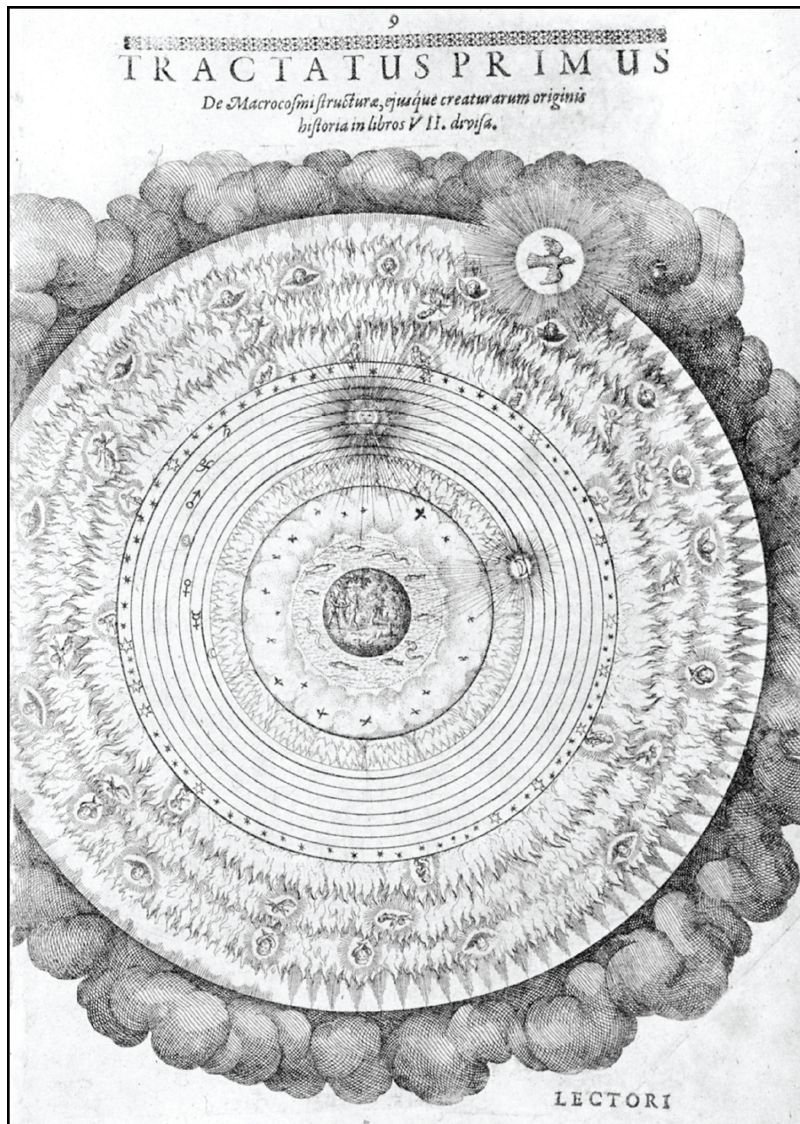
So we repeat, there is a need for a thorough exposition and understanding of the fundamental metaphysical principles that underlie a spiritual knowledge of astrology. That astrology can be redirected or reoriented to its spiritual significance is a prerequisite to its transvaluation.

All this groundwork is however only a preliminary way by which man can know himself and will result in the perception that man's being or rather his manifestation is rooted in the justice of the cosmos.

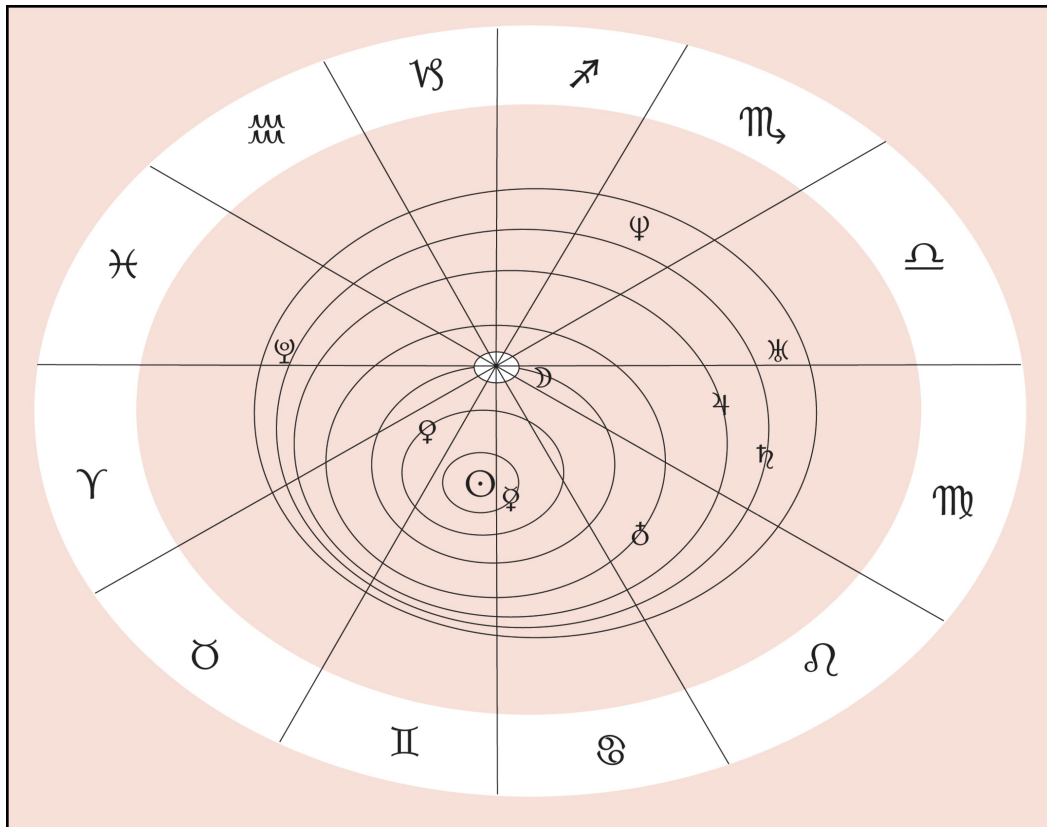
From the point of view of the ancient, philosophically oriented cosmologist, the chart is a wisdom-example of the intellectual imagination--or a symbolic reflex portraying how the Gods or Principles are involved in the fabrication of the vehicles that the individual soul employs for its manifestation. The mandala is accepted as exemplifying and embodying knowledge of superior beings capable of functioning with intuition and transmitting their knowledge of how these fundamental principles are operative in, and can be understood by, the individual from his natal chart.

In the following quotes we will try to itemize these principles which Plotinus is speaking of and put them into a diagrammatic form. In other words, instead of applying these principles to an individual chart, we will apply them to the One.

[Paper as read by AS in WG Class 1983 0318a Ends]



[FIGURE 1983 0318b-1. Robert Fludd's Geocentric World-View. Facsimile scan of diagram from *Astronoesis*, p. 5.]



[FIGURE 1983 0318b-2. Heliocentric and Geocentric Views. Facsimile scan of diagram from *Astronoesis*, p. 15.]



[FIGURE 1983 0318b-3. Zodiac. Facsimile scan of diagram from *Astronoesis*, p. 13.]