

The Third Phase of Soul

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BOOKS QUOTED FROM OR REFERENCED:

- Plotinus, *The Enneads* (MacKenna translation, 4th ed.)

PLOTINUS QUOTES REFERENCED: I.6.9, IV.3.17, V.3.9. These quotes are referenced in the Astronoesis version of this paper, not in this version.

DIAGRAM appended to this paper:

- FIGURE 1983 0527b-1-AD. Tripartite Soul, Levels of Cosmos, and Sheaths.

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NOTES:

- **RETYPE AD PAPER presented in class (V09MP).**
- This is **1983 05/27b, The Third Phase of Soul Paper, and the second entry associated with this date. 1983 05/27a = Plotinus; Soul Class.**
- This paper is read and discussed in WG Class 1983 0527a Plotinus; Soul. A different version of this paper is read and discussed in WG Class 1983 0429a Astronoesis; Nature; Mercurius and WG Class 1983 0513a Astronoesis; Nature; Dragon.

THE THIRD PHASE OF SOUL

[Paper as read in WG Class 1983 0527a Begins]

The third phase of the soul which we may, only for the sake of convenience, call Mercurius, needs to be thoroughly explained and understood, its functioning amplified by illustrating its relation to a body which is part of the World-Idea.

It is a spark from the soul in the Nous, an individual unit of life, and a perpetually evolving offspring. This evolving offspring must ultimately be brought to qualitatively resemble the higher phase, that is, the soul which is in the Nous, through the practice of the “imitation of God” and other philosophic disciplines, including yoga.

Without understanding the fundamental nature of this eternal twin, the theory of reincarnation and karma becomes hopelessly muddled. To criticize a misunderstood theory of reincarnation is not of service to philosophic students. The intense and overwhelming aspiration on the part of many of these contemporaries to explain everything away by reducing it to the nondual is an admirable display of devotion but it is not the balanced view required by philosophy, for it leaves certain very important and practical matters unexplained and unexplainable.

The fact remains--and no words can abolish the situation--that our identification with our ego includes a meaning that cannot be whisked away at the stroke of a pen. They have not properly inquired into the value and significance of the ego. Obviously, the interval between the Self or *Atma* (the Soul) and its representative, the ego, is a no-man's land, and it is very noticeably left unexplained. That Nature put into so much travail to produce the necessary vehicles by which the Mercurial phase of the soul may evolve is in fact one of those questions which if left unanswered would rankle in our mind. So it must be squarely faced. There are various views on this subject scattered throughout the ancient and modern writings and we have attempted to bring them together in a coherent and organized fashion to help us in our understanding of reincarnation and metempsychosis and the meaning and the value of the ego and how this fit into the metaphysical scheme.

Now, it was previously pointed out that the ancients conceived the Soul as tripartite. It can just as easily be conceived of as dual. The higher Cognitive Isness or Awareness and its intelligence cannot directly experience the sensible world and therefore must act through the lowest phase, which we refer to as Mercurius, within which the manifestation of the World-Idea will take place. This lower phase may be referred to as the function of manifestness, *asmita* in Yoga terminology. This infinite light “descends” or contracts completely into the realm of manifestation by a process that will be described later, into the womb of the world, what the Buddhists call the *Tathagatagarbha*, where Buddhas are born, that is.

This germ from the higher soul will evolve or gestate through indeterminate time concomitantly with its Idea of the World. This World-Idea, as we said, is fabricated and organized by the Universal and Cosmic Souls and then projected by and through an individual soul as its own thought. The perpetual unfoldment of the World-Idea is irreversible in its direction and therefore guarantees the evolution of the individual soul with it. The evolving “double” of the soul, as part of the World-Idea, is often spoke of as the “second soul”.

Through its function of manifestness, this soul which is projecting the Intellectual Cosmos(.) given to it from within. Its experience of that Cosmos or thought is the modification of its own functioning, referred to as the World-Idea. This projection encompasses the entire manifest universe for an individual soul. The archetypal or intellectual Idea of the universe is manifested through the secondary

phase of the soul which will project it within itself by continuously transforming itself and which will include the necessary body with which it will identify and operate through.

Now this very function of manifestness is also the means by which the individual soul takes itself at any level to be part of the cosmos. These thoughts or these mental modes are instantiating or imaging the Ideas as various grades of thought, and all these are manifest to, and appear within, the Mercurial phase of the soul. The imaged cosmos itself provides a framework within which we can locate these vehicles, and we've tabulated them and correlated these various classifications within the chart in the attempt to pictorialize somewhat the concept of Man as the ancients conceived him. [Note: See FIGURE 1983 0527b-1-AD, Tripartite Soul, Levels of Cosmos, and Sheaths, appended to this paper. See also *Astronoesis*, p. 349, Figure 168.]

The Mercurius phase of the Soul as the pure form of manifestness--that is, consciousness, our "I AM"--is first identified with the highest reaches of heaven, the intelligence of the cosmos in its pure aspect called reason-principles or Ideas variously combined to form the Idea of the universe. Here the Mercurial phase of the soul assumes substantiality as the pure joy of existence and is referred to in other literature as *anandamaya kosha*, or the Robe of Glory. The principle of pure light, the I AM, is being aprioristically conceived, that is, before it manifests a cosmos. But through this function of manifesting, the soul takes itself to be embodied in these reason-principles. The I takes itself to be this mind, the self-affirming certitude of "I am the World-Idea." At this level, the I or *asmita* is the substratum or basis for the differentiation of the appearances within itself. In this stage of *ananda*, the soul that still has its wings is associated with this vestment of luminous reason-principles that form the "Robe of Glory," the Augoeides, the radiant body, and here it may truthfully be said, "The world is my idea." For here the intelligence of the stars is the locus for the soul's first association with the cosmos, and it is infused there with the intelligible form of the World-Idea. At the station of Reason and its act--that is, the clear shining of the intelligence which contains the Ideas for the formation of the world--the highest phase of the Mercurial soul is in harmony with the operation of the Cosmic and Universal Soul, unfolding the World-Idea for itself.

The ray of soul in its universality, dressed with these reason-principles, participates in the spiritual powers of absolute willing, knowing, and feeling, through which it is modalizing or particularizing itself as this individual soul and this is the level which may be referred to as Noeron body or the *vijñanamaya*. This Nous or intelligence of the cosmos as being manifested through an individual soul includes that particular soul's role in the World-Idea, and it also constitutes spiritual knowledge or gnosis. Consequently, the soul functioning at this level of intelligence is a spontaneous knowledge and activity which includes the knowledge of the planetary spheres or the *manomaya kosha* and its effect. This higher self-knowing, the *vijñanamaya kosha*, within the soul takes place through the modes of willing, feeling, knowing, symbolized in the cosmology/astrology by the three trans-Saturnian functions of Uranus, Neptune, Pluto.

As we have said, the "I principle" or *asmita* identified with the Noeron body includes the knowledge of the two lower realms. It is that power to know by which the Ideas are being variously combined to form the World-Idea for an individual soul. This latter is received by the functioning of the *manomaya kosha* or the greater mind which we can correlate with the planetary spheres. This is the realm of the cosmocrators, the powers of the cosmic soul, and symbolized by the sensible Sun and the planets, which are elaborating the sublunary worlds. The individual soul conjoined to the cosmic soul participates in the functioning of its powers. The soul or mind receives the World-Idea, or rather intuits it, and makes

a representation of it for itself. And inherent in this production is the intellectual nature of the mind, which includes the powers of the soul, that is, both fabricative and gnostic, that simultaneously imbues its representations with significance.

Now the mind of the cosmic soul is receiving the World-Idea and with its powers or representative faculty organizes the Earth's memory. This organization which is the given content of the world of sense or the subtle image of the world is still prior to our reflective consciousness. This imaginal essence or the Earth's memory then becomes the medium through which that prior mind can become reflectively aware of its prior unconscious activity.

At this level of our unconscious mental functioning, the World-Idea is being incessantly instantiated and transmitted. That is, the soul's image-making faculty is constantly recreating the World-Idea. This subtle image of the world is not optical, but rather an abstract schema or synthesis, and it is prior to our reflective awareness. It is an alogical whole which nonetheless contains all the features that will later on become available to us through our murky reflective self-consciousness. It is the functioning of this mind that is organizing the "matter" or more precisely the Earth's memories, and the elements, into clusters of sensations which constitute the functional images that become the phenomenal subject and object of our knowledge, which at this level is our empirical experience. These clusters of sensation, these images, memories, or the organization of these Earth's memories into a functional image, is the medium through which the soul or the mind "incarnates" and therein becomes self-reflectively aware of its prior activity.

The functioning of this psychosomatic organism--which is, as we have said, an organization of the Earth's imagination--may be referred to as imitative being. And here we wish to remind the reader that at this point we may recognize the presuppositions or basic attitudes that will be included in the manifesting of his mental powers. Here and only here, within the organization of the memories, we can speak of Jung's archetypes as the precondition for an individual psychological experience, and say that philosophy is a mouthing of these archetypes.

This last is the sublunary system of tropes or life traces which the planetary spheres have organized into a variety of species and their accompanying environment, in conformity to the World-Idea, as far as this is possible. In this imaginal realm of the Earth's dragonic belt, which constitutes the Moonlike and Shelly bodies, the lowest vehicles of the soul's experience, that our mind, which is really cosmic in extent, is obscured at this final identification with the lowest sheath, and the apparent bifurcation of the soul into an empirical subject and a phenomenal object occurs. Now this is a simplified picture of the vast cosmological presuppositions that must be delineated in order to understand our sensible experience. It is approximately in this way that the ancients conceived what conditions were necessary for the arising of knowledge. The entire panorama of the sensible world, which as we said was fabricated by the gods, was a necessary prerequisite--the stage upon which the actors made their entrance and exits.

So the entire manifested world can be conceived of as a huge thought projected forth from each individual soul. And within this whole we may conceive of a hierarchy of levels, each level distinguished from the whole and from one another, the highest being Life Intellectual, or the soul as embodying reason-principles, and among the lowest the vegetative life, a life dim and obscure. The laws that apply to one level are different from those of another, but all these various levels we can conceive as compressed and as operative within a single entity. The microcosm is a miniature cosmos.

Nonetheless we are to remember that we're situated within thought--Mind's functioning. And the Mercurial phase of the individual soul may be thought of as associated or identified with the lowest of Nature's kingdoms.

If we insert this I-ness into an animal body which has gone through a phylogenetic and ontogenetic development, this soul, this I-ness, this unit of life would first be superimposed upon by the inherent functioning and vitality of that organism, and that this corresponds to the "man of flesh and blood," the separate ego that regards the world as completely other and which must be the source of satisfaction of its own desires, and this is the whirlwind of never-ending activity. Essentially this gives rise to a realistic epistemology and a geocentric world-view.

But, constantly intruding into this "natural man" is the functioning of a greater intelligence, which is indicated by the planetary spheres, altering, modifying, transforming that matrix of tendencies (despite the claims of inertia, which we refer to as the psychosomatic organism), till finally a sufficient deposit of this higher mind's functioning orientates that individual soul towards a more rational view or heliocentric position. We are retelling an ancient story about the mystery of Man, which started with Orpheus and continued through the Greek philosophical mythology and culminates in the *Enneads* of Plotinus.

If we conceive of the Mother Earth as a goddess within whose domain has transpired the manifestation of innumerable species of life, their immediate origin would be her body itself. This body will contain the necessary ingredients for the building up of the two lowest sheaths, what are referred to as the Shelly and Moonlike bodies. This "material" has been recycled innumerable times; it therefore has certain tendencies or proclivities which are indications of past functioning and which may be referred to as the "tropes" or the memory of the Earth. The combination of the Great Elements into organized living bodies include these selected responses or tendencies that manifest themselves in the body's functioning. Or in other words, within this mysterious imaginal essence is retained traces of its functioning after the dissolution of the entity, and the totality of these traces constitutes the memory of the Earth. This beginningless ontogenetic and phylogenetic development is the source from which and within which the bodies of all living creatures are produced and live.

This indefinite and indeterminable storehouse of images, the seething cauldron of innumerable disembodied functionings, is the material of the soul's fabricative activity and is suggestive of the nature of the Dragon. The Shelly and Moonlike bodies of living creatures are an embodiment of them and their activity is refunded into this subconscious. The Dragon lives and breathes through the individual organism; and not only is it constitutive of the physiological functioning of the organism, but also of the significance attributed to that functioning which is later on understood when the reasoning part of the soul judges it. But for now, as located in that Moonlike and Shellylike body, a rudimentary understanding of the sensible world takes place. The soul as an inhabitant of such a body is becoming acquainted with the traces of the intelligence of the Ideas which have been left behind as part of the Earth's memory.

It is these traces (of the Ideas) which give rise to images; each non-optical image constitutes a matrix of disembodied tendencies that have been miscalled "archetypes". Imperceptible in themselves, they can nevertheless be inferred through reflection on their activity by the soul's gnostic power when it reaches the level of reflective conscious judgment. For the present it is being maintained that these contents will become the environment or the idea of the world for that individual soul inhabiting that body. Similarly, the presence of the soul within that World-Idea is indicated as well.

What we witness here is the presence in the imaginal essence of the intelligence of the Ideas as tropes or samskaras and the powers of the soul or the functioning of the soul as represented by the

categories of the imagination. Both are included in this imaginal essence. Under these conditions, the soul perceives images in water -- the shadows or phantoms in the cave. The soul as wrapped in the cocoon of oblivion is unable and unwilling to investigate into the mystery of the nature of Man.

A preliminary inquiry into the nature of the degrees, which are all-encircling, will require extended investigation and research. For now, we are simply asserting the suggestion of an intrusion of the intellectuality of the Ideas flowing into our world in the peculiar way described previously. For each of these degrees is often symbolized by an image of multivalent significances. It includes the formative power of the archetypal Ideas, the presuppositions of the genera and species of all life. Then we have the intellectual mind of the cosmic soul as its power to know the Ideas in the archetypal realm and through its functioning, which is both gnostic and fabricative, organizing the Earth's memories into a world-picture, an alogical whole that includes adventitious unities whose very organization brings about the experience of a phenomenal subject and object.

A selection or specific combination of the totality of the degrees and how they are being portrayed by the various functioning of the categories of the imagination will constitute a specific psychosomatic individuality, a unique person, which will provide the soul with a body that its karma entitles it to. Only after this acquisition can the soul, operating through this body, can we speak of the phenomenalization of that primary image--that is, the operation of reflective judgment on and through the functioning of this entity.

At this point, what must be recognized is the mortality of this entity. There is no reincarnation for this entity. It is important that this be understood to prevent an animistic conception of reincarnation. The ongoing continuity of this individual soul's karma--that is, its next psychosomatic organization--is provided by the cosmic circuit. But the reference of this continuity of karma, which a succession of bodies provides, refers us to the same self-identical "I AM" or individual consciousness.

A thoughtful consideration of the natal horoscope--our cosmic identity--suggests the particularity of this individual soul's status, and this description should not be regarded as an explanation.

At the moment of birth, all the geometrical and arithmetical relationships are precisely indicated and announce the nature of this imitative being which participates in the functioning of these soul powers.

Insofar as the functioning of the cosmic soul, to which is conjoined the individual soul, is operative, it will create the necessary organ in the imaginal essence which manifests that function. So something of the intellectual nature of the soul's power is transmitted and left behind as a trace in that entity or adventitious unity. The reduplication of these soul powers which is left behind in the organized imaginal essence is the ground of our psychological experience. We will try to illustrate this description a little further on.

So we're gradually approaching an understanding of how the ego is a thought. It is made of memories, the stuff of dreams, and nonetheless reflects those macrocosmic principles. And this totality of the memories of the Earth may be referred to as our subconscious, as a vast intelligence. The specificity of the individual ego that refers to the significances attached to the functioning of its tropes will be used as a vehicle by an individual soul, whose knowledge and consciousness--or, in other words, its "I AM"--will be unfolded through the resulting interaction.

The process by which the individual soul or "I AM" as embodied becomes more conscious by and through the power of combining in innumerable ways the significances or meanings attached to the tropes and thereby creating the necessary concepts by which it can understand that which the intellectual part of his mind has created and then reflectively judging the object. It becomes scientific when there is a

conformity of these concepts with the prior activity of the intuitive mind. That is, the mind is trying to understand through the psychosomatic organism that which its prior activity had created.

What must be recognized and clearly understood is that the activity of reflective thought is within the Dragon. We are in effect combining those meanings and significances which are attached to the tropes, the degrees, and manipulating them, creating concepts of understanding by which to grasp the object. The compulsiveness of these significances can and does predetermine the understanding to such an extent that these *are* the presuppositions of our psychological experience and understanding. Insofar as the ego is constituted by these presuppositions and its life a gesture or manifestation of them, it's difficult to see how he can arrive at the formulation of a doctrine of Truth.

It is at this point that the full import of being in a cul-de-sac arises. The way out is shown to us in the Platonic teachings that attempt to disentangle the reason-principles which the images embody or in what Idea the images are embodied. The great philosophic thinkers pierce through the images to the reason-principles directly. This is intelligible intuition without the use of any intermediaries and not of a conceptual nature, nor does it rely on the language of the Dragon. Those who are not free from these compulsive tendencies and the intensity of the images do not have access to this intelligible truth.

The rich storehouse of information that the horoscope contains can be a source of spiritual and metaphysical knowledge that could inspire and enrich our lives, for in this mysterious way the transcendental is included or is immanent in the empirical (and not embodied in footnotes). Perhaps in delineating the chart of some well-known people whose lives are well-documented, we could, through this *postmortem* astrological analysis, illustrate something of what is meant by the famous dictum that, "We do not have the ideas, rather they have us"-- or--"What superior beings think, we must perceive.

So we must begin by reminding our readers that in the degree symbolism there is inextricably buried a hierarchy of meanings, that is, significances that are attached to the tropes' functioning. At the moment of birth the planets are conjunct with certain of those degrees, so that we have at one and the same time an aspectual relationship between all the planets and the degrees they are conjunct with and one another. As friends of the Ideas, we must point out that at the very origin, at birth, this entity is already endowed with meanings that will be manifest in the course of the person's life.

Those cosmocrators, which are powers of the World-Soul to which our mind is conjoined, and organize these tropes into a body of imagination. And this entity has seven ways of functioning and four ways of knowing, each bearing the impress of the cosmocrator, resulting in a category of the imagination, that is, the different ways that this entity of the imagination can function and know. By "body" we mean the grouping together of these tropes, and by "psyche" we mean the functioning of the categories of the imagination. This is the psychosomatic organism that is imitative being and includes within itself traces of the Ideas.

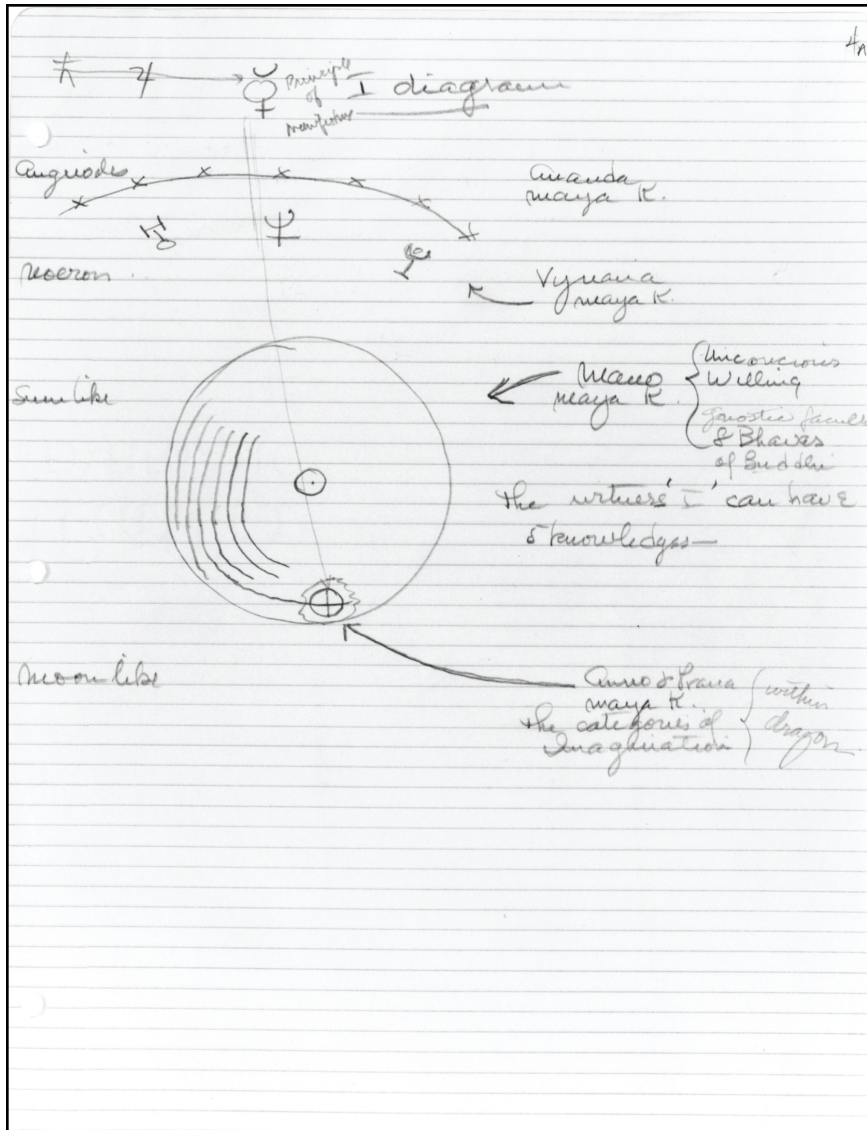
In the chart, a planet may conjunct a degree indicates, on the one hand, how that function which is represented by the organ or category of the imagination of the trope, and on the other, how that planet will manifest the significances within the trope.

It can be shown that this understanding of an entity, in all cases except the man liberated from his ego, can be traced back to these ideas which the categories of the imagination have manifested. It can also be shown that a deepening understanding accrues when the natal chart is making certain aspects with the transiting planets, and even further, that a vastly superior and universal consciousness is being transmitted through an individual soul particularizing itself within the system of tropes that is represented by this individual entity.

If we continue retracing our steps on the upward path of that part of the soul which is said to be divisible among bodies, we can further our understanding by pointing out the relationship that exists between the transiting Chaldean planets to the natal chart or how that individual's greater mind is attempting to become aware of itself in the reflecting medium that the psychosomatic organism supplies. The soul must come to an understanding of itself through this organism that has a phylogenetic and ontogenetic background, but nonetheless to which it is heir, and must take it upon itself in each incarnation to erase the interferences and distortions that intervene between the subtle image produced by the greater mind's functioning and its reflection in that empirical subject which is its vehicle, until finally the ego is subservient to the God within.

[Paper as read in WG Class 1983 0527a Ends]

DIAGRAM FOR 1983 0527b



[FIGURE 1983 0527b-1-AD. Tripartite Soul, Levels of Cosmos, and Sheaths. K= Kosha. Facsimile scan of hand-drawn diagram by Anthony Damiani from *Astronoesis*, p. 254.]