

**WISDOM'S GOLDENROD, JUNE FRITCHMAN SEMINAR NOTES
(TYPED)
JULY 17a, 1984
PLOTINUS; NATURE; PROVIDENCE & NECESSITY**

TOPIC: Plotinus
SUBJECT: Nature

SUBSUBJECTS: Providence & Necessity, Freedom & Determinism

BOOKS READ FROM OR REFERENCED:

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

PLOTINUS QUOTES READ OR REFERENCED: II.3.9, III.2.13, III.5, III.8.5-7, IV.3.30, VI.8.14

TYPED by JF; REFORMATTED by IT 2023

NOTES:

- **RETYPE HANDWRITTEN NOTES (V08.1).** From JF Notes.
- This is **1984 07/17a, Plotinus; Nature Afternoon Seminar, and the first entry associated with this date. 1984 07/17b = Plotinus; Nature Evening Seminar**, for which we have incomplete audio and in which Anthony doesn't speak. Some of the themes are the same.
- Typed, distributed as part of 2007 Soul series.
- Note from JF: The carbon copy of the partial transcript in my collection is the only one known to exist as of 2006. It was typed in 1984 (right after the seminar) from my notes. According to my recollection, Anthony was present at this very powerful seminar. "Most" of the comments therein are Anthony's ((except those comments in double parentheses)). I have added relevant pieces of Plotinus quotes which are only referenced in the original partial transcript. To the original typed transcript, I have added some additional Plotinus references or clarifications (in square brackets []). I also corrected some capitalization, punctuation, and spelling in a few places.
- No Anthony on the audio tapes for the other Providence classes/seminars from summer 1984: 7/15/84, 7/29/84, 8/5/84, 8/10/84.
- In 2023, IT updates prefatory matter and footer, fixes errors/typos, reformats to accord with new conventions.
- This seminar took place on a Thursday afternoon.

1984 07/17a SEMINAR at Wisdom's Goldenrod Plotinus; Nature; Providence and Necessity

[JF Notes Begin]

Even though the Soul is always intellective, we are not always aware [IV.3.30]. The proper circumstances-- ruled by aspects-- are needed to evoke, embody the Ideas. This is why Soul associates with the Cosmic Circuit-- in order to learn.

But, the argument that the particular aspects or modifications CAUSE the Knowledge are wrong-- a) They provide the occasions for knowledge, but they do not cause it. (Knowledge is always present-- is sui generis.) b) The aspects, causal sequence is not outside of Soul-- the manifestation is not external-- it is the essential nature of Soul and Intellect. c) The Soul has CHOSEN this life because this particular sequence of events will evoke the Ideas it needs to consciously assimilate. It did the choosing to begin with.

Given the choice-- those circumstances will go on according to the sequence of aspects determined at birth. If Soul has sufficient power and attention it can grasp the Ideas as they are evoked. If not, it is overpowered by circumstances. It will then miss the opportunity-- have to wait for another life.

Even when we speak of the Ideas evoked, there is a whole hierarchy of meaning to the Idea, and the Soul will apprehend sensibly, rationally, intuitively.

d) The Idea contains from the start all that it will manifest from it.

These arguments show a misunderstanding of mind and mentalism. The lower does not cause the higher-- the Ideas and divine Soul are the cause of the emanation.-- When the Idea is present, it doesn't take any time or space to get from Intell[ection] to the manifestation. Soul does not get the Ideas-- it has to build for itself a vehicle or organization of tropes which can embody certain Ideas. Use the music example here-- The composer's skill must obey the laws of the medium used-- the notes, scales, and so on. But the presence of the inspiration is Providence. The Body is a pile of vasanas which the Soul can use to manifest its Ideas.

There are CERTAIN vasanas available to be molded. But also-- the Sage does not manifest just ANY Ideas. He manifests very specific Ideas according to transits. The Ideas need the bodily modification in order to manifest, but NOT in order to BE. The Ideas ARE.

In the Sage determinism is in the fact that P.B. doesn't DECIDE which Ideas will come in. He is receptive to the presence of the Ideas-- he writes about what is present. He is in touch with the continual Providence which is there, and can express it because he has the right tools-- his power of writing is such, his power of concentration and of stillness are such that he can grasp and express the state of World-Mind. There is no interference, only transmission.

So on one side, the moment-time and Idea are determined, then we go one more step-- what do we mean by 'He'? He does not "suffer" these Ideas to be manifest, he IS that Cosmic Circuit, or realizes the World-Idea within him and so is knowing by his own essence. He is participating in the essential outflow of Ideas (or influx) from the Int[elligible] to sensible.

If he IS the higher, then he is himself the source of the providential flow of Ideas. His essence is the Undivided Mind. He is participating in his own essential production, or in another mode of speaking, he finally now realizes that he is himself building a vehicle through which he himself as Soul is learning about himself.

((On the one hand we discover what the World-Mind wills, but on the other hand we realize that we have willed the world.))

The World-Mind is manifesting all levels by your choice-- you have chosen-- between living the higher and following the lower. [diagram of steps of a ladder/level accompanies this point in partial transcript]

((2 kinds of Providence should be clear-- a) World-Idea manifesting the universe, and b) return or deliberate usage.))

VI.8.14: [on man & the essential man]

The Soul comes in with its own essential nature or reason for being-- It is always present, but when it is allowed to shine through it manifests. IF we imagine this radiating essence of Soul trying to bring itself into existence, it needs the matter in order to know its content.-- The essence needs the aspect to EXIST, but not in order to be-- it already IS. The 2A Hypothesis [Parmenides dialogue] then shows the transition or transmutation to be instantaneous. IT doesn't act by thinking out or even reasoning-- only Intelligence can know by essence how to coordinate World-Idea with the Individual Souls.

Reason harmonizes the two-- the emanation of Ideas and Necessity.

Why does Soul need to wait for aspects? Why can't it just do what it NEEDS to do? But it doesn't NEED anything-- the sensible world needs no process in a certain way, Soul essentially produces. Moreover, Soul itself has put forth the system of Necessity as the best way of attaining VISION-- which it cannot get directly. These are the laws of the sensible manifestation which Mind is the very heart of.

((Quote III.8.5-7 -- All forms of existence are for VISION.))

The ultimate purpose of Ego is for [it to] gain knowledge of Soul.-- The Ego has to be seen [in] its proper place-- its true worth as the vehicle of understanding. What Soul cannot gain directly it does through the Ego and Circuit. If Ego is seen as a separate existence it is only a mechanistic whirling of thoughts.-- Ego has a value and purpose-- toward gaining of vision. ((“Universe is divine if Divine Soul is included later with it-- otherwise it is subdivine.”)) II.3.9, end.

What Soul retains from experience is a vision of ideal form-- the reason-principle must be made one with Soul.

If we lived in the Overself, the Cosmos would be viewed always as the instantiation or emanation of Ideas. ((When we view Cosmos as a process of (linked) cause and effect we are bringing in the lack, the matter. Necessity is related to needfulness or Poverty [cf. III.5].))

In the example of the Sculpture, the laws of the medium must be understood and obeyed-- There can be no inspired expression that does not work [outside of] the laws of the [medium].-- There is a necessary way that the paints must be used. The creative act must follow the laws of the material. If the material the

Sage works with-- his own vasanas--are as pure as possible it is a better vehicle for the Influx of Ideas and Providence.

III.2.13: Adrastia (recompense)

Because the Idea already contains anything which can be manifested in existence and time and sequence, everything is provided for. Even when Necessity operates to bring about a circumstance, the Idea is prefigured in the Intelligible, and this is the true CAUSE.

Even Necessity is already included within the Providence of the World-Mind. The Universe is an Emanation.-- In Providence, something of the causing principle or source is in the emanation. The Cause is intrinsic (see VI.8.14). In Necessity the cause is not viewed as being the effect-- the law governing is viewed as extrinsic.

This may be related to our discussion of Hierarchy and monism. Take for example light as a source of energy present in photosynthesis, as heat, as electricity. The light (source) must obey the Necessary laws of formal manifestation of its energy. It must “obey” the laws of photosynthesis or thermodynamics for heat. If we view the Cosmos, therefore, as an appearance of Mind, or Mind appearing in a certain form, the Cosmos is under Providence. But cosmos as cosmos is governed by certain laws. If light appears through the form of photosynthesis, the appearance must be bound by these necessary laws of photosynthesis. But in the example light must itself be considered the source of the photosynthesis or heat-- and the forms of heat or photosynthesis is prefigured in the light. If Necessity, then, is the law of the formation of an appearance of mind, Necessity is itself the laws of the mind’s operation through form. Therefore Mind itself is formless. Saying Cosmic manifestation is a determination, then, is a tautology from one view, but from another is NEVER determining mind-essence at all.

The essence of Man, for example, present directly with the particular man, is the ESSENTIAL cause of its existence, [within] the laws of appearance [Necessity]. If Soul’s essential nature can shine through the form of its appearance-- [it] can even dissolve the Karmic (Necessity) Laws, if the Person views Cosmos as presence of formless Mind. The Sage can plant seeds outside the realm of form-- in individual mind-- which will then manifest when conditions of the “outer” man are appropriate, (when the aspects or circumstances or laws of Necessity allow it).

[transcript has picture of still frames (as in a movie, representing the moment-to-moment World-Idea) and seed thoughts coming into them]

The laws of manifestation which mind establishes apply to appearance, the Sage can put something into the influx of life or soul ray which sustains the entity, and this seed-thought will automatically flower when Necessity (or Karma) allow. Working directly with the Source, the Sage plants some seed-thought at some moment A which may not manifest [un]til some later moment-- but sooner or later will do so.

NOTES: [recollection that AD said these were important at end of seminar]

* Be sure to mention essential Cause -- in VI.8.14.

* II.3.9. Without the Divine, the forms of appearance go on but there is no intelligence or meaning to enter the form.

* Character = Power of Soul (P.B.)

[JF Notes End]