

**Nested Levels of Soul and Cosmos**  
**by the Editors of *Astronoesis***  
**Paper V09P**

3-LETTER CODE: ASN

TOPIC: Astronoesis

SUBJECT: Soul

SUBSUBJECTS: Cosmos, Earth Soul, Star Souls, Planetary Souls, Terrestrial Zodiac

ORIGINAL LOCATION & FILE NAME: senested.mcw

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BOOKS QUOTED FROM OR REFERENCED:

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

PLOTINUS QUOTES REFERENCED: II.3.9, III.8.6, IV.4.26, IV.4.27, VI.7.7

REFORMATTED/CORRECTED by IT, MW 2025

NOTES:

- **RETYPE ASTRONOESIS ENDNOTE (V09P).**
- Written in the mid-1990s for *Astronoesis* but not used.

## NESTED LEVELS OF SOUL AND COSMOS

Plotinus writes in VI.7.7:

“The power of the All-Soul, as Reason-Principle of the universe, may be considered as laying down a pattern before the effective separate powers go forth from it: this plan would be something like a tentative illumining of Matter; the elaborating soul would follow the tracings and give them minute articulation; every separate effective soul would become that towards which it tended, assuming that particular form as the choral dancer adapts himself to the action set down for him.”

The Demiurge is like the choreographer; the Intellectual-Principle is the writer. Individual souls all play the parts. These individual souls are souls in their own right, and they are also agents, elaborating the World-Idea in levels from the big bang universe on down to the Earth.

The cosmos is a confluence of necessity (or karma) and Providence. This confluence is the basis for the long and short path: the karmic evolution of cause and effect vs. the recognition of the ever-presence of the Overself. In the *Timaeus* the Demiurge makes a speech to the gods: It provides the grace or providential support by which the universe runs; they must be the agents of karma. The bodies of the Gods are the agents in the circuit and provide the karmic continuity.

Star soul, cosmic soul, planetary soul are the souls which assist the Universal Soul in the manifestation of the World-Idea. Each level of manifestation proceeds by vision. (In Plotinus III.8.6 all production is through vision and is for contemplation.) Each sun soul is elaborating the World-Idea, but filtered as it were through its own intellectuality. Each is a God, and has its own four-fold nature, as well as being the agent and vehicle for the prior. (See II.3.9.)

We may picture the levels of cosmos and soul as nested within each other. Plotinus points out that each grade of life is a grade of thought: so each soul is an intelligence. The Earth Goddess is described in IV.4.26-27. The Earth provides the vehicles for the individual human souls, has a knowledge of these souls, and must get something from them.

“And there is nothing against the idea that sensation in the earth exists for the sake of the human interests furthered by the earth. They would be served by means of the sympathy that has been mentioned; petitioners would be heard and their prayers met, though in a way not ours. . . .

“That the earth contains the principle of growth must be admitted; . . . the earth is primarily of the spiritual order; and how can we doubt that in spirit all is lucid? This becomes all the more evident when we reflect that, besides being as spirit lightsome, it is physically illuminated moving in the light of the cosmic revolution.

“There is, thus, no longer any absurdity or impossibility in the notion that the soul in the earth has vision: we must, further, consider that it is the soul of no mean body; that in fact it is a god since certainly this soul must be for ever good.

“. . . We must conclude, then, that every part and member of the earth carries its vestige of this principle of growth, an under-phase of that entire principle which belongs not to this or that member but to the earth as a whole: next in order is the nature (the soul-phase) concerned with sensation, this not interfused (like the vegetal principle) but in contact from above: then the

higher soul and the Intellectual-Principle constituting together the being known as Hestia (Earth-Mind) and Demeter (Earth-Soul)--a nomenclature indicating the human intuition of these truths, asserted in the attribution of a divine name and nature.” (IV.4.26-27)

The mind of the World, our world, Earth-Mind, is the most immediate source of the World-Idea for all the humans as well. The totality of the collective unconscious of humanity is the Earth memories. The 360 degrees of the terrestrial zodiac have a double nature. They are the Earth’s interpretation of the ideas given by the Sun, and they are conditioned historically by the traces of all life experience.