

*Nous moves Man,  
and vice versa*



## ***Abstract and train of thoughts***

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## Foreword by the Series Editor

Kosmos moves only in Soul — the only Space within the range of the All open to it to move in — and therefore its Movement has always been in the Time which inheres in Soul. . . . Would it, then, be sound to define Time as the Life of the Soul in movement as it passes from one stage of act or experience to another?  
— PLOTINUS<sup>1</sup>

This paper is an amplification of the Diagram and Accompanying Notes in our Secret Doctrine's Second Proposition Series. It aims to demonstrate that Universal Motion permeates, animates, and *moves* Man, who is the Model and Ideality of the Universe.

Briefly, there are two kinds of Universal Motion: Eternal Vibration and Vortical Motion:

**Eternal Vibration is Motion Unmanifested, a spiritual term.**

Unconscious, noumenal motion, the “Great Breath” of the One Eternal Element (Existence) “which knows itself not,” or Absolute Perpetual Motion (First Logos).

**Vortical Motion is Motion Manifested, a material term.**

Conscious, phenomenal, and everlasting vortical vibrations (Third Logos).

Motion becomes progressively apparent in the gross material world: rapid in the inorganic, slow in the organic. Every single constituent of Man, whether eternal principle or ephemeral aspect, is one of seven stages of consciousness unfolding from within without. As consciousness is related to vibration and form, when the three commingle they give rise to endless differences of appearance and character, thus creating the illusion of separateness.

Words which express *spirit*, denote, primarily, *breath, air, wind*, the radical sense of which is to *flow, move* or *rush*. Hence the connection between *spirit* and *courage, animus, animosus*; hence passion, *animosity*. So in Greek *φρενιτις*, frenzy, is from *φρήν*, the mind, or rather from its primary sense, a moving or rushing.

So in our mother tongue, *mod* is mind or spirit; whence *mood*, in English, and Saxon *modig*, moody, angry. Hence *mind* in the sense of *purpose*, its primary signification is a setting forward, as *intention* is from *intendo*, to stretch, to strain, the sense that ought to stand first in a Dictionary.<sup>2</sup>

For Plato's masterful analysis of the linguistic instruments of motion, consult “Cratylus [426c-427d] and other Sacred Names,” in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers.

T. T.

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<sup>1</sup> *Enneads*, III, vii, 11 (tr. MacKenna & Page). Full text in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series.

<sup>2</sup> Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1844



## Introduction by Helena Blavatsky

### Greeks divided the soul into two: Noetic and Phrenic.

Though antiquity (like esoteric philosophy) seems to divide soul into the divine and the animal, *anima divina* and *anima bruta*, the former being called *nous* and *phrēn*, yet the two were but the double aspect of a unity. Diogenes Laërtius<sup>1</sup> gives the common belief that the animal soul, *phrēn* — *φρήν*, generally the diaphragm — resided in the stomach, Diogenes calling the *anima bruta*, *θυμός*.<sup>2</sup> Pythagoras and Plato also make the same division, calling the divine or rational soul *λόγον*, and the irrational *ἄλογον*. Empedocles gives to men and animals a dual soul, not two souls as is believed. The Theosophists and Occultists divide man into seven principles and speak of a divine and animal soul; but they add that Spirit being one and indivisible, all these “souls” and principles are only its aspects. Spirit alone is immortal, infinite, and the one reality — the rest is all evanescent and temporary, illusion and delusion.<sup>3</sup>

### Pythagoras, into three: Nous, Phren, and Thymos.

[Pythagoras] described the *Soul* as a self-moving Unit (monad) composed of three elements, the *Nous* (Spirit), the *phrēn* (mind), and the *thymos* (life, breath or the *Nephesh* of the Kabbalists) which three correspond to our “Ātma-Buddhi,” (higher Spirit-Soul), to *Manas* (the EGO), and to *Kāma-rūpa* in conjunction with the *lower* reflection of *Manas*. That which the Ancient Greek philosophers termed Soul, in general, we call Spirit, or Spiritual Soul, *Buddhi*, as the vehicle of *Ātma* (the *Agathon*, or Plato’s Supreme Deity). The fact that Pythagoras and others state that *phrēn* and *thymos* are shared by us with the brutes, proves that in this case the *lower* Manasic reflection (instinct) and *Kāma-rūpa* (animal living passions) are meant. And as Socrates and Plato accepted the clue and followed it, if to these five, namely, *Agathon* (Deity or Ātma), *Psychē* (Soul in its collective sense), *Nous* (Spirit or Mind), *Phrēn* (physical mind), and *Thymos* (*Kāma-rūpa* or passions) we add the *Eidōlon* of the Mysteries, the shadowy *form* or the human double, and the *physical body*, it will be easy to demonstrate that the ideas of both Pythagoras and Plato were identical with ours.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *De clarorum philosophorum vitis*, Bk. VIII, 30

<sup>2</sup> [Note 5 by Boris de Zirkoff, *ibid.*, p. 211] The translation in the Loeb Classical Series does not seem to convey this meaning, however. It runs as follows:

The Soul of man, he says, is divided into three parts, intelligence (*nous*), reason (*phrēn*), and passion (*thymos*). Intelligence and passion are possessed by other animals as well, but reason by man alone. The seat of the soul extends from the heart to the brain; the part of it which is in the heart is passion, while the parts located in the brain are reason and intelligence. The senses are distillations from these.

<sup>3</sup> *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (CHINESE SPIRITS) VII pp. 205-6 *fn.*

<sup>4</sup> *Key to Theosophy*, § VI (THEOSOPHICAL TEACHINGS AS TO NATURE AND MAN) pp. 95-96

## Buddhists, into seven.

The Buddhists, who separate the three entities in man (though viewing them as one when on the path to Nirvāna), yet divide the soul into several parts, and have names for each of these and their functions. Thus confusion is unknown among them. The old Greeks did likewise, holding that *psychē* was *bios*, or physical life, and it was *thymos*, or passionate nature, the animals being accorded but a lower faculty of the soul-instinct. The soul or *psychē* is itself a combination, *consensus* or unity of the *bios*, or physical vitality, the *epithymia* or concupiscible nature, and the *phrēn*, *mens*, or mind. Perhaps the *animus* ought to be included. It is constituted of ethereal substance, which pervades the whole universe, and is derived wholly from the soul of the world — *Anima Mundi* or the Buddhist Svabhāva<sup>1</sup> — which is *not* spirit; though intangible and impalpable, it is yet, by comparison with spirit or pure abstraction — objective matter.<sup>2</sup>

## Theosophists, also into seven.

### Lord Buddha compared man, the great boon and bloom of sentient life, to saptaparna (seven-leaf plant).<sup>3</sup>

By its complex nature, the soul may descend and ally itself so closely to the corporeal nature as to exclude a higher life from exerting any moral influence upon it. On the other hand, it can so closely attach to the *nous* or spirit, as to share its potency, in which case its vehicle, physical man, will appear as a God even during his terrestrial life. Unless such union of soul and spirit does occur, either during this life or after physical death, the individual man is not immortal as an entity. The *psychē* is sooner or later disintegrated. Though the *man* may have gained “the whole world,” he has lost his “soul.” Paul, when teaching the *anastasis*, or continuation of individual spiritual life after death, set forth that there was a physical body which was raised in incorruptible substance. The spiritual body is most assuredly *not* one of the bodies, or visible or tangible *larvae*, which form in circle-rooms, and are so improperly termed “materialized spirits.” When once the *metanoia*, the full developing of spiritual life, has lifted the spiritual body out of the psychical (the disembodied, corruptible astral man, what Colonel Olcott calls “soul”), it becomes, in strict ratio with its progress, more and more an abstraction for the corporeal senses. It can influence, inspire, and even communicate with men subjectively; it can make itself felt, and even, in those rare instances, when the clairvoyant is perfectly pure and perfectly lucid, seen by the inner eye (which is the eye of the purified *psychē* — [spiritual] soul). But how can it ever manifest objectively?<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. “Svabhāva not as a compound element you call spirit-matter, but as the one element for which the English has no name. It is both passive and active, pure *Spirit Essence* in its absoluteness and repose, pure matter in its finite and conditioned state — even as an imponderable gas or that great unknown which science has pleased to call *Force*.” *Mahatma Letter* 11 (65) p. 60; 3<sup>rd</sup> Combined ed.

<sup>2</sup> *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (ON THE VIEWS OF THE THEOSOPHISTS) I pp. 292-93

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, (THE MYSTERY OF BUDDHA) XII p. 304 *fn.*

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, (ON THE VIEWS OF THE THEOSOPHISTS) I p. 293

## Self-moving Man is a spark of the Great Universal Archaeus

	Sanskrit	Greek	English	
7	Atman	Agathon	Good	<p><b>Nous moves Man, and vice versa</b><sup>1</sup></p> <p>The admirable part of everlasting perpetual motion.</p> <p>She is Aletheia-Truth, divine wandering, touching the swift motion and flow of life.</p> <p>He is Justice and self-ruled Ruler of all. Though mixed with nothing, Nous passes through everything enlightening them all.</p> <p>As the wind sweeping over the smooth sea causes ripples (phrix), so the perpetual motion of consciousness ruffles the mind, causes craves for all things new, and obscures inner vision.</p> <p>When enlightened by ethical living, self-restrained mind begins moving against the mainstream upwards and towards its source and salvation.</p> <p>By agitating the soul, unmastered passions make it rage and boil.</p> <p>Unenlightened mind is restless in seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, far more “grievous to suffer and piteous to behold” than his divine counterpart.</p> <p>Energises and propels man to action, and determines the duration of embodied existence.</p> <p>Subtle counterpart of the gross physical body, receiver of vibrations from the brain centres, and reflector of these to the corresponding astral centres where they first appear as sensations.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>Medium of every principle and aspect, living instrument of action on the objective plane, and transmitter of external data to the middle principle where they are perceived as feelings and emotions.</p>
6	Buddhi	Sophia	Wisdom	
5a	Manas ↑	Nous	Ideals	
5b	Manas ↓	Phrēn	Ideality	
4	Kāma	Thymos	Desire	
3	Prāna	Bios	Vitality	
2	Linga S.	Eidōlon	Model Body	
1	Sthūla S.	Sōma	Visible Body	

<sup>1</sup> See “Modifications of Consciousness” in our Major Works.

<sup>2</sup> Sensation in Greek is *αισθησις*, sense-perception, from *αισσω* or rapid motion, shoot, dart, glance as in light.

# Plato on the Occult Constituents of Man

Selections from Fowler H.N. (Tr.) *Plato: Cratylus, Parmenides, Greater Hippias, Lesser Hippias*. Vol. IV (1st ed. 1926). Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, revised 1939 (Loeb Classical Library, Series Editor J. Henderson).

## Agathon is Good {7}

The word αγαθόν (good) is intended to denote the admirable (αγαστόν) in all nature. For since all things are in motion, they possess quickness and slowness; now not all that is swift, but only part of it, is admirable; this name αγαθόν is therefore given to the admirable (αγαστόν) part of the swift (θοοῦ).<sup>1</sup>

## Sophia is Wisdom {6}

### Greeks had two words for Wisdom: Sophia and Phronesis.

Wisdom (φρόνησις) is perception (νόησις) of motion (φορᾶς) and flowing (ροῦ); or it might be understood as benefit (ὄνησις) of motion (φορᾶς); in either case it has to do with motion.<sup>2</sup>

### But Phronesis-Wisdom and Sophrosyne, or self-restraint, differ.

Σωφροσύνη (self-restraint) is σωτηρία (salvation) of φρόνησις (wisdom). Ευφροσύνη (mirth) needs no explanation, for it is clear to anyone that from the motion of the soul in harmony (εὐ) with the universe, it received the name ευφροσύνη, as it rightfully is; but we call it ευφροσύνη.<sup>3</sup>

### When Nous or purified mind is wedded to Sophia-Wisdom, the two are one again.

Certainly σοφία (wisdom) denotes the touching of motion. This word is very obscure and of foreign origin; but we must remember that the poets often say of something which begins to advance εὐθύθη (it rushed). There was a famous Laconian whose name was Σοῦς (Rush), for this is the Laconian word for rapid motion. Now σοφία signifies the touching (επαφή) of this rapid motion, the assumption being that things are in motion.<sup>4</sup>

And ἀλήθεια (truth) is . . . the divine motion of the universe . . . because it is a divine wandering θεία ἀλή. But ψεῦδος (falsehood) is the opposite of motion; for once more that which is held back and forced to be quiet is found fault with, and it is compared to slumberers (εὔουσι).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Cratylus* 412c

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 411d

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, 412a, 419d

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, 412b-c

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 421b

## Nous is Ideals<sup>1</sup> {5a}

### What is Νοησις-Intelligence?

Νοησις (intelligence) is merely ἐσις (desire) τοῦ νέου (of the new); but that things are new shows that they are always being generated; therefore the soul's desire for generation is declared by the giver of the name νεόεσις; for in antiquity the name was not νόησις, but two epsilons had to be spoken instead of the eta.<sup>2</sup>

### Νους-Higher Mind is Δικαιοσύνη-Justice.

One says the sun is justice, for the sun alone superintends all things, passing through and burning (διαϊόντα και καιοντα) them. [Another says is Fire], not actual fire, but heat in the abstract that is in the fire. . . . Anaxagoras says it is, mind [νοῦς]; for mind, he says, is ruled only by itself [αυτοκράτωρ], is mixed with nothing, orders all things, and passes through them.<sup>3</sup>

### How Nous differentiates the three-facet One into Many.

And when Nous began to move things, separating off took place from all that was moved, and so much as Nous set in motion was separated. And as things were set in motion and separated, the revolution caused them to be separated much more.<sup>4</sup>

## Phren is Ideality {5b}

From φριξ (phrix), ruffling of a smooth surface, ripple caused by a gust of wind sweeping over the smooth sea, «υπό φρικὸς Βορέω»;<sup>5</sup> «μελαίνη φρικὴ καλυφθεῖς» of Proteus coming to the surface;<sup>6</sup> «Ζεφύροιο εχεύατο πόντον ἐπι φριξ», ripple spread over the sea from the west wind.<sup>7, 8</sup>

### Theosophists, Buddhists, and Greeks on Man's triune nature.

Theosophists, like the ancient philosophers and their pupil Paul, who said that the physical body was penetrated and kept alive by the périsprit, *Psychē*, consider man as a trinity: body, périsprit, spirit.

The Buddhists, who distinguish these three entities, divide the périsprit still further into several parts. Nevertheless, on the point of approaching perfection — Nirvāna — they hardly admit more than one of these parts: the Spirit.

The Greeks did the same, dividing the périsprit into life and the passionate nature, or *Thymos*. The périsprit is thus itself a combination: the physiological vitality, *Bios*; the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. a range of deeper studies on Nous: "Mind is the Man," "Prometheus, Indian Titan and Hierophant," "Sons of the Fire-Mist," and "The Nous of the Greeks" in our Secret Doctrine's Third Proposition Series; "Burnet on Anaxagoras' ideas and impact" in our Hellenic and Hellenistic Papers Series.

<sup>2</sup> *Cratylus* 411d-e

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 413a-c

<sup>4</sup> Anaxagoras, fr. 13 (tr. Burnet)

<sup>5</sup> *Ilias* 23, 692

<sup>6</sup> *Odyssea* 4, 402

<sup>7</sup> *Ilias* 7, 63

<sup>8</sup> *Liddell & Scott*



concupiscible nature, *Epithymia*; and the ideality, *Phrēn*.<sup>1</sup> . . . Phrēn [is] a Pythagorean term denoting what we call the Kāma-Manas still overshadowed by the Buddhi-Manas.<sup>2</sup>

### Thymos is Desire {4}

Nor is there any difficulty about επιθυμία (desire), for this name was evidently given to the power that goes (ιούσα) into the soul (θυμός). And θυμός has its name from the raging (θύσις) and boiling of the soul.<sup>3</sup>

### Bios is Vitality {3}

**Greeks had two words for life: Zoe<sup>4</sup> and Bios.**

Zōē (ζωή) in the sense of (a) *living, i.e., one's substance, property, etc., (b) life, existence, opp. death, (c) way of life.* Bios (βίος) in the sense of *life, i.e. not animal life (ζωή), but mode of life and manner of living.*<sup>5</sup>

Zōē and Bios are often used interchangeably with additional meanings ascribed to them by different authors. A distinction that students of Occultism may find helpful is Zōē as the “ocean of life,” a self-moving Kosmos embracing all beings;<sup>6</sup> and bios, as individualised, sentient life. To the Vital Self, the 1<sup>st</sup> aspect of Man, HP Blavatsky assigns bios in the sense of zōtikē dynamis (ζωτική δύναμις) or *vis vitalis*, to denote the life-sustaining force, a breath and shadow of the One Life, appropriated by an embodied existence.

### Eidolon is Model Body {2}

Eidōlon (εἰδωλον) is *phantom*,<sup>7</sup> an *image reflected* as in a mirror or in water,<sup>8</sup> *image in the mind, idea*.<sup>9, 10</sup>

**Eidolon is a living mirror through which Eidōs (the Seer) perceives Eidos (the nobility of Himself).**

<i>Eιδώς</i> -Eidōs	Seer or knower, seeing with the mind's eye.
<i>Eιδωλον</i> -Eidōlon	Mental image or reflection.
<i>Eιδος</i> -Eidos	Mental perception, inner knowledge or sight.

<sup>1</sup> Blavatsky *Collected Writings*, (FRAGMENTS) I p. 365

<sup>2</sup> *Theosophical Glossary*: Phrēn

<sup>3</sup> *Cratylus* 419d-e

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, 419e

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Liddell & Scott*

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Timaeus*, 30b

<sup>7</sup> *Ilias* 5, 451; *Odyssea* 4, 796

<sup>8</sup> *Sophista* 266b; Aristides: *de Divinatione per Somnia* 464b, 9

<sup>9</sup> Xenophon: *Symposium* 4, 21

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Liddell & Scott*

An etymologically similar word to Eidōlon is Aδης (Hadēs).<sup>1</sup> Hadēs, the god of the underworld, stands for the death of the suffering Chrēstos' material nature (*i.e.*, euthanasia proper, a noble death<sup>2</sup>) before the latter's rebirth in Spirit-Christos.

Says Plato through Socrates:

The name "Hadēs" is not in the least derived from the invisible (αειδής), but far more probably from knowing (εἰδέναι) all noble things, and for that reason he was called Hadēs by the lawgiver.<sup>3</sup>

### Soma is Physical Body {1}

Some say [that the human body] is the tomb (σῆμα) of the soul, their notion being that the soul is buried in the present life; and again, because by its means the soul gives any signs which it gives, it is for this reason also properly called "sign" (σῆμα). But I think it most likely that the Orphic poets gave this name, with the idea that the soul is undergoing punishment for something; they think it has the body as an enclosure to keep it safe, like a prison, and this is, as the name itself denotes, the safe (σώμα) for the soul, until the penalty is paid, and not even a letter needs to be changed.<sup>4</sup>



"Virgil's mens agitat molem," in our Mystic Verse and Insights Series.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. "Blavatsky on Ritualism in Church and Masonry," *pp.* 18 *et. seq.*. Full text in our Blavatsky Speaks Series.

<sup>2</sup> See *Secret Doctrine*, II p. 531

<sup>3</sup> *Cratylus* 404b

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, 400b-c