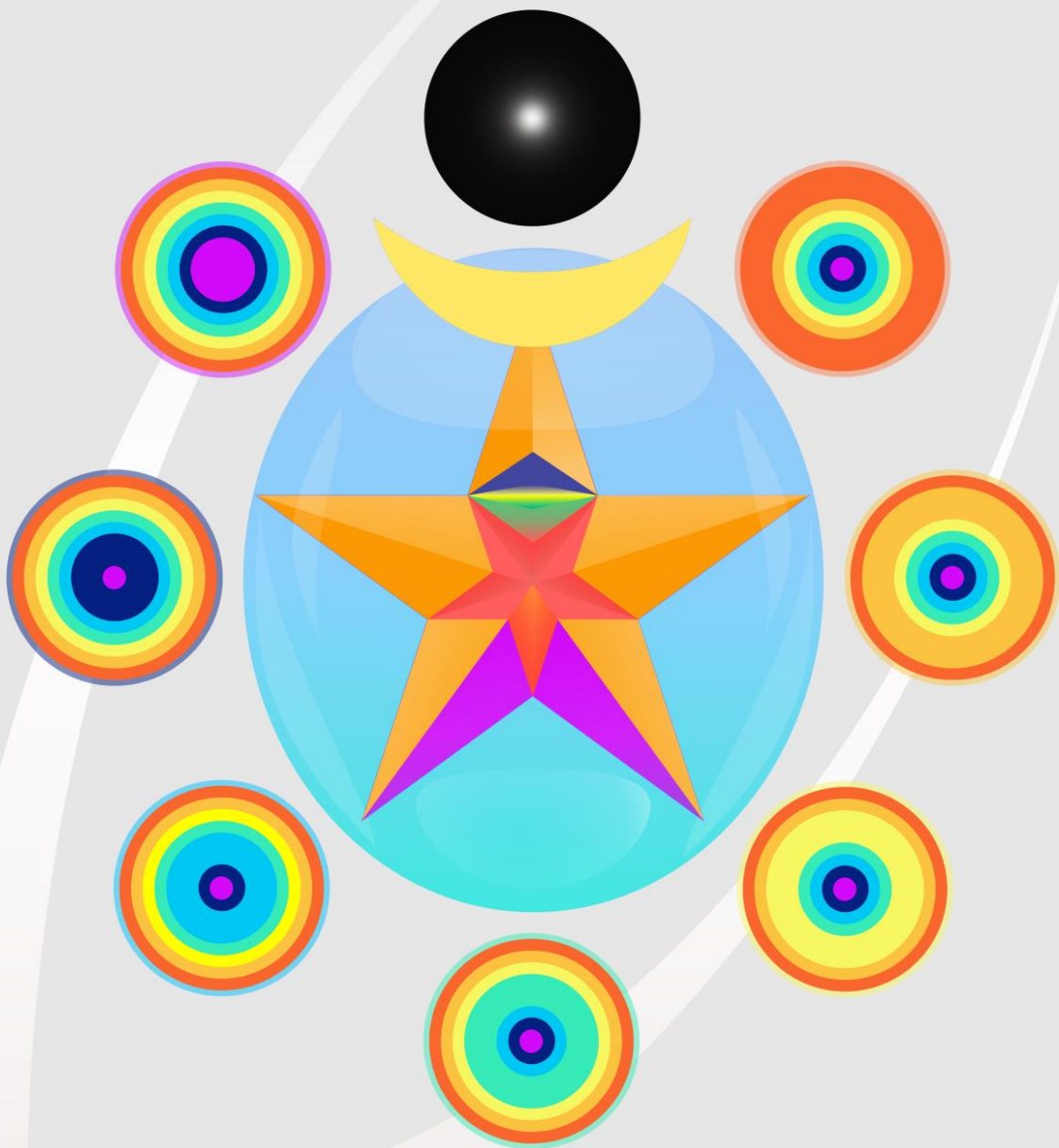


*How vibration brings forth  
sound, form, and colour*



Universal Consciousness is A–U–M or Pranavam, i.e., Spirit–Breath–Sound–Life.

Spirit or Eternal Breath is Motion, and motion animates matter.<sup>1</sup>

Eternal Motion is Svava<sup>2</sup> or Vibration, the substratum of the Pythagorean Music of the Spheres.

And thus by endless combinations, modifications, and individualisations of the Seven Tattvas or Forces of Nature,<sup>3</sup> which in turn produce every sound, form, and colour, the Divine Mind exhibits periodically aspects of itself to the perception of finite minds.

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<sup>1</sup> See “Virgil’s *mens agitat molem*,” in our Mystic Verse and Insights Series. — ED. PHIL.

<sup>2</sup> “Svava being that which is *beyond* spirit, in the modern acceptation of the word — the spirit of the spirit, or as very properly translated, the “current of the life wave,” the emanation of the One Life.” *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. III) XII p. 615

<sup>3</sup> For an esoteric analysis of the Tattvas and their correspondences with the human body, states of matter, and colour, see *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (E.S. INSTRUCTION No. III) XII pp. 605, 614. For an in-depth analysis of the subject matter see *The True Colours of Man*, 2015, the fifth in our Major Works Series. — ED. PHIL.

<sup>4</sup> Title page illustration: Cosmos and Deity in Man by Philaletheians GR.

## Essay 1

### There can be no sound without vibration, for the former is the consequence of the latter.

A two-part essay by C. Kotayya, F.T.S. This part was first published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. XII (2), October 1890, (THE HINDU THEORY OF VIBRATION AS THE PRODUCER OF SOUNDS, FORMS, AND COLOURS) pp. 44-52.

**T**HE ARTICLE on Mrs. Watts Hughes' "Sound-Pictures" in *The Theosophist* for September, has drawn my attention to the philosophy of Vibrations in Nature as treated of in Hindu metaphysics. I propose to write on this subject, firstly, in regard to, its theory, and secondly, in regard to its practice. This necessarily involves a brief exposition of Vedāntism for a clearer understanding of the question at issue.

The theoretical side would dwell upon the general proposition that all phenomena, whether in the form of the cosmos as a whole, or that of its constituents, the twenty-five Tattvas with their properties or attributes of figure, colour, sound, &c., are caused by motion, vibration, or spirit acting on or in conjunction with matter, they (spirit and matter) being designated differently on their different planes, while they themselves are only aspects or facets of Parabrahman (Absolute Consciousness, the One Reality and Stability, and the Unity).

Nada, Svava, and Śabda are the Sanskrit equivalents of sound, while Svava ordinarily means breath. Nada signifies, however, a spiritual sound, but esoterically Śiva (spirit) or Purusha (male principle). In *The Voice of the Silence*,<sup>1</sup> Nada is explained as the "Soundless Voice" or the "Voice of the Silence," which seems to mean a spiritual state of sound, vibration or motion. This inner motion is the noumenal cause of all objectivation, manifestation or phenomena, as Nada, which is Śiva or Purusha, is the cause of the universe. Svava literally means breath, vibration or Prāna (air or life), but metaphysically spirit or abstract motion. Svava signifies also Hamsa (breath), the latter including Nada (Spirit), Bindu (Buddhi) or wisdom, and Kala (matter). In *Nāda-Bindu Upanishad (Rig-Veda)* Hamsa is represented as Kalahamsa, or swan, symbolizing Aum<sup>2</sup> or Om, *au* being pronounced as *o*. Om is an abbreviation of Soham by the elision of *s* in "so" and *ha* in "ham." But Soham is a Mantram (incantation) meaning "That I am," — "so" signifying "That" and "Ham," signifying I am. Reversing the order of the syllables, it becomes Hamso altered into Hamsa, meaning "I am *That*."<sup>3</sup> Nada, Bindu and Kala in Vedāntism are the universal triune principles or the trinity in nature corresponding to Ha-m-sa, the first sound being the technical symbol for the inspiration of breath, the second for the concentration of it, and the third for the expiration of it. I cannot explain the philosophy of Svava or Hamsa better than by quoting from Mr. Rama Prasad's article on *Nature's Finer Forces*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> p. 78

<sup>2</sup> *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 74

<sup>3</sup> [See "Bestride the Bird of Life" in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>4</sup> *The Theosophist*, Vol. IX, p. 275

The *tattvas*, as we have seen, are the modification of *svara*. Regarding *svara* we find in our book:

In the *svara* are the Vedas and the *śāstras*, and in the *svara* is music. All the world is in the *svara*; *svara* is the spirit itself.

The proper translation of the word *svara* is the *current of the life wave*. It is that wavy motion which is the cause of the evolution of cosmic undifferentiated matter into the differentiated universe, and involution of this into the primary state of non-differentiation, and so on, in and out, for ever and ever. From whence does this motion come? This motion is the spirit itself. The word *ātma* used in the book, itself carries the idea of eternal motion, coming it does from the root *at* eternal motion; and, it may be significantly remarked, that the root *at* is connected with, is in fact simply another form of the roots *ah* breath, and *as* being. All these roots have for their origin the sound produced by the breath of animals. In the book under consideration, the technical symbol for inspiration is *ha* and for expiration *sa*. It is easy to see how these symbols are connected with the roots *as* and *ah*. The current of the life-wave spoken of above is technically called *Hamsa-chara*, that is the motion of *ha* and *sa*.

This primeval current of the life-wave is then the same which assumes in man the form of the inspiratory and expiratory motion of the lungs, and this is the all-pervading source of the evolution and involution of the universe.

[The book goes on:]

It is the *svara* that has given form to the *first accumulations of the divisions* of the universe; the *svara* causes evolution and involution; the *svara* is God himself, or more properly the *Great Power (Maheśvara)*. The *svara* is the manifestation of the impression on matter of that power which in man is known to us as the power which knows itself. It is to be understood that the motion of this power never ceases. It is ever at work, and evolution and involution are the very necessity of its unchangeable existence.

It is sufficiently clear from the above passage that the evolution and the involution of the cosmos are the result of motion or vibration, considered as the spirit pervading throughout nature.

The said motion and matter are respectively designated:

- Īśvara (Logos) and Māyā (Illusion) on the cosmic plane, and
- Jīva (soul) and Avidyā (nescience) on the microcosmic plane, and
- Vikshēpaśakti and Avaranaśakti on the plane of gross matter.

The following table shows the triune principles in Nature corresponding to Nada, Bindu and Kala,<sup>1</sup> referred to already:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Kaivalya Navaneetham* by C. Venkatrama Sastrulu, pp. 35-36

<sup>2</sup> [Cf. *Compassion: the Spirit of Truth*, 2009, the first in our Major Works Series, Appendix H on AUM, pp. 365-67. — ED. PHIL.]

<b>Nada (sound)</b>	<b>Bindu (cypher)</b>	<b>Kala (form)</b>
Ha (germ of Śiva or spirit)	M	Sa (germ of Śakti or matter)
Jñānam (wisdom)	Conjunction	Ajñānam (ignorance)
Pathi (Lord)	Pāśa (bridle)	Pasu (animal)
Purusha (male principle)	Puthra (son)	Stri (female principle)
Seed	Conjunction	Blood
Agni (fire)	Moksha (Nirvana)	Soma (Moon)
Thath ( <i>that</i> , or the higher self)	Asi (conjunction)	Thwam (you, or the lower self)
Īśvara (Logos)	Union	Jīva (soul or ego)

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**Vibration is caused by the difference in the density of material particles, the solid being moved by the liquid, and the liquid by the gaseous.**

There can be no Śabda (sound) without vibration or motion, the former being the consequence of the latter.

On the physical plane we see that forms of matter are produced by the combination, variation and permutation of its particles, whether solid, liquid or gaseous. As the above functions imply motion or vibration, there can be no formation or form without movement. Motion is caused by the difference in the density of material particles, the solid being moved by the liquid and the liquid by the gaseous. It is therefore laid down as a general proposition in physics that a gross or dense substance is moved, in, by, or through a subtle one. The modern physical science applies this law only to physical matter, called Mahābhūta (gross matter), going only up to ether, and ignores all matter beyond it on the ground of its incognizability by physical instruments. But Eastern philosophy goes far beyond it, not sentimentally or imaginatively, but by actual Yogic vision, and laughs at the boundary laid down between the Unknowable and the Knowable by the modern science. In that vision all is matter or spirit, only varying by the law of differentiation; the former being an aggregation of the latter, in consequence of which the former is grosser than the latter. Spirit and matter are, therefore, to be understood as only relatively different and not absolutely.<sup>1</sup>

Absolutely they are one and the same, call it what you may. This oneness is styled in Hindu metaphysics:

Nirgunabrahmā (essence without attributes),  
Nishkala (formless),  
Nishprapancha (worldless),  
Nirmala (perfectly pure),  
Nirvikāra (unmodified),  
Niralamba (independent),  
Nitya (eternal),

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<sup>1</sup> [Spirit and Matter are the two poles of one Eternal Element; they are interdependent, and mutually convertible. — ED. PHIL.]

Buthha (absolutely conscious),  
Kevala (the absolute),<sup>1</sup>  
Akhanda (indivisible),  
Advaitiya (non-dual),  
Adyanthavina (without beginning or end),  
Parathpara (the ultimate of the ultimate),  
Aparōksha (within oneself),  
Swayamjyothi (self-illuminated),  
Sarvaviapaka (all pervading), and  
Nirathisayānantha (boundlessly joyful).

This is the state of Nirvana, Kaivalya Paramapada and Moksha.<sup>2</sup>

N.B. I have thought it proper to describe the Absolute state in so many terms to dis-abuse the reader of the impression that the above state is one of annihilation or darkness.<sup>3</sup>

① The union of spirit and matter which are respectively positive and negative, or plus and minus, produces the Absolute Stability, which, in the conception of the intellect, is naught. This is the idea conveyed in regard to the triune principles tabulated above. The conjunction of Nada with Kala produces Bindu (cypher, the Absolute), which means that spirit and matter exist only relatively and never when they are synthesized in the Advaita (the non-dual) as explained in the foregoing paragraph. This is the idea underlying the Vedāntism of the Advaitīs. Some Pandits, however, interpret that the union of Nada and Kala produce the Son, called the manifested universe.

② Another inference to be drawn from the “Nadabindu” table is that Nada (sound or vibration, whether physical or spiritual) is the cause of Kala (form or manifested world), thereby going to support the proposition that sound produces form. Kala also means ray or light. Prakriti is nothing but the radiation of the spiritual sun Śiva. As the rays evolve from the Sun, so does the universe emanate from Parabrahman, of whom Śiva (spirit) is one aspect.

③ A third inference to be drawn is from “Hamsa.” “Ha,” the sound of inspiration, and “Sa,” that of expiration, are the significant symbols of involution and evolution of the universe, while a “M,” the mute sound, represents the Absolute Consciousness or Unconsciousness, the result of the union or synthesis of involution and evolution.

To use a metaphor [from the Secret Books], which will convey the idea still more clearly, an out-breathing of the “unknown essence” produces the world; and an inhalation causes it to disappear. *This process has been going on from all eternity, and our present universe is but one of an infinite series, which had no beginning and will have no end.*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [Absoluteness]

<sup>2</sup> *op. cit.*, Pranava Table

<sup>3</sup> [Consult Diagram and Notes, in the same series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>4</sup> *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 4; [quoting *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 265]

### **Air, breath, life, sound, and form are interconnected.**

④ The following is the fourth inference. It has already been shown how “Om” is derived from “Hamsa” The former is Vedantically styled the Sūkshma Pranavam, and the latter the Sthūla Pranavam, meaning respectively subtle and gross sounds, the latter being the vehicle of the former. Om represents the unmanifested Logos and Hamsa the manifested, relatively. The word Pranavam is derived from Prāna (air, life or breath) and means a sound. This simply shows the connection there is between air, breath, life, sound and form: The potencies of “Om” will be dwelt upon further on.

When Purusha and Prakriti are evolved from their ideal, latent or potential state, they exhibit themselves as the manifested universe analogous to the evolution of a tree from its seed, a bird from its egg, or an animal from its ovary, in accordance with what is called Bijankura Nyaya (argument on the seed principle). As day and night succeed one another, the evolution and involution of the universe go on in endless succession in the boundless Batta Bayalu (open space) in consonance with “the law of periodicity, of flux and reflux, ebb and flow, which physical science has observed and recorded in all departments of nature.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Divine spirit animates inert mass.**

As motion (spirit) and non-motion (matter) must be of something common to both the principles, that something is no other than

Parabrahman (the one Reality, the Absolute), which is the field of Absolute Consciousness, *i.e.*, that essence which is out of all relation to conditioned existence, and of which conscious existence is a conditioned symbol. But once that we pass in thought from this (to us) Absolute Negation, duality supervenes in the contract of Spirit (or consciousness) and Matter, Subject and Object.<sup>2</sup>

Chit (consciousness) latent in the germ of the Mundane Egg, having been passive, while in the germinal or potential state, begins to move in or act on Prakriti (the primordial substance), that has been co-existing with it in that state. The result of this action is the gradual evolution of the universe. According to the Hindu philosophy Prakriti is of three gunas (degrees, planes, attributes, or qualities), named Sattva (subtle or essential), Rājās (motive or active), and Tamas (gross). When Chit is reflected in them, it becomes Īśvara, (Logos, Universal Consciousness, Intelligence or Soul), Jīva (Ego, Individual Consciousness, or Soul), and Vikshēpaśakti (manifesting or evolutionary force) respectively. The planes of matter are then designated Vidyā Māyā, Avidyā Māyā, and Avaranaśakti, meaning knowing illusion, nescient illusion, and involuting or enveloping matter, respectively. Parabrahman or Chit reflected in each plane<sup>3</sup> of matter acts as the instrumental, and the vehicle itself as the material cause in the evolution of the cosmos. Having given a general idea of the process of the evolution of the universe, I shall now dwell more particularly on the principle of Vikshēpaśakti, with which the question of the phenomena of forms, sounds and col-

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<sup>1</sup> *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 17

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 15

<sup>3</sup> It should be born in mind that the terminology used in Hindu Philosophy has generally a relative signification with reference to the planes spoken of.

ours on the astral and physical planes is more concerned, though indirectly or secondarily.

**Cosmic mind is the prime mover of everything in the manifested universe. Physical forces are only secondary effects, guided by spiritual forces.**

The Vikshepaśakti is an evolutionary or positive force produced by the reflection of Parabrahman on the plane of Avaranaśakti (enveloping matter) as already explained. It is the former acting on the latter that produces all the phenomena on the Sthūla (gross) and Sūkshma (subtle) planes of cosmic and microcosmic matter.<sup>1</sup> Avaranaśakti being involutory and negative, must necessarily, when operated upon by Vikshepaśakti, produce a vibratory or wavy motion, technically called Svara or Hamsa (breath). This breath emanates from the “Great Breath,” which is only an aspect of the Sat or the One Reality, the other being Abstract Space. *The Secret Doctrine* speaking of the former, says:

On the other [hand], Absolute Abstract Motion, representing Unconditioned Consciousness. Even our Western thinkers have shown that Consciousness is inconceivable to us apart from change, and motion best symbolizes change, its essential characteristic. This latter aspect of the one Reality, is also symbolized by the term “Great Breath,” a symbol sufficiently graphic to need no further education. Thus, then, the first fundamental axiom of the Secret Doctrine is this metaphysical ONE ABSOLUTE-BE-NESS symbolized by finite intelligence as the theological Trinity.<sup>2</sup>

It will be seen from the above that abstract consciousness or motion means the one and the same thing, and that motion is characterized by change — phenomenon or form. Svara is but a differentiation of the above said Absolute Abstract Motion, representing Unconditioned Consciousness. It is also the view of the Vedāntic philosophy that Manas (mind) and Mārutham (motion or breath) are parallel in the relation of subject and object. The truth of this proposition is seen in our own life. We cannot live or breathe after the departure of consciousness or soul from the body, but while we do live the temporary cessation of breath by Yoga or Kumbhaka leads to the stoppage of intellectual operations and *vice versa*. As breath is a consequence or objective form of consciousness thrown out at its will, the cause, *i.e.*, consciousness exists for ever though life may cease. The Sthūla Śarīra is the gross body caused by the action of Prāna on gross matter, while Prāna itself emanates from consciousness. The blind mechanical forces of nature are believed by the modern scientists to be the sole and supreme powers controlling all nature. This is the result of their obstinately ignoring the existence of the higher powers and forces evolving the objective world. It is said that even a blade of grass cannot move without the command of God. Does it mean any other than that the cosmic mind is the mover of everything in the universe? The mechanical forces are only secondary ones guided by psychic or spiritual forces.<sup>3</sup> An ignorance of the latter does not militate against their existence or their

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<sup>1</sup> *Kaivalya Navaneetham*, by C. Venkatrama Sastrulu, p. 130

<sup>2</sup> *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. I, p. 14; [see Diagram and Notes in our Secret Doctrine's Third Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>3</sup> [Cf. “Blavatsky on the Dual Aspect of Wisdom” in our Constitution of Man Series. — ED. PHIL.]



operation. Whether they are recognized or not, the Universe still goes on under their operation. I say this to show that in Mrs. Watts Hughes' "Sound Pictures,"<sup>1</sup> though apparently a result of musical notes sung into the eidophone, there as a world of forces acting behind the veil of physical matter as thought herself and confirmed by Colonel Olcott. According to our philosophy the five Tattvas, or principles, called Ākāśa (ether), Vāyu (air), Agni (light and heat), Āpas (water) and Prithivī (earth), are only different forms of Svara (vibration), which produce the phenomenal world on the Sūkshma and Sthūla planes of matter. Svara emanates from Vikshepaśakti, and Vikshepaśakti is a reflection of Chit in Tamas (gross) plane of matter, as already said. Hence the whole manifested Universe emanates from the Absolute Chit, or Para-brahman.

When the process of evolution began, this Svara, this great power, threw itself into the form of Ākāśa, and thence respectively one after the other into the form of Vāyu (air), Agni (fire), Āpas (water) and Prithivī (earth). It does the same when it enters the involutory process.<sup>2</sup>

The following, from the *Globe* of July 28<sup>th</sup>, 1890, was copied in *Lucifer* for August:

Théophile Gautier,<sup>3</sup> describing the effects of hashish, wrote,

My hearing was prodigiously clear. I could distinguish the colour of sound. Green, red, yellow and blue sounds reached me in perfectly distinct undulations.<sup>4</sup>

Gautier was a poet, and those words of his may have appeared to many as the result of an overwrought imagination. He was, however, labouring under no delusion, coloured sound is by no means a metaphor. It is according, to certain German *savants*, an absolutely true physiological fact. The proportion of persons, they say, having the faculty of colouring sound is 10 per cent. — which seems to us to be an exaggerated number and herein consists the phenome-

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<sup>1</sup> [Megan [Margaret] Watts Hughes, 1842–1907, Welsh singer, songwriter, scientist and philanthropist. Her name appears as Margaret, of which the Welsh name Megan is derived, in several publications. She was the first to experiment with and observe the phenomenon of visualizing resonating sound using a device she invented called Eidophone. The device naturally-produced geometric patterns from the resonance of her human voice. As a result, she referred to images as "Voice-Figures." Her work culminated in a monograph titled *The Eidophone; Voice Figures: Geometrical and Natural Forms Produced by Vibrations of the Human Voice*, 1904.]

<sup>2</sup> *Nature's Finer Forces*, by Mr. Rama Prasad, *The Theosophist*, Vol. IX, p. 276

<sup>3</sup> [Pierre Jules Théophile Gautier, 1811–1872, French poet, dramatist, novelist, journalist, and art and literary critic. While an ardent defender of Romanticism, Gautier's work is difficult to classify and remains a point of reference for many subsequent literary traditions such as Parnassianism, Symbolism, Decadence and Modernism. He was widely esteemed by writers as disparate as Balzac, Baudelaire, the Goncourt brothers, Flaubert, Pound, Eliot, James, Proust and Wilde.]

<sup>4</sup> [Cf. Théophile Gautier's "Fumée":  
Là-bas, sous les arbres s'abrite  
Une chaumière au dos bossu ;  
Le toit penche, le mur s'effrite,  
Le seuil de la porte est moussu.  
  
La fenêtre, un volet la bouche ;  
Mais du taudis, comme au temps froid  
La tiède haleine d'une bouche,  
La respiration se voit.  
  
Un tire-bouchon de fumée,  
Tournant son mince filet bleu,  
De l'âme en ce bouge enfermée  
Porte des nouvelles à Dieu.]

non. For all who possess that faculty every auditory sensation, noise, spoken word, or melody, is represented by a distinct colour. An indefinite sound produces only an ill-defined, grey, sombre image, as in the instance of a cannon, which fired from afar causes only an unsatisfied sensation, devoid of colour; but when the report is sharp, clear and near, the colour evolved becomes distinct.

### Colours of the human voice.

According to Dr. Baratoux,<sup>1</sup> speech is represented by a uniform colour, for each person having the faculty of colouring sound, blue being the prevailing one, and then yellow and red-green voices are scarce. The voice of a young girl conveys the impression of an azure blue, and that of a grown woman is of a violet tint. The speech of a woman with masculine voice produces a sensation akin in colour to indigo. The tenor's voice is light chestnut, the baritone's is dark blue, and the basso's is quite black. The soprano's is bright red, and the contralto's is dark chestnut. As a rule, low deep voices have a dark colouring than clear sharp voices. These are usually pale blue, while medium ordinary voices are yellow tinted. The colour evolved by vowels is not uniformly the same. According to some German *savants* the *a* is black, the *i* is red, and the *o* is white. Others say that the *e* is yellow, and that the *u* is either blue or green, according to circumstances of pronunciation.

### Colours of musical instruments.

Musical instruments produce coloured sensations of a particular kind. The sound of brass instruments is red: that of the clarinet is yellow; that of the violin and piano is blue; and that of the big drum is dark brown. The colour evolved by the notes of the gamut played on any instrument is proportionately brilliant or dull, according to the more or less high or low tones produced. In singing, the colour evolved depends occasionally on the particular vowel used, as in *do*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*, *si*; and it is said that a distinguished contralto always realised an azure-blue from *do*, a rose-colour from *re*, a bright yellow from *mi*, a deep blue from *fa*, a red from *sol*, a violet from *la*, and a coffee-brown from *si*.

It is assumed that the colour evolved by the sight and sound of figures would enable certain persons to solve arithmetical problems by a combination of colours. It would be scarcely safe to entrust one's accounts to calculators of that kind. A specimen of the genus admits that zero conveys no distinct colour to his mind, and that 2 to 2,000 produces in him the self-same luminous coloured sensation. The figure 1 suggests a black colour, 2 a pearl-grey, 3 a yellow, 4 a decided grey, 5 a deep chocolate, 6 a pink, 7 a blue, 8 a red, and 9 a white.

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<sup>1</sup> [Dr. Jean Baratoux, 1855-1956, Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur. Cf. *De l'Audition Colorée*. Paris: Impr. Chaix, 1888]

### Colours of languages.

There are other peculiarities in connexion with the theory of colour in sound still more singular than the foregoing. For example, it is contended that every language can be characterized by a combination of colours pertinent to itself. French is silver-grey, English is dark-grey, and German is mouse-grey. Languages spoken in the south of Europe are of brighter colours. Spanish is a mixture of carmine and yellow, with coruscating tints and a metallic sparkle, whatever that may be, and Italian is a mixture of yellow carmine and black, with soft tints of other colours to harmonize. Another believer in this theory assimilates Christian names to colours. John suggests a pale red, Joseph a dark blue, Louise a pale blue, Lucy suggests a yellow, and Marius and all names ending in *-us*, a green.

Now, how shall we explain these phenomena? It is certain there is a close relationship between the senses which admits of their exercising an influence over each other. Colour-hearing is evidently the result of a special condition of sensuous excitability. It should not, however, be considered a morbid symptom, although it may be considered as closely akin to psychical irregularity. A case is cited of a person on whom the sound of the letter *o* produced at one and the same time a sensation of suffocating heat, and of fear as of being thrown down a precipice. However it may be, there is no doubt that science justifies, up to a certain point, one of the pretensions of the school of impressionists; which maintains the association, under certain physical conditions, of sounds with light and colour. But these too suggestive impressionists should bear in mind that those coloured sounds are really exceptional effects, which the majority of people certainly fail to notice.

*Lucifer* thereupon remarks:

The above facts corroborate the experiments of Mr. Francis Galton,<sup>1</sup> who, however, carried his observations upon the interchangeability of the senses a stage further. For in his *Inquiry into Human Faculty*, he gives a number of cases in which individuals associated not only sounds, but also *numbers* and *geometrical* forms with definite and invariable shades of colour. Such observations are of interest from the Theosophical standpoint, as confirming the teaching concerning the senses, given by Madame Blavatsky in the *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge*, Part I, pp. 37 and 38. They go even farther and distinctly suggest the real existence of a “sixth sense,” which is the root of our present five, and which unites and synthesizes them all in one.<sup>2</sup> For to this sixth sense the deliv-

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<sup>1</sup> [Sir Francis Galton, FRS, 1822–1911) English statistician, polymath, sociologist, psychologist, anthropologist, eugenicist, tropical explorer, geographer, inventor, meteorologist, proto-geneticist, and psychometrician. He was knighted in 1909.

Cf. “Besides Galton’s interesting chapter upon this subject, in his *Inquiries into human faculty and its development* [New York: Macmillan & Co., 1883], we find in the *London Medical Record* a sensitive describing his impressions in this wise:

As soon as I *hear* the sounds of a guitar, I *see* vibrating chords, surrounded by coloured vapours.

The piano produces the same: “coloured images begin to float over the keys.” — *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (OCCULT OR EXACT SCIENCE?) VII p. 64.]

<sup>2</sup> [Cf. “Sixth Sense is Reason over Instinct” in our Constitution of Man Series. — ED. PHIL.]

erances of the lower five would naturally be interchangeable, and its own deliverances would, of course, tend to translate themselves into terms of one or more of the lower five.

In Vedāntic writings we are told that Śabda (sound), Sparśa (touch), Rūpa (form), Rasa (taste), and Gandha (smell) are differentiations of one and the same force, viz., Svara; the modifications being due to the difference of matter or vehicle through which it acts. This will be illustrated in the second section of my essay.



## Essay 2

*From The Theosophist, Vol. XII (2), November 1890, pp. 88-91.*

**S**O ECONOMIZE SPACE I will proceed to tabulate the five Tattvas showing their corresponding attributes, properties, &c., in man and universe. Each of them is sub-divided into five sub-principles, making twenty-five on the whole, each of which has its own peculiar properties. It is these twenty-five forces that are the material causes of the astral<sup>1</sup> and physical worlds, corresponding to the Sūkshma (subtle) and Sthūla (gross) planes of matter. The following is the Table [on the Tattvas: their sounds, forms, and colours]: →

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<sup>1</sup> Only nineteen of the twenty-five Tattvas operate on the Sūkshma plane.

## Table of Tattvas showing their sounds, forms, and colours.

Compiled from *The Science of Breath*, by Pandit Ramaprasad Kāśyapa, and *Kaivalya Navaneetham*, by Pandit C. Venkatrama Sastrulu.

Tattva <sup>1</sup>	Range of Svara from the nose	Figure or form <sup>2</sup>	Colour	Sound	Syllable	Taste	Force	Tendency of motion	Property	Power	Action	Cosmic principle	Quality
Akasha (Ether)	None	Ear	Dark	Absolute sound	Ya	Bitter	Pervasion	Transverse	Sound	Supreme	Reconstruction	Sadushiva	Perfect tranquillity
Vayu (Air)	8 fingers <sup>3</sup>	Sphere	Green	Jalajala	Va	Acid	Motion	Oblique	Tangibility	Primordial	Envelopment	Maheshwara	Peace
Tejas (Light and Heat)	4 fingers	Triangle	Red	Bajaba ja	Si	Hot	Expansion	Upwards	Form (Rupa)	Active	Destruction	Rudra	Enlightenment
Apas (Water)	16 fingers	Semicircle	White	Budabuda	Ma	Astringent	Contraction	Downwards	Taste	Knowing	Preservation	Vishnu	Compassion
Prithivi (Earth)	12 fingers	Quadrilateral	Yellow	Katakata	Na	Sweet	Solidity	Steadiness	Smell	Creative	Formation	Brahma	Desire

<sup>1</sup> [*Air* is a symbol of soul, according to which soul is also called a spirit (πνευμα); just as *Fire* is an image of intellect. But *Water* stands for nature, by which the world is nourished, and through which all nutriment and increase are produced. *Earth* is the image of body, through its gross and material nature. Cf. "Plotinus on the Dual Aphrodite" in our Mystic Verse and Insights Series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>2</sup> These figures hold good on the plane of human existence alone. — Vide note to *Nature's Finer Forces*, by Pandit Rama Prasad, *The Theosophist*, Vol. IX, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> Measured horizontally.

When in the course of evolution atoms first appeared on the scene, they were called Sūkshmati Sūkshma Pañcha Bhūtas (the subtilest of the subtile five elements). Then they enlarged according to the three degrees of Prakriti (matter),

Firstly, as Sattva (finest) atoms of the five simple elements;

Secondly, as Rāja (of the size of a particle of dust) atoms of the said elements;

Thirdly, as Tamas (gross) atoms of the same elements of the size of a grain of sand; and

Fourthly, as Mahābhūtas (compound gross atoms of the five Tattvas).

These graded elements have become the subtle or gross bodies or vehicles of the Egos, Logoi, and all the Devas (gods).<sup>1</sup>

All the elements of chemistry are given form to by Prāna (breath or life). An atom is a group of the five classes of Tattvic minima. A minimum is the least possible quantity of a Mahābhūta that can exist in composition. Prāna is the result of the composition of the five Tattvas held in check by and round the sun.<sup>2</sup>

It is sufficient here to say that the twenty-five Tattvas are the members of the body of Jñāna (Anima Mundi or Universal Soul), who is the Architect of the Universe.<sup>3</sup> This Builder is the Pranava or Om, whose origin from "Soham" has already been explained. This Pranava composed of A-U-M, and Arthamāthrika, is a power in the organization of the Cosmos. Each of the said component parts is sub-divided into four powers, giving a total of sixteen. At the head of these sixteen is Parabrahman or Paramaśiva. If the function of these sixteen powers or forces are understood, the theory of the whole cosmos may be said to be mastered.<sup>4</sup> Man being a miniature of the great Architect referred to, the whole cosmos is said to be focussed in him. It is logical, therefore, to infer that man by development may attain to the position of the Logos. What is required for the accomplishment of this end is the perfect study of, and control over, the principles referred to. When he does so he becomes Īśvara (Supreme Power). Psychic powers<sup>5</sup> could, therefore, be acquired only by assimilating with the Logos, *i.e.*, by the exercise of Universal Love, Compassion or Brotherhood.

The Logos is reflected not only in man as said above, but in everything, from an atom to a solar system, as conveyed in the sayings *Pipeelikādibrahmapariantam* (from an

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<sup>1</sup> *Kaivalya Navaneetham*, by Pandit C. Venkatrama Sastrulu, p. 131

<sup>2</sup> *Nature's Finer Forces*, by Mr. Rama Prasad, *The Theosophist*, Vol. IX, p. 478

<sup>3</sup> [The Planetary Builders are our own deities, reflecting and acting upon the ideations they find planned for them within the Universal Consciousness, who is the real Great Architect of the Universe. See "The Masque of Love" in the eponymous series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>4</sup> [Note to Students: consult Bhagavan Das, *The Science of the Sacred Word, being a summarised translation of the Pranava-Vada of Gargyayana*. Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1910-13 [3 Vols.]: Vol. I, 1910; Vol. II, 1911; Vol. III, 1913. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>5</sup> [Note to Students: Beware of the two kinds of psychic powers: "The Pali word *Iddhi*, is the synonym of the Sanskrit *Siddhis*, or psychic faculties, the abnormal powers in man. There are two kinds of *Siddhis*. One group which embraces the lower, coarse, psychic and mental energies; the other is one which exacts the highest training of Spiritual powers. Says Krishna in *Shrimad-Bhāgavat*:

He who is engaged in the performance of yoga, who has subdued his senses and who has concentrated his mind in me (Krishna), such yogis all the Siddhis stand ready to serve."

*The Voice of the Silence*, frag. I, note 1 to vs. 1, p. 73. — ED. PHIL.]

ant unto Brahma) and *Anurōraneean mahathōmaheeyān nikhīlasya janthō*, meaning that Brahma is in all beings, like an atom in an atom and the greatest of the great.<sup>1</sup>

It will be seen in the table given above that each Tattva has its corresponding form, colour, sound, syllable, motion, force, action, cosmic principle, &c. These are the phenomena of that Tattva by which it could be distinguished from the other principles. The action of each Tattva produces its own peculiar phenomena of the kind noted in the table above.

This table gives us a general idea of the causation of phenomena.

**The four states of matter correspond to the four states of consciousness.**

It has already been told that the twenty-five sub-Tattvas referred to above form the Universe by their combination, variation, and permutation.

- 1 This manifested Universe is Vedantically designated the Sthūla Śārīra (gross body) of Virāj Vaiśvānara on the cosmic plane, and of Viśva Jīva on the human plane. This is the Jāgrat or the wakeful state of both of them.
- 2 Analogous to nineteen of the said twenty-five gross forces, there are nineteen subtle forces, which constitute the Sūkshma (subtle) world or body of Hiran-yagarbha (golden matrix) and Tajjasa (transparent),<sup>2</sup> which are the dreamy states of consciousness of the Logos and Man respectively.
- 3 There is the Kārana (causal) body of Avyakta (the formless being) on the universal plane and Prajñā (the enlightened soul) on the human plane in the Su-shupti or pralaya state.
- 4 There is the Mahākārana Dēha (ultimate causal plane of matter) of Paramātma (supreme spirit) on the universal plane and of Kutastha (common soul) on the human plane in the state of Turiya (undifferentiated Sat).

Thus there are four separate states of matter corresponding to the four states of consciousness of the Logos or Man. These four planes correspond to the four sounds synthesized in Pranava or Om, which are a, u, m, and Arthamāthrika (half sound). Each of these planes or states are sub-divided into four planes, making sixteen altogether. There are thus sixteen states of matter and consciousness, the highest being the Mahākārana of Mahākārana and Turiya of Turiya respectively, both being the aspects of the Kēvala (absolute) state of Parabrahman.<sup>3</sup>

Thus we see that the whole universe is identical with the sound (Om). The said sound and Hamsa are closely allied to each other, the former being the essence of the latter, as has already been shown philologically. They are so to say the spiritual and material aspects of Parabrahman (the one reality). Pranava (by which word Om is called) is derived from Prāna (air, vibration, breath, spirit or life), just as the term spirit is derived from *spiro*, to breathe. Hence Pranava is spirit. The plane of life ema-

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<sup>1</sup> [For in-depth analysis, consult "Adventures and Peregrinations of the Metaphysical Atom," in our Secret Doctrine's Third Proposition Series. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>2</sup> [Luminous]

<sup>3</sup> Telugu *Kaivalya Navaneetham*, by Pandit C. Venkatrama Sastrulu, Brahma-pranava Chakra.

nates from the plane of consciousness, the former being incapable of existence in the absence of the latter. The former is latent in the latter. Hence Pranava or Spirit is consciousness from which Prāna (breath or life) emanates. So Pranava is regarded as Brahmā (principle of formation), Hari (principle of preservation) and Śiva (principle of destruction or reconstruction), as is meant in the Sanskrit śloka stating the above proposition, which I need not quote here. Though Prāna is the secondary cause of the three powers referred to, Pranava is the primary one, the former being latent in the latter as stated above.

The four sounds of composing Pranava are geometrically characterized in the forms or figures of a star, a pole, a semi-circle and a point; corresponding to the four planes of matter during the four states of consciousness. It has already been shown in the table given above that the five Tattvas have their five syllables or notes. These are the five forces or vibrations that produce the figures or forms noted in the said table, which the syllables composing Hamsa correspond to the universal triune forces. It is evident therefore that the theory of forms, figures or pictures produced by vibration of sound pervades through the whole system of Hindu philosophy.

I have just given the fundamental forces evolving the Visible Universe from the Invisible Logos, which is the Word or the Idea latent in the Absolute or Parabrahman. It could be shown from Mantra Śāstra or Hindu magic that Śabdabrahmā (the power of sound) which in Sagunabrahmā (material universe) is the source or cause of the world of phenomena or forms, the neutral Brahma being soundless or formless according to the aphorism: Nissabdō Brahmaēcha (Brahma is called the soundless). The visible universe is Nāma, Rūpa, Kriya, Prāpanchika (world of forms, sounds, and emotions or vibrations), *i.e.*, these three are the correlative forces of the manifested universe or the phenomenal Trimūrti (trinity). That none of them could exist without the other is an axiom of Hindu philosophy. Hence the axiom itself is taken as the designations of the objective universe.

C. KOTAYYA, F.T.S.

Adyar, 7<sup>th</sup> October 1890







- “Adventures and Peregrinations of the Metaphysical Atom,” in our Secret Doctrine’s Third Proposition Series.
- Bhagavan Das, *The Science of the Sacred Word*, being a summarised translation of the Pranava-Vada of Gargyayana. Adyar: Theosophical Publishing House, 1910-13 (3 Vols.): Vol. I, 1910; Vol. II, 1911; Vol. III, 1913.
- “Blavatsky on Occult Vibrations,” in our Blavatsky Speaks Series.
- Hieronymus von Mansfeld, *The True Colours of Man*, 2015, the fifth of our Major Works.
- “The atoms of Science are the vibrations of Occultism,” in the same series.

