



Theosophical Society Point Loma - Blavatskyhouse

Literature, supporting the study (on Sunday, January **29**, 2023)
of the lecture of Johanna Vermeulen (on Sunday, January **22**, 2023)

Series: **Dealing with turbulences in your life**
Lecture: **Stoic philosophy on peace of mind**

Gottfried de Purucker on the teachings of the Stoics

All books mentioned in this document can be downloaded from our website
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TO PREPARE THE STUDY MEETING, PLEASE DO NOT STUDY AND READ ALL 24 PAGES OF THIS DOCUMENT. JUST SELECT THE TEXTS THAT INSPIRE YOU, AND SHARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS, INSIGHTS AND OWN LIFE-EXPERIENCE WITH THE OTHER STUDENTS.

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THEME 0: STOICISM IN GENERAL**THE DIALOGUES OF G. DE PURUCKER, Vol. 1, p. 177-78***The Esoteric Becomes Exoteric*

A great number of what we now call our exoteric Theosophical doctrines were in the times of Greece and Rome parts of the teachings of the Mysteries. H.P.B. herself alludes to this fact. Portions of these then secret, and now published, doctrines leaked out, seeped out into the outer world, and were seized upon by intuitive minds and developed into the different systems of philosophy, as in the Stoic philosophy for instance. Of course, I can see very clearly that the time will probably come when what we now call esoteric we shall publish broadcast, because the time will have come to do so. But that does not mean, if you please Companions, that any one of you is entitled to break his oath of secrecy. It is not for me to say when. It is for Those who know more than any one of us here. But I can feel that it is coming. Then still deeper teachings will be given to us, replacing those which have been broadcast into the outer world.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 366

You remember that the ancient Greeks and Romans had a school which they called the Stoic, from the Stoa Poikile or Painted Porch, in Athens, where the Stoic teachers taught. This school was founded by Zeno of Citium, in the Island of Cyprus, at about the end of the fourth century before our present era; and it formed at about the time of the downfall of the Roman Empire, the religious science or scientific religion of the most advanced thinkers of that era.

There is no question that Zeno had been initiated, probably in the Samothracian, as well as in the Eleusinian, Mysteries; because we know that the doctrines that he taught are not only practically identical as far as they go — please note the qualification — with our own, but there are allusions and hints here and there scattered throughout these teachings, which show us very plainly that these doctrines of Stoicism did not originate with him, according to the views of the modern scholars, but must have taken their origin in a far past, in an antiquity originating far beyond anything of which history has preserved annals.

THEME 1: THE ALL, THE DIVINE**[Marcus Aurelius: Regard the universe as one living organism]****FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 12-13**

Now, where is Reality? Is the Real, is the True, to be found in these lower vestures of materiality ? Or is it to be found in the State of Being from which everything came ?

The ancient Stoics in their really wonderful philosophy taught, and the same teaching originated in the esoteric philosophy of Hellas or Greece—as found later in the Neo-Platonic teachings these ancient Stoics taught that Truth *can* be known; that the most real thing, the greatest thing, was to be found in ever-receding vistas, as the Spirit of man strived inward, and beyond, veil after veil falling away as the Wise Man (their technical term) advances in the evolution of his soul. They taught that the material universe was illusory precisely as our Teachers tell us of the Maya ; and the Stoic understood (and this teaching is our own) that this apparently dense, gross, heavy, material universe is phenomenally unreal, mostly built up of holes, so to say — a teaching which is beginning to be re-echoed even to-day in the writings and thoughts of the more intuitional of our scientists.

The Stoics taught that the ether was denser than the most dense material thing, fuller than the most full material thing — using human words, of course. To us, with our human eyes, trained only to see objects of illusion, it appears to be the most diaphanous, the thinnest, the most ethereal. What was the Reality, the Real, behind this All? The real thing? They said it was God, Life of Life, Truth of Truth, Root of Matter, Root of Soul, Root of Spirit. When the Stoic was asked: What is God? he nobly answered: What is God not?

WIND OF THE SPIRIT, p. 199

. . . the statement attributed to the Stoic philosopher Cleanthes which has been rendered into Latin, although he was a Greek, in the following words: "Quodcumque audiveris, quodcumque videris, est Jupiter." That is: "Whatsoever thou mayest hear, whatsoever thou mayest see, is Jupiter"; a thought very familiar in ancient Hindūsthān where Brahmā is said to evolve forth the universe from itself, in other words, that Brahmā is the universe and yet transcendent to it: the universe and all of it, and yet transcendent! Which reminds one of the statement attributed to Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*: "I establish all this universe from a portion of myself, and yet remain transcendent."

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 427-28

And a common doctrine among the ancients all over the world, in Hindūsthān or in Greece or Rome, wherever it may have been, was, as so beautifully expressed in a poem by Cleanthes, the Stoic:

"Zeus is all that is. Whate'er you see or know or sense or feel is Zeus. Zeus is all within and all without." Therefore not an atom but is Zeus; as also every potentiality of the infinite Kosmos, as of all Kosmoi; for every universe or kosmos is but one of the vast and incomputable swarms of living entities which fill the Spaces of endless and beginningless SPACE.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 18

Paul, the Apostle of the Christians "to the Gentiles", as they call him, according to the Christian Gospels in *Acts*, xvii, verses 23-28, spoke to an assembly of the Athenians on Mars Hill, commonly called the Areopagus, and he said the following (the translation being ours) :

For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription: "To the Unknowable God." For in It we live and move and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, "For we are also of Its line."

The poets of whom Paul speaks were probably Cleanthes the Stoic, and Aratus. It is perhaps well to mention that the sense of 'Unknowable', as used in connexion with this word *Agnostos*, is that employed by Homer, by Plato, and by Aristotle. This Greek word *Agnostos* also permits the translation 'unknown', but merely because the Unknown in this connexion is the *Unknowable*.

The Athenians had raised an altar to the Ineffable, and with the true spirit of religious devotion they left it without further qualification ; and Paul, passing by and seeing it, thought he saw an excellent chance to 'make hay while the sun shone', so to say, and claimed the Unknowable to which this altar had been raised, as the Jewish God, Jehovah.

A fortnight ago, following the Teacher's instructions, we stated how it was that man could form some conception of that Ineffable Principle of which Helena Petrovna Blavatsky speaks on pages 14-19 of her *Secret Doctrine*, as being the first of the three fundamental postulates, necessary in order to understand the true teachings of the Esoteric Wisdom ; and we saw that man has in himself, as was then said, a faculty transcending the ordinary human intellectual power-something in him by which he can raise himself upwards or, perhaps better, *inwards*, towards the Inmost Center of his own being, which in very truth is that Ineffable : from It we came, back to It we are journeying through the aeons of time.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 370

Now these poets of whom Paul here speaks, are unquestionably the two famous Stoic philosophers, Aratus (a countryman, by the way, of Paul, both he and Aratus being probably natives of Tarsus in Cilicia) and Cleanthes of the Troad, who wrote, by the way, one of the finest examples of Greek religious poems extant, greatly admired even by Christian writers, because they believe they see in it what they would probably call a nascent monotheism, in the Christian sense!

But it was simply a hymn of reverence to the Stoic Divine Essence, the Hierarch of the grand Hierarchy of our universe, its supreme head, which in the poem Cleanthes called "Zeus".

Please always remember that though Zeus may be called the Supreme Hierarch of a Universe, or Kosmos, or Hierarchy, he is but the Head of *one* of innumerable other similar hierarchies, hierarchies of the vast aggregate, endless and beginningless, which compose manifested Being.

Now, in him – in It – we live, and move, and have our being. And this It, is what we very rightly call *Space*, which is the vast, endless and beginningless congeries of living beings. There is no vacuum, no vacuity, no emptiness, no "nothing", anywhere. *Everything is full, not merely of life, but of living and conscious things*, and of beings of infinitely varying degrees of consciousness, such as you and I are, for example.

THEME 2: BIRTH (*genesis*) OF THE UNIVERSE**[Evolution and Involution: How elements stream from Zeus and return again to Zeus]****THE ESOTERIC TRADITION, footnote 435**

The teaching of the Stoics as regards such progressive unwrapping or emanational evolutionary unfolding of all the constitution and structure of the Universe from the Cosmic Divine Monad, is virtually identical with the teaching of the Esoteric Philosophy on the same subject, although of course it is obvious that the Stoics phrased the doctrine after their own manner and with their own particular choice or selection of words.

The main point in this wonderful teaching to be kept in mind is, that the Cosmic Divine Monad, as the Source or Root of the Universe which flows forth from it, is considered to contain within itself as latent germinal Seeds or Element-Principles the hierarchical planes and Families of beings and entities which during the course of the building of the Universe later flow forth from it.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 114-115

The Stoics had a doctrine of development which *in its essence* is the pure teaching of our own philosophy, though expressed in different form and under different names. They expressed it in this wise, following the mechanical mode so agreeable and dear to the Greek mind. It is curious, by the way, that the Oriental mind has always preferred to follow the psychological and spiritual lines of thought, rather than the mechanical, or, as we would now say, the “scientific”. But the Stoics taught in Greece, and later in Rome, that the *mechanism* of the *Essential Nature* of the Deity — and this *essential nature* is our Swabhâva, what we would call “Father-Mother” — was *tension*, and *slackening* of this tension, this slackening of tension being the first act of World-Building. They took as an analogy in illustration of the idea the well known fact that when a metal grows hot it then expands, and finally is vaporized; and using this simple matter-of-fact analogy they said that the “natural” state of Pneuma (“Spirit” = the Deity) is fire — not physical fire, but the seed of that cosmic element from which physical fire springs. The slackening of this tension produced the first differentiation of the Primal Substance — or Pneuma = “God” — and this differentiation then awoke to active life the life-seeds, slumbering or latent, which came over from the previous period of manifested life; the life-seeds, or seed-lives — their spermatic logoi, alluded to before by us — thus awaking, proceeded to build and guide the forthcoming World Period and all the entities in it, each such seed-life bringing forth from itself its essential species, or characteristic essence — our Swabhâva. This is the teaching, in miniature, but as the Stoics gave it, of the Esoteric Philosophy.

Now when the universe was to come forth *from its own being*, taught the Stoics, the “tension” of the Primal Substance or Divine Fire slackened, or contracted as it were, and this contraction, by condensation, gave birth to the æther next, as the tension slackened in the æther, this gave birth to “air”; and it, next, to “water”; and it, finally, to “earth”. We are not speaking of the material fire, air, water, earth, that we see around us, but we refer to the elements or “seeds” of these, the earth and the water and the air and the fire that we see around us being merely material samples or the last progeny, as it were, of the elemental seeds from which these respectively sprang.

“Fire” gave birth to the “æther”, the latter being its shadow, the shadow of itself. The “æther” gave birth to *its* shadow, or “air”, its encasement or body; and the “air” to “water”; and the “water” to “earth”. The Stoics taught further that all these things can be respectively transformed one into the other—the dream of the alchemist, and also the dream, psychologically, of initiates in our own School, who aim and strive to transform the base into the pure, the material into the spiritual.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 121-123

Resuming our thought from our last study of two weeks ago, we shall take up this evening an outline of the psychological nature of man, because, as mentioned before, if man understands himself, he understands that *from which he came*, and *which he is* — he understands the universe proportionately with his own development of spirit and of mind and of the percipient faculties that go with the development of spirit and of mind in man. In order to enable us more easily to understand, and more clearly to set forth, the essential characteristics of man's psychological economy, we shall endeavor to show how closely these are related to two fundamental theorems, or principles, or doctrines, of the Wisdom-Religion; and these two are (1) the Law, or rather the fact of Hierarchies; and (2) the Law (we use the term again under strong protest) of the Essential Nature of things, called Swabhâva; as said before, the latter is a Sanskrit term meaning *self*-evolution, *self*-formation, *self*-development, *self*-becoming. In it inheres the foundation of the law of morals. As is obvious, Man is responsible to himself, and because man is a part of other things, he is therefore responsible to other things also. Likewise, as a corollary of the foregoing, after death man does not "meet his Creator", but verily he has to meet and to reckon with his *creature*, that which he has built up in himself during his life, — his astral self.

What makes a rose bring forth a rose always? Why does the seed of an apple invariably bring forth apples? Why does it not bring forth thistles, or daisies, or pansies? The answer is very simple; very profound, however. It is because of the Swabhâva, the *essential nature* in and of the seed. Its Swabhâva can bring forth only that which *itself is*, its essential characteristic, its own inner nature. The Stoics of Greece and Rome expressed this fact of evolution by saying that in the opening of a period of Manifestation, it is the Pneuma – “Spirit” – which relaxes its tension, condensation or concretion thereupon ensuing of the said Pneuma or Spirit, and evolution begins, emanation and evolution both begin, following the causes set up and active in the preceding period of Manifestation. There spring into life coordinately with the opening of the new period the "spermatic logoi", the "seed-logoi", an expression translated from the Greek *spermatikoi logoi*, spermatic reasons, seed-reasons, "Logos" meaning "reason", hence "cause", among other things. It was these seed-logoi, or spermatic logoi, which were the fruits or results, the karmans, as we would say, of former periods of activity. Having attained a certain stage of evolution or development, or quality, or characteristic, or individuality in the preceding Manvantara; when the next period of evolution came, they could produce nothing else but *that which they were themselves*, their *own inner natures*, as seeds do. The seed can produce nothing but what it itself is, what is in it ; and this is the heart and essence of the doctrine of Swabhâva. The philosophical, scientific, and religious reach of this Doctrine is simply immense; it is of the first importance.

The habit, or, if you like the word, the "law" (we use this word again under protest), of Swabhâva can work only in that which is itself, because only its own vehicle, its own self, is appropriate for the manifestation of itself — obviously! Hence, the manner of evolution and emanation, and the

progress of the Hierarchies, are as set forth before; that is, that from the highest, evolution and emanation proceed downward into the more material; and so on down the line of the "shadowy arc" into matter, until the turning-point of the descent is attained; whereupon begins the ascent along the "luminous arc".

We must note well, however, that the higher does not leave its own sphere in this process; the higher does not wholly become the lower, and the lower wholly become the still lower, leaving a vacuum or an emptiness above. The higher spheres remain always. It is like the flame of a candle laid at the wick of another candle; and from that one candle, as our first great Teacher has said, you can light all the candles of the universe, without diminution of its energy or of its force or of its characteristic essence. The highest remains always the highest; it is that part of itself, as it were, that is the developing energy acting from within; its Skandhas it is – which you will remember we have studied before – which produce, as the Stoics would have said, this "relaxation of tension", this condensation or concretion of parts of itself. A perfect analogy is found in the intra-uterine development of man, and his descent into incarnation. His spiritual nature does not come down and become his actual body; it remains always his spiritual nature; but from it it throws out parts of itself, its lower aspects or principles, if we may so put the idea; and these, as the manvantaric cycle proceeds, in their turn, each one in its turn, secretes, protrudes, and excretes something lower. So that the physical man, the body, is in very truth the "Temple of the living God", which is itself the Glory thereof, hence a part of the Temple; the Temple, verily, is the lowest manifestation of the living God within.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 497-99

We employ the word "Evolution" strictly in the etymological sense – the unfolding, the unrolling, the outgoing, of the forces lying latent, from its past Karman, in the seed of the being or entity, or whatever it may be, which enters upon a cycle of active existence.

This great principle was well illustrated in the case of Kosmic Evolution by what the ancient Stoics taught with regard to the evolving or development or evolution, the rolling out, of the four (or five) Elements of the ancients, as those Elements were understood in their day. They taught, as you remember we pointed out at a former study, that the Fifth Element, the Fifth Essence or Quintessence, called "Æther" – which is our Âkâśa – held in its bosom before their manifestation or evolving the seeds of the lower four; and that when the time came for these four to evolve, when the Deity, when Zeus, wished to send forth the worlds again into manifestation after a period of repose, the first that appeared was the Element Fire, rolling out from Æther (or Âkâśa) evolving, unwrapping itself, from it. Not "Fire" as we understand it, but, as it were, the Seed of Fire, the Spirit of Fire, that primary and elemental kosmic force of which Fire on our plane, this low plane, is a feeble manifestation. Then, when Fire had run through its course of cyclic evolution: in the same way that it had proceeded forth from the bosom of Æther or Âkâśa, so did Air from Fire, unrolling itself from the bosom of Fire which had contained in itself this Element Air; containing not merely its own Swabhâva, or characteristic or quality of fieriness, as we say in our Oriental thought; but containing in itself also the characteristic of its own Parent Æther, Âkâśa. Then, next in sequence, from Air rolled forth, was unwrapped, sprang forth in development, the Element Water. Not our water, which is absurd; but that which we might call the Seed of Water, the Spirit of Water, that which Water or Liquidity represents on our plane; and it held in its bosom somewhat of the quality or characteristic of Air, its Parent; and of Fire, its Grandparent; and also of Æther or Âkâśa. It contained also the Forces, the Potencies, and the Powers, of these its Predecessors, but feebler naturally in Water than in their own respective realms; the qualities and

potencies of each preceding one growing feebler as the evolution proceeds farther on, *i.e.*, more largely into "matter". Then from Water, from its bosom, evolved or rolled forth the Seed of the Element Earth. When the turn of the cycle set in; when the evolution of these Elements, when the building of globes and so forth, had come to an end, and Zeus wished to recall them all back to his bosom, then, the reverse procedure began, and Water took unto itself again its child the Element Earth. Earth began to liquesce and to pass back into the Element Water. Then in its turn, in its due period, the Element Water began to ærify its particles and to pass into, or was gathered again into, the bosom of its parent the Element Air. Then air in its turn began to ignify its nature and to pass into the bosom of its parent Fire. Then, finally, Fire ætherialized its nature and passed back into the bosom of the Fifth Essence or Æther, its parent; and the cycle of Kosmic Evolution was ended for another period of repose.

Now we carry these five Elements farther on at least to seven in number. But there is the principle of development inherent in the Kosmos which we illustrate by using the word Evolution as above outlined: the Outgoing of the Breath, the breathing forth, of Brahma, as the archaic Indian thinkers said. The work done, then ensued the Inbreathing, the Ingathering, the Involution, of Brahma. Precisely the same illustration that we have just given from the Stoic philosophy you will find in the ancient Hindū literature, in the Upanishads, and more particularly in the Purānas.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 309-310

None of the ancient philosophers of the Mediterranean countries, when speaking of "earth", "water", "air", "fire", "ether", nor the Hindūs, when speaking, for instance of Ākāśa or of Ādi-Tattwa, meant the material things which we can sense, such as earth and water. They meant the Root-Elements of Nature, of which these four or five things that we sense, are, as it were, presentments or symbols.

Now, the Greeks called the Elements "Stoicheia" a plural diminutive of the word "stoichos", meaning a *series*, in other words a hierarchy. The singular "Stoicheion" would be an entity of a hierarchy, a part of it, one of the composite parts of the hierarchy, although modern scholars can trace no ostensible reason for giving this name to what they recognise as being the ancient conception of the Element of Nature. But our philosophy shows why, and explains that the stoicheia are the seven Prakritis of the Kosmos.

THEME 2A: RE-IMBODIMENT / RE-INCARNATION (*Palingenesis*)

WIKIPEDIA Palingenesis:

The word *palingenesis* or rather *palingenesia* (Ancient Greek: παλιγγενεσία) may be traced back to the Stoics, who used the term for the continual re-creation of the universe.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 160

You will remember that these seven Jewels or Gems or Treasures were given as follows, counting from below upwards: The first or lowest is Rebirth, or rather Reimbodiment, better still, perhaps, Regeneration. In Sanskrit it is called Punarjanman; and in Greek it is called Palingenesis; both words representing practically the same thought: the first element in each word meaning "again" or "anew", and the second element in each meaning "generation" or "birth" — "coming into being".

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 182

The wise ancients never bothered their heads much about any foolish attempt to fathom the Boundless or the limitless Eternal. They recognised the Reality of Being, and let it go at that, knowing well that an ever-growing knowledge of the Universal Life was and is all that human intelligence could ever attain to, by an ever-expanding Consciousness.

This alternate appearing and disappearing of worlds or Hierarchies, is the teaching imbodyed in the first of the seven Jewels or Treasures of Wisdom. As the human spirit sends down its ray and reincarnates by means of that ray into a human being of astral matter and of mind-matter and of flesh, so similarly, when the time comes for a Hierarchy to re-imbody itself, to undertake its task anew of Palingenesis or repeated self-generation, the same relative course is run. Never let us forget the ancient axiom of the Esoteric Wisdom which the Hermetists so beautifully expressed: *As above so below*. What happens in heaven is mirrored on earth, *mutatis mutandis*. Man's palingenesis, as a microcosm, is but a faithful copy of the palingenesis of worlds; of his own cosmic Hierarchy as the Macrocosm.

THE ESOTERIC TRADITION, p. 637

The reason for the secrecy that prevailed in pre-Christian times was this: In order fully to understand the general Doctrine of metempsychosal Palingenesis, or, more generally, of Reimbodiment, long and arduous study and much thought are required.

The principles of this Doctrine are very simple in themselves and a child can understand them, but if one wishes to have an accurate and extensive knowledge of them, one must study and reflect deeply; and it was an ancient custom, prevalent everywhere, that no sane and wise man gives out all of the teachings of any science or art or philosophical system all at once, and especially not to those who have not previously prepared themselves by training and study properly and rightfully to receive them.

This was the spirit imbodying itself in the method governing and controlling all ancient initiatory rites used in the ancient Mystery-Schools . . .

STUDIES IN OCCULT PHILOSOPHY p 434-35***Cyclic progression not repetition***

Question — *Will all things now existing exist again after pralaya in more or less the same form as hitherto? Will the cycle just repeat itself in a kind of predestined way, all entities repeating their previous work and accomplishments? As just one instance, will the great world scriptures such as the Hindū Rāmāyana come into being once more with the same individuals composing its history?*

Answer — The idea of repetitive cycles imbodyed in this question is nothing new in the history of Oriental philosophy, nor indeed in that of ancient Greek philosophy; for it was one of the foremost and favorite teachings of the old Stoic school: that the Universes, or our universe rather, and all in it, repeated itself cyclically through immense intervals of time, so that what now is, took place in the previous cosmic cycle, and what now is, will again repeat itself in due serial order when this present cosmic cycle is ended, the rest-period is completed, and the new cosmic cycle begins. It is the principle of the turning wheel, the favorite symbol of these repetitive cycles with their undoubted mechanical aspects.

Now there is great truth in all this. But what most of these statements ignore, either deliberately or through ignorance, is that while these repetitive imbodyments of the Universe certainly take place, this being one of the fundamental teachings of Theosophy, yet each imbodyment for any particular or any one universe is always on a higher plane than the one on which it was last imbodyed. Thus it is not a perfect identity, and therefore there is no dead mechanism about it and no merely frightfully useless running the round on the wheel of change with no hope of progress. This last would be the worst kind of fatalistic horror.

The universe repeats itself, reimbodies itself, and each repetition governed by the karman of the preceding produces a universe closely alike to the one which preceded it — just as a man in one life is very much like the man of the last life; yet in both cases the imbodying entity, whether universe or man, is always a little higher, a little more forwards in its evolutionary course, than before.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 368, 374

368 Now, as pointed out in our last meeting, all this of course happens in what is called *space*. Space is not a mere container or receptacle of things, as our modern dictionaries define it, for in that case it would be a thing finite in itself; and, as said before, in such case we should have to find or conceive of a container to contain the container, and so *ad infinitum*. But space is the endless and beginningless Pleroma, *Fullness*, as the Greek philosophers said: the Boundless All, the field of action of the Universal Life, the endless and beginningless fullness. Space is the vast, truly incalculable, aggregation of the innumerable hierarchies forming manifested Being. We live and move and have our being in Space, as the beings living in and upon the atoms which compose our bodies, live in our bodies, which to them is practically endless space, the illimitable Pleroma.

(...)

374 You will remember that at our last meeting we discussed, more or less briefly on account of the shortness of the time, the question of the nature of Space, and what Space was, and what

Space was not. We endeavored to point out that "space", in the ordinary conception of things, means a receptacle or a container, in other words, it usually means *place*. Space is used almost synonymously with place; but this is not the use which is authorized or taught in the esoteric teachings, wherein it is shown that Space is the illimitable series of Hierarchies, which – do not merely fill, but which – are the Boundless All, beginningless and endless; and that Space, as the old Greeks put it, was an endless fullness, endless and beginningless, and they called it the Pleroma, or the Fullness; one Universal Life, one Heart, so to say, pulsating or beating throughout.

We also speak of – and please mark this carefully – the *spaces of Space*, the inwards of Space, the inward parts, bearing to Space the same relation that man's own inner principles bear to his outer vehicle.

(...) There is a doctrine of the northern Buddhism – and we are going to choose it in order to illustrate the esoteric teachings regarding Space – called the Doctrine of the Void, the Doctrine of the Empty, likewise found in other schools in past times, such as were illustrated by the Greek Atomists, Democritus, Leucippus, and Epicurus, and by the great Roman poet Lucretius; and even spoken of by some of the Stoical philosophers, who otherwise taught the Doctrine of the Fullness.

THEME 3: THE INTERMINGLING OF ALL LIFE (*Krasis di' holou, Theokrasie*) Everything interpenetrates everything else

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 51-52

Without going into this study at some length, it is impossible for us to understand certain of the teachings in *The Secret Doctrine*. The ancient Stoics (the very wonderful philosophy originating with some of the Greek philosophers, and which became so deservedly popular among the deeper thinkers of Rome) taught that everything in the universe is intermingled, or interwoven, not by fundamentally distinct essences or entities interpenetrating each other, nor in what we theosophists today call "planes of being", merely, but by various aspects or differentiations of one common substance, the Root of all, and they expressed the principle through the three Greek words, *Krasis di' holou*, a mingling through everything, an intermingling of all the essences in the Cosmos, arising out of, and differentiated from, the Root-substance common to all. This is also the teaching of our own Esoteric Wisdom. It is the *manifestation*, in other words, of all beings, of all thinking, and senseless beings, and of all the gods giving direction and purpose to the complex universe, which we see around us today; and in this varied life was placed the primal cause of all the beauty, the concord, as well as the strife and discord that do exist in Nature, and which is the cause of the so-called mistakes that Nature makes.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 41-42

"Nature" is imperfect, hence of necessity makes "mistakes", because its action derives from hosts of Entities at work. What we see around us all the time is proof of it. "Nature" is not perfect.

If it had sprung from the "hands of the Immutable Deity", hence perfect and immutable like its Parent, knowing no change, it would be a Perfect Work. It is much to the contrary, as we know, and its imperfections or "mistakes" arise from the fact that the beings existing in and working in and controlling and *making* nature extend in endless hierarchies from the Inmost of the Inmost, from the Highest of the Highest, downwards for ever, upwards for ever, in all degrees of imperfection and of perfection, which is precisely what we see in the scenes of manifestation surrounding us. Our intuition tells us the truth concerning this, and we should trust it.

This was well known to the ancients. The Stoics expressed it and taught it in their magnificent philosophy. The Stoics of Rome and of Greece originally expressed it by what they called Theocracy. Theocracy has a compound meaning – *Theos*, a god, divine being, and *krasis*, meaning an intermingling – an intermingling of everything in the universe, intermingling with everything else, nothing possibly separable from the rest, the Whole.

It is the cardinal heresy of the Oriental religions to-day, notably in that of the Buddhists, if a man thinks that he is separate or separable from the universe. This is their cardinal heresy, the most fundamental error that man can make. The early Christians called it the "sin against the Holy Ghost". If we look around us and if we look within, we realize that we are one entity, as it were, one great human host, one living tree of human life, woven inseparably *into* and *from* Nature, the ALL.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 130-131

You doubtless remember what we mentioned in former studies of the wonderful doctrine of the ancient Stoics of Greece and Rome, called the *Krasis di' holou*, the *mingling through everything*, the *intermingling of all*; when this doctrine was applied to the Gods, the ancient Stoics called it Theocracy, not theocracy, which means something else entirely. Theocracy means the intermingling of the Gods, even as human thoughts mingle on earth.

Now the Self remains eternally itself on its own plane, but in manifestation it intermingles, if we may use that term, with the spheres of matter by raying itself, as does the sun; by communicating itself as the divine ray; it shoots down into the spiritual world, and thence into the intellectual world, and thence into the psychic world, and thence into the astral world, and thence into the physical. It creates at each one of these stages, at each plane of the Hierarchy, a vehicle, a sheath, a clothing, a garment, and *these*, just expressed by various names, on the *higher plane* are called "souls", and on the *lower plane*, "*bodies*" and it is the destiny of these souls – "garments" or "vehicles" or "sheaths" of the spirit – ultimately to be raised upwards to divinity.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 158

The third Key is the doctrine of interpenetrating Beings or Existences, otherwise called the doctrine of Hierarchies, which are also inseparable and universally interpenetrating Planes or Spheres. EVERYTHING EXISTS IN EVERYTHING ELSE. There are, in strict truth, no absolute divisions, anywhere, neither high nor low, neither within nor without, neither right nor wrong, nor up nor down. Fundamentally, there is naught but an eternal Is and an eternal Now. As the ancient Stoics said so finely, *Everything interpenetrates everything else*. The very atmosphere we breathe, for instance, is vibrant and living with the multitudinous Lives; they are in the air we breathe; the monadic essences or lives are in the air we breathe, in our bones, in our blood, in our flesh, in everything. Think of it, then; let your thought go free, release yourself inwardly. Let your imagination carry you into the wonders that these Keys open up to our minds. Conscientious study of the Ancient Wisdom and a pure and unselfish life will be your unailing guides.

THEME 3A: HIERARCHIES and LAWS OF NATURE

(Moral Laws of Nature: inner nature of Zeus)

(Physical Laws of Nature: outer patterns of habits of higher beings)

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 52-55

Properly to understand this Intermingling involves another important subject of study which we shall take up at a later date, and this is the doctrine of Hierarchies.

(...)

The eternal action and interaction – or what the Stoics also called the *intermingling* – of these beings produce eternally the various so-called "planes of being", and the action of the will of these beings on matter or substances is the manifestation of what we call the "laws of Nature". This is a very inaccurate and misleading phrase; but it seems justifiable in a metaphorical sense, because as a human legislator or a human law-giver will set forth or set down certain rules of conduct, certain schemes of action, which are to be obeyed, so the Intelligences behind the actions of Nature do the same thing, *not* in a legislative way, but by *the action of their own spiritual economy*. So man himself, in similar fashion, lays down the "laws" for the less lives which compose his essences – the principles under the center which he governs – and which comprise even the physical body, and the lives building it. Each one of these lives, as was said before, is a microcosmic universe or cosmos, that is to say, an ordered entity, an entity ruled by inescapable or ineluctable habit, which the scientists of our own race, applying the rule to universal cosmical action, call the "laws" of Nature.

(...)

Yet, as we see and consider the things around us, as we know that the world, being an exemplar of change and hence of limitations and decay, therefore cannot be and is not infinite, we know – the instincts of our being tell us – that it is the work of less beings, of minor and limited Powers, however exalted spiritually; and as we penetrate into our own thoughts and study the life of the beings and of the nature around us, we see also that there is life *within* life, wheel *within* wheel, purpose *within* purpose, and that behind the outward manifestations or action (the "laws of Nature") of the so-called Gods, there are still more subtil Powers, still more exalted Intelligences at work: verily, wheels within wheels, lives within lives, and so on for ever: an unending and boundless Unity in Multiplicity, and Multiplicity limitless and unbounded in Unity.

So, as said before, when we speak of the unity of Life, or of the "divine unity", we merely mean that here our penetrating spirit has reached the limit of its present powers, a point at which human thought can go no farther. It has run to its utmost limits, and from the feebleness of it, we are bound in truth to say, Here is as far as our thought can go. It is our present "Ring called 'Pass Not!'" But this honest confession of human limitation does *not* mean that there is "nothing" beyond. On the contrary, it is a proof that Life and space are endless.

Now the Neo-Platonists who first came into prominence in the early centuries of the Christian era – and who, with the Stoics, provided Christianity with all that it had that was philosophically good and spiritual and true – taught that the summit, the acme, the flower, the highest point (that they called the "hyparxis") of any series of animate and "inanimate" beings, whether we enumerate the stages or degrees of the series as seven or ten or twelve (according to whichever system we follow), was the "divine unity" *for that series or Hierarchy*, and that this hyparxis or

flower or summit or beginning or highest being was again in its turn the *lowest being of the Hierarchy above it*, and so extending onwards for ever.

Change within change, wheel within wheel, each Hierarchy manifesting one facet, as it were, of the divine cosmic Life, each Hierarchy showing forth one thought, as it were, of the divine thinkers.

THEME 4: SEED-LOGOI (*Logoi Spermaticoi*)**FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 122**

The Stoics of Greece and Rome expressed this fact of evolution by saying that in the opening of a period of Manifestation, it is the Pneuma – “Spirit” – which relaxes its tension, condensation or concretion thereupon ensuing of the said Pneuma or Spirit, and evolution begins, emanation and evolution both begin, following the causes set up and active in the preceding period of Manifestation. There spring into life co-ordinately with the opening of the new period the "spermatic logoi", the "seed-logoi", an expression translated from the Greek *spermaticoi logoi*, spermatic reasons, seed-reasons, "Logos" meaning "reason", hence "cause", among other things. It was these seed-logoi, or spermatic logoi, which were the fruits or results, the karmans, as we would say, of former periods of activity. Having attained a certain stage of evolution or development, or quality, or characteristic, or individuality in the preceding Manvantara; when the next period of evolution came, they could produce nothing else but that which they were themselves, their own inner natures, as seeds do.

MAN IN EVOLUTION, p. 289

Huxley, then, sets forth with graphic truth the biologic karman merely of the body, as transmitted as effect from parent to offspring, through the working of the aggregate of the lower life-atoms, in their preparing of vehicles for incoming souls *of similar tendencies, of similar character*.

Huxley concludes as follows:

In the theory of evolution, the tendency of a germ to develop to a certain specific type, e.g., of the kidney-bean seed to grow into a plant having all the characters of 'Phaseolus vulgaris,' is its 'Karma.' It is the 'last inheritor and the last result' of all the conditions that have affected a line of ancestry which goes back for many millions of years, to the time when life first appeared on the earth.

As Professor Rhys Davids aptly says (in *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 114), the snowdrop “is a snowdrop and not an oak, and just that kind of snowdrop, because it is the outcome of the karma of an endless series of past existences.”

Yes, just so; the teaching concerning this tendency of a germ to develop into a certain specific type is nothing new. It is an old, old conception. The old school of the Stoics in Greece and Rome expressed it as being the operation of what they called the spermatic logos, the *logos spermaticos*, that is to say, the 'seed-logos,' what we may call the character-logos, the consciousness-logos: in other words, that particular and individual part of the constitution of any entity which is its specific character. It is this *logos spermaticos* which makes the rose produce a rose always, and nothing but a rose; which makes the hen's egg bring forth a chick and nothing but a chick; which makes the kidney-bean seed grow into a kidney-bean plant.

FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 114

As an egg unfolds within itself the germ which is to become the future chick; or the human egg, the ovum, unfolds the germ within it which is to become the future child of man, similarly does the universe develop, similarly does an atom develop, thus also does a monad develop. It is

unfolded within the auric egg. The human ovum, the seed of the plant, each is nothing but an egg. The shape may differ, the life-form may differ, but this has nothing to do with the principle of unfoldment of which we are speaking. The encasement within the auric egg envelops the germ of individuality — or Swabhâva — which is destined to follow its course along its own characteristic line of unfoldment: what is in the egg or seed comes out, each species according to its own kind, and this is its Swabhâva. The Greek Stoic School taught the existence — both cosmically and infinitesimally — of *spermatik logoi*, “seed-logoi”, each such spermatik logos producing creatures after its kind and according to its own essence — like the Hebrew Biblical Elôhîm — and this is again Swabhâva.

THEME 5: WHAT IS HAPPINESS? (*Eudaimonia*) (plus VIRTUE en FREE WILL)

WIKIPEDIA *Eudaimonia* (Grieks: εὐδαιμονία);

In terms of its etymology, *eudaimonia* is an abstract noun derived from the words *eû* ('good, well') and *daímōn* (... referring maybe to a minor deity or a guardian spirit)

ESOTERIC TEACHINGS, Vol. 2, p. 115

Open your minds, Companions, to the rising of the spiritual sun and let in the light. Then you will have peace and harmony in your souls; and these bring a bliss so subtil, so powerful, so over-mastering in the keen sense of realization, that it is small wonder that the mystic should think that he had attained unto Reality. He has attained in some degree. But strive not forcefully for it. Be still. Be quiet. Be at peace. Be harmonious. Lift your soul in quiet thought upwards. Love will guide the wings of your soul to your spiritual sun.

You will recollect, doubtless, those of you who are acquainted with the Greek literature, that Socrates, a wise and unfortunate man, used to say to those around him that his *Daimon*, his inner monitor, never told him what *to do* but always what *not to do*. This *Daimon*, as in many other cases, was, to use a figure of speech, the voice of the Higher Ego, which in great men is often very strong in its energy, and in some hyper-sensitive constitutions is often spoken of as a 'voice.' In constitutions which have been trained, it is recognised that this Voice of the Silence is not really a voice – which is its effect sometimes on the physical brain – but that it is an inner urge, flashes of light and inner vision. It is the beginning of the Vision Sublime.

H.P. BLAVATSKY, COLLECTED WRITINGS, Vol. 6, p. 187-88

We may pass now to the "Gods," or Daimons, of the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, and from these to the Devas and Pitris of the still more ancient Hindû Âryans.

Who or what were the Gods, or Daimonia, of the Greeks and Romans? The name has since then been monopolized and disfigured to their own use by the Christian Fathers. Ever following in the footsteps of old Pagan Philosophers on the well-trodden highway of their speculations, while, as ever, trying to pass these off as new tracks on virgin soil, and themselves as the first pioneers in a hitherto pathless forest of eternal truths – they repeated the Zoroastrian ruse: to make a clean sweep of all the Hindû Gods and Deities, Zoroaster had called them all Devs, and adopted the name as designating only evil powers. So did the Christian Fathers. They applied the sacred name of Daimonia – the divine Egos of man – to their devils, a fiction of diseased brains, and thus dishonoured the anthropomorphized symbols of the natural sciences of wise antiquity, and made them all loathsome in the sight of the ignorant and the unlearned.

What the Gods and Daimonia, or Daimons, really were, we may learn from Socrates, Plato, Plutarch, and many other renowned Sages and Philosophers of pre-Christian, as well as post-Christian days.

H.P. BLAVATSKY, COLLECTED WRITINGS, Vol. 14, p. 408fn-409fn

§ Kwan-yin is a synonym, for in the original another term is used, but the meaning is identical. It is the divine voice of Self, or the "Spirit-voice" in man, and the same as Vâch...śvara (the "Voice-deity") of the Brâhmans. In China, the Buddhist ritualists have degraded its meaning by anthropomorphizing it into a Goddess of the same name, with one thousand hands and eyes, and they call it Kwan-shai-yin-Bodhisat. It is the Buddhist "daimon"-voice of Socrates.

STUDIES IN OCCULT PHILOSOPHY, p. 551-52***The Nature of Evil and Free Will in Man***

Question — *In what way did the Stoic teaching differ from that of Theosophy as regards (1) the nature of evil, (2) Free will in man?*

Answer — We must remember that the Stoic Philosophy, a really grand system of cosmic thought, has been badly understood by moderns trained in Christian ways of theological thought. The Stoics had virtually the same fundamental or esoteric teaching that the Platonists had, and consequently 'the nature of evil' is just about what I have explained in my answers to former questions. Evil is imperfection, i.e., insufficient evolution, and is therefore relative; because what men might call 'good,' the gods who are above us might actually call 'evil' by comparison with their own super-goodness.

It may be illustrated by the example of light: There is weak light, light of moderate strength, and dazzling brilliance. The beings who live in the intermediate light, would say that the weak light is evil. On the other hand, the beings who live in the dazzling brilliance, would say that the intermediate light is evil. Therefore, the nature of evil, as taught in the Stoic Philosophy, or, indeed, as taught in Platonism, or, indeed, as taught in modern Theosophy, is simply imperfection. Any being who or which is insufficiently evolved to have brought out divinity from within itself, at least to some degree, can be called 'evil' by comparison with beings much more evolved, who are therefore much more perfect.

Next, as regards the Stoic doctrine of 'Free will in man,' this Stoic doctrine is exactly the same as part of the Theosophical teaching on the same topic; and please remember that the heart of Platonism or Stoicism is identic with the heart of Theosophy. But alas, this esoteric heart moderns have never understood because of their Christian prejudices and biases. Free will in man arises out of the fact that man is a child of the Universe, divinely, spiritually, intellectually, psychically, astrally and physically, as well as morally. Consequently, free will in man arises out of the heart of his being, which is as much as saying the heart of the Universe, of which he is a child, because the Universe is the Great Whole; therefore the part must have whatsoever it may be that the Great Whole has. You see how beautifully this thought works: Man has free will because he is of the same essence or substance as the spiritual Universe, which is or has free will.

COMB. 6: ALL THEMES EXPLAINED IN ONE LONG TEXT-FRAGMENT**FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY, p. 365-74**

[366] Now the main subject which we have to study more fully this evening is the procedure followed by Nature in the building of worlds and of the Kosmos and of man; and directly connected with this our subject, are the different views of the gods, the monads, the souls, the atoms, and the bodies, which we have been studying this winter.

You remember that the ancient Greeks and Romans had a school which they called the Stoic, from the Stoa Poikile or Painted Porch, in Athens, where the Stoic teachers taught. This school was founded by Zeno of Citium, in the Island of Cyprus, at about the end of the fourth century before our present era ; and it formed at about the time of the downfall of the Roman Empire, the religious science or scientific religion of the most advanced thinkers of that era. There is no question that Zeno had been initiated, probably in the Samothracian, as well as in the Eleusinian, Mysteries; because we know that the doctrines that he taught are not only practically identical *as far as they go* – please note the qualification – with our own, but there are allusions and hints here and there scattered throughout these teachings, which show us very plainly that these doctrines of Stoicism did not originate with him, according to the views of the modern scholars, but must have taken their origin in a far past, in an antiquity originating far beyond anything of which history has preserved annals.

Among the doctrines of Stoicism was that of the genesis or birth of the elements of the Kosmos. Five were spoken of, and two more were vaguely hinted at. The five were *Æther*, beginning with the highest; then what was called *Fire*; then *Air*; then *Water*; and then *Earth*. Now these kosmical elements are not the familiar things which we know by those names, for they were taken merely to symbolize, through certain appropriate qualities which they possess, the actual Elements of Kosmical being.

Now these Elements of nature, which the Brâhmanical philosophy called the *Tattwas*, – which you will remember we studied very briefly at our last meeting – may also be called the *Principles* of Kosmos, precisely as man's seven principles may be called the *elements* of his being. We can say the elements of Kosmos, or the principles of Kosmos; and it means for present purposes the same thing; and we may say the elements of man or the principles of man, and it means for present purposes precisely the same thing. Seven different qualities or states or conditions of Prakriti or nature – call it also substance or matter for the present, if you like. The present is not an appropriate time to go into a too detailed distinction of the difference – which does exist – between *matter* and *Prakriti*. At any rate, the Elements are seven different states or conditions or qualities of prakriti, the manifested side of kosmical being.

Now these seven Elements or Principles – five, as openly taught – according to the Stoic philosophy were derived one from the other, in order as follows: first the Nameless One; second, its progeny or offspring, or child, which is the second element lower in the scale; the third was *Æther*, the progeny or offspring of the second, combining in itself, at the same time, the qualities or powers of the second, its parent, and of the first, its grandparent, so to say. Then came Fire, containing in itself the elements of the three preceding, and also its own particular *swabhâva* or essential characteristic. You will remember what *Swabhâva* means from our former studies of it: it is the particularity, the essential nature, the real characteristic, of a thing, which makes it different from some other thing. The *swabhâva* of a rose makes the rose-plant bring forth a rose always, and not a lily or a violet; and the *swabhâva* of a man brings forth as offspring a man

always and not a gooseberry or an acorn. This is swabhâva, or self-nature. Call it “individuality”, if you like; it is the special or germinal individuality.

Then from Fire, as a parent, sprang Air. We are using these familiar terms, with a warning, as said before, that they do not really mean the familiar material things which we know by those names. However, this Element called Air contains in itself the qualities of its own nature, likewise those of fire, its parent, and of æther, its grandparent, and the qualities of the second and the first Elements as well. Then comes Water, containing in itself its own qualities and also the qualities of the five which precede it. Finally comes the seventh or last, gross matter, or concreted substance, containing in itself the qualities of all the six which precede it; each Element giving birth to each following one as the Life-Wave ran its course down the Shadowy Arc of manifestation, or the building of the framework of the Kosmos.

Thus, said the Stoics, is the Kosmos built — enunciating an exactly similar doctrine to our own, indeed, identical, as so far outlined. Simply change the names: use gods, monads, souls, atoms, bodies, or bearers, and add life-force, and the kosmical Self as the first, and our seven kosmical Principles are there.

Then, said the Stoics (expressing here their doctrine in our own terms), when the impulse of the evolutionary life-wave had reached its ultimate cycle of descent, *i.e.*, had reached its lowest point on the Fourth Round, then began the period of ascent; and Water drew into itself, as the Life-Wave advanced upward, Earth, and mingled it with itself; and Air, following in turn, drew within itself the Water containing the Earth, and mingled it with itself. Then fire drew into itself the Air containing the two lower Elements in itself; and the Æther then in its turn drew into itself the Fire, with its elemental containments; and the Second Element, counting downwards, drew into itself the Æther; and finally the first, or Nameless One, then drew into itself the Second, containing the elemental qualities of all the others: and then, using the Stoic language, the “tension” of the divine Essence was restored to its own quality and kind, as far as that Essence had emanated a Life-Wave of innumerable living particles or Monads, and there was repose and bliss and utter peace and ineffable rest, until the cyclic time came for the next evolutionary outpouring of the innumerable lives. This is, as seen, a doctrine precisely similar to our own, as shown in the teaching setting forth the evolution of lives during the Rounds of a Planetary Chain. Descending along the Shadowy Arc into manifestation through matter, the Life-Wave advances downwards until it reaches its lowest cyclical point, then rises along the Luminous Arc until all is withdrawn again into the Essence which sent it forth, or rather from which it went forth; individual experience gained, many stages in evolution passed through, by every unit or Monad of the Life-Wave which had come down into matter, for the purpose of gaining soul-experience there, and incidentally giving to the circumambient matter itself an upward impulse. For matter is nothing but “crystallized” spirit; or, if you like, spirit is etherealized matter; though the former statement is the better way by far in which to express the fact.

Now, as pointed out in our last meeting, all this of course happens in what is called *space*. Space is not a mere container or receptacle of things, as our modern dictionaries define it, for in that case it would be a thing finite in itself; and, as said before, in such case we should have to find or conceive of a container to contain the container, and so ad infinitum. But space is the endless and beginningless Pleroma, *Fullness*, as the Greek philosophers said: the Boundless All, the field of action of the Universal Life, the endless and beginningless fullness. Space is the vast, truly incalculable, aggregation of the innumerable hierarchies forming manifested Being. We live and move and have our being in Space, as the beings living in and upon the atoms which compose our bodies, live in our bodies, which to them is practically endless space, the illimitable Pleroma.

Break the molds of your minds; allow your thought to lead you into the vast expanse of the universal consciousness which these sublime ideas must open to you. Imagine, if you will, please, that Life is endless; that, as said before, throughout all runs the beating of the Universal Heart; and, furthermore, that there is nothing great, nothing small, except by comparison, except relatively so. We bring forward again here the thought which we have often before expressed, an axiom which is one of the fundamental truths of the Esoteric Wisdom, the Ancient Wisdom of the olden times, and this fundamental truth or principle is that of Relativity. Everything is relative; there are no absolutes anywhere, except relatively so; there are no "jumping-off places"; there are no ultimates; there are no bounds beyond which the evolving spirit may not go. Everything is related to everything else. How can a thinking man talk of infinites, and at the same time speak of absolutes? Why, the very word "absolute", as pointed out in a former study, means what the Hindū word *Mukta* means, *released, free*. "Absolute" means released, unchained, unbound; freedom.

You remember that when Paul, the apostle of the Christians, during one of his missionary journeys, spoke to the men of Athens from Mars' Hill, *i.e.*, from the Areopagus, he used words which are unquestionably, I think, the finest in the Christian New Testament, for they are purely pagan philosophy, and they are as follows below. In addressing the men of Athens, he told them that when he disembarked, on coming up to Athens he found an altar dedicated to the "Unknown God" — *tō theō agnōstō*. Now he must have disembarked at the old port of Phalerum, the port of Athens which was used before (and after) the building of the Piraeus. We know also, from the Greek historian and traveler, Pausanias, in chapter one, book one, of his work, that there were altars in that port dedicated to the "Unknown Gods". Now this word, translated into English as "Unknown" ("agnostos"), means in Greek not so much "unknown" as "unknowable" — unknown in the sense of unknowable; unknown because it was unknowable.

Now Paul, in speaking to the Athenians in his sermon to them, used the following words, as given in the Christian writing, "Acts", chapter 17, verse 28. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being, as certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his offspring." I may also point out in passing that the Greek of this passage allows us to translate the Greek word "autō" just as well "it" as "him": "For in *It* we move, and live, and have our being." The Christians of modern days, having in mind their personal, active, monotheistic deity, in translating this passage naturally took the word as of the masculine gender; but the neuter gender is grammatically correct also and philosophically better by far.

Ay, Paul, the "Christian" (shall we so call him? at any rate he was an initiate), Paul, the "Wise master-builder", as he calls himself, thus hinting at his esoteric affiliations, not only tells us that in *It* we live and move and have our being, but makes constantly reference to matters of initiation. The many mystical allusions to various matters which occur throughout the writings ascribed to him, show very plainly how far the Christianity of today has wandered from its first founders.

Now these poets of whom Paul here speaks, are unquestionably the two famous Stoic philosophers, Aratus (a countryman, by the way, of Paul, both he and Aratus being probably natives of Tarsus in Cilicia) and Cleanthes of the Troad, who wrote, by the way, one of the finest examples of Greek religious poems extant, greatly admired even by Christian writers, because they believe they see in it what they would probably call a nascent monotheism, in the Christian sense! But it was simply a hymn of reverence to the Stoic Divine Essence, the Hierarchy of the grand Hierarchy of our universe, its supreme head, which in the poem Cleanthes called "Zeus". Please always remember that though Zeus may be called the Supreme Hierarchy of a Universe, or

Kosmos, or Hierarchy, he is but the Head of *one* of innumerable other similar hierarchies, hierarchies of the vast aggregate, endless and beginningless, which compose manifested Being.

Now, in him – in It – we live, and move, and have our being. And this *It*, is what we very rightly call *Space*, which is the vast, endless and beginningless congeries of living beings. There is no vacuum, no vacuity, no emptiness, no "nothing", anywhere.

Everything is full, not merely of life, but of living and conscious things, and of beings of infinitely varying degrees of consciousness, such as you and I are, for example. Think of it! Open your minds, and let the thoughts which this divine idea gives to you, stream in. Let them find a habitation in your souls! They bring endless comfort and peace, and lead to further illumination.

Yea, verily, such is *Space*, seven-fold *Space*, more particularly the vast *spaces of Space* inwards, inwards, inwards, endlessly.

In opening our more particular study for this evening, after having thus for the time being finished our study left incomplete at our last meeting, let us read from *The Secret Doctrine*, Volume II, page 492, the second paragraph:

The Secret Doctrine points out, as a self-evident fact, that Mankind, collectively and individually, is, with all manifested nature, the vehicle (*a*) of the breath of One Universal Principle, in its primal differentiation; and (*b*) of the countless "breaths" proceeding from that One BREATH in its secondary and further differentiations, as Nature with its many *mankinds* proceeds downwards toward the planes that are ever increasing in materiality. The primary Breath informs the higher Hierarchies ; the secondary— the lower, on the constantly descending planes.

A wonderful passage! Note particularly the reference to the "many mankind", concerning which matter we shall speak at greater length in a future study.

Now during our last study we traced very briefly the evolution from a *god* (one of infinite multitudes of divinities, – call them "gods", we will not quibble about names –) of other multitudes of inferior beings; of monads springing from that god and forming its luminous garment, its vehicle, its carrier, its bearer, its body. Each one of those innumerable multitudes of monads, in its turn, sends forth from itself, projects from itself, other innumerable multitudes of *souls*, which form *its* garment, *its* bearer, *its* carrier, *its* vehicle, *its* body. Again, every one of such souls in its turn sends forth from itself other innumerable multitudes of *atoms*, prānic-astral entities – not the physical atom of science, please – and these atoms form the garment, the carrier, the vehicle, the bearer, the body of such a soul.

Each one of these atoms, in its turn, concretes around itself, gathers to itself, the life-atoms waiting over for it from previous cycles of activity, which are the skandhas belonging to that plane of manifestation, and thus forms its physical vehicle, in which all the other principles (mostly latent) reside.

Now this vast collection of entities: gods, monads, souls, atoms, passed down through the kosmical Elements which we have described, using the Stoic formulae rather than the Brāhmanic which are not so well known to European readers, but which equally well could have been used; and as these courses of life, as this life-wave, travels downwards into matter, through each element, through each one of the seven elements, it gives birth to one class of these entities which we have been describing.

The god lives on the plane of the Nameless One; the monads live on the plane of the second Element, likewise unnamed in the literature of the ancients; the souls live on the plane of Aether, ākāśa; and the atoms live on the plane of Air, the fourth plane, the prānic-astral world.

Thus, the Elements of the Stoics, seven in number, but only five openly named, form the principles of nature; and the life-wave in passing through these Elements, builds its appropriate habitations in each one of them. At certain appropriate planes, these habitations take the form of globes, and these globes are the seven forming our planetary chain; they are globes built of these innumerable, multitudinous hosts of atoms, of souls, of monads; some "awakened", some partly "awake", some still sleeping in the lower spheres.

Then when the hosts of beings composing the life-wave – the life-wave being composed of the entities derived from a former but now dead planet – in our case the moon – find that the time has arrived for them to enter upon their own particular evolutionary course, they cycle downwards along the planetary chain that has been prepared for them by the three hosts of elementary beings, of the three primordial elementary worlds, the forerunners of the life-wave yet integral parts of it. Remember, a hierarchy consists of ten degrees or states; three, as the Pythagoreans would have said, remaining in the silence and darkness – to us – of divinity, and seven entering into manifestation. This life-wave passes seven times in all around the seven spheres of our planetary chain, at first cycling down the Shadowy Arc through all the seven Elements of the Kosmos, gathering experience in each one of them; each particular entity of the life-wave, no matter what its grade or kind, spiritual, psychic, astral, mental, divine, in it, advancing, advancing, advancing downwards, advancing until at the bottom of the Arc, when the middle of the Fourth Round is attained, they feel the end of the downward impulse. Then begins the upward impulse. According to the Stoic doctrine, everything passes by degrees back towards the divine, through the Elements again, the lower being withdrawn into the higher, until at last the great cyclic round is finished, and the cycling beings re-enter divinity, man being in the front ranks. As so often said before, "Man" begins his evolutionary journey an un-self-conscious godspark, and ends it as a self-conscious god.

And when we say "man" of the later stages of that journey, we mean the *thinking entity*. The *personal*, by that time, will have become the *impersonal*: the *mortal* will have been raised into *immortality*. These two ideas which our Teacher has included among others in her beautiful Invocation, comprise two of the most sublime teachings of the Ancient Wisdom, which we have but briefly alluded to at various times, but which we shall have to study more fully at some future time. The main thing to realize at the present time is that Space is a vast, beginningless and endless Fullness; it is the Boundless All; and, further, that it is composed of the numberless Hierarchies, which actually *are Space itself*, the spaces of Space; and, still further, that these Hierarchies in their turn are composed of incalculable numbers of evolving beings in all the seven stages of development; and that each such being has its own Grand Cycle to perform: first down the Shadowy Arc, and then when the end of that particular evolutionary wave or course has been reached, the reascent along the Luminous Arc upwards, towards the Source from which it originally came. Then, finally, the long pralactic sleep. At its end, comes the kosmic re-awakening, obeying the karmic impulses from the preceding manvantara and manvantaras, the opening of a new evolutionary course through the spheres of Life, but on higher and far sublimer levels than before.

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