

WHAT CAN THEOSOPHY TELL US ABOUT Scriabin's *PROMETHEUS, POEM OF FIRE*?

Example 1.

Leonid Sabaneev, program notes for *Prometheus*, Op. 60 (premiered Moscow, March 2, 1911); translated by Faubion Bowers in *Scriabin: A Biography* (New York: Dover, 1996), 206-207.

Prometheus, Satanas [sic], and Lucifer all meet in ancient myth. They represent the active energy of the universe, its creative principle. The fire is light, life, struggle, increase, abundance, thought. At first, this powerful force manifests itself wearily, as languid thirsting for life. Within this lassitude there appears the primordial polarity between soul and matter. The creative upsurge or gust of feeling registers a protest against this torpor. Later it does battle and conquers matter—of which it itself is a mere atom—and it turns to the original quiet and tranquility, thus completing the cycle.

Helena Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine: The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy*, vol. 2 (1888), 245.

Satan, or Lucifer, represents the *active*, or, as M. Jules Baissac calls it, the 'Centrifugal Energy of the Universe' in a cosmic sense. He is Fire, Light, Life, Struggle, Effort, Thought, Consciousness, Progress, Civilization, Liberty, Independence.

Example 2. Theme of Ideation [pazyuma].

Part 1: circle Part 2: ascent Part 3: descent

Example 3. Motivic derivation of Theme of Will from the ascent fragment of the Theme of Ideation. Numbers below refer to intervals measured in half-steps.

Ascent fragment "Theme of Will"

Reduction Reduction

3 1 4 3 1 4

Example 4. Derivation of the Rapture motive from the descent fragment of the Theme of Ideation.

The image displays two musical examples side-by-side. The left example is labeled 'Descent motive, Theme of Ideation' and the right is 'Rapture motive'. Each example consists of a main staff with a treble clef and a 3/4 time signature, and a 'Reduction' staff below it. The reduction staves show the notes of the main staves with stems and beams, and are annotated with fingerings '1 3 1 3' at the bottom. The Rapture motive staff includes a triplet of notes.

Example 5. From the “Stanzas of Dzyan,” Stanza III, verse 5 (Blavatsky 1888, vol. 2, 68).

“The root remains, the light remains, the curds remain, and still Oeaoahoo (a) is one (b).”
 a) “Oeaoahoo” is rendered “*Father-Mother of the Gods*” in the commentaries, or the six-in-one, or the septenary root from which all proceeds. All depends upon the accent given to these seven vowels, which may be pronounced as *one*, three, or even seven syllables by adding an *e* after the letter “o.” This mystic name is given out, because without a thorough mastery of the triple pronunciation it remains for ever ineffectual. b) This refers to the Non-Separateness of all that lives and has its being, whether in active or passive state. In one sense, Oeaoahoo is the “Rootless Root of All”...in another sense it is a name for the manifested one life, the Eternal living Unity. The “Root” means, as already explained, pure knowledge (*Sattva*), eternal (*Nitya*) unconditioned reality or sat (*Satya*)...for these are the two aspects of the one. The “Light” is the same Omnipresent Spiritual Ray, which has entered and now fecundated the Divine Egg, and calls cosmic matter to begin its long series of differentiations.

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