

CHAPTER XXXIII

Anaximenes (585 - 528 B.C)

Air

Born in Miletus, Anaximenes, about 545 BCE becomes renowned for his revolutionary views concerning man and the universe.

Anaximenes identifies air with the soul and considers that this alone is the genetic principle of the cosmos. "Just as our soul is an air that composes our very selves, so also the entire cosmos is composed of a breath, of air."

All beings of the natural world derive from air. The principle of the world is based on the rarefaction and condensation of air. The densities create the various substances.

When air is rarefied, it becomes fire; when it condenses it becomes wind, later cloud, later water, later soil, later rocks and all other elements that make up the earth.

The cause of eternal motion is air alone.

With his theories, Anaximenes opens widely the doors of rational interpretation of the phenomena and things of the world.

