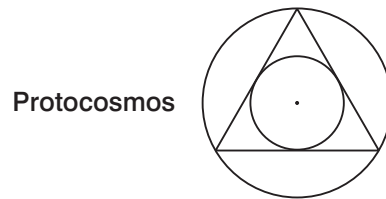


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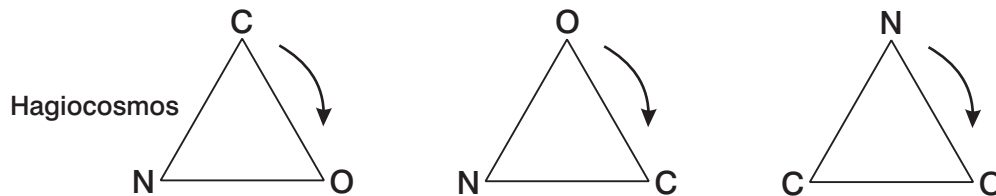
SIX TRIADS

Listening to Tolstoy's story, *What Men Live By*, has stirred in some of you a wish to learn from it all that we can about the Six Triads. It is not difficult to find all the six even in this simple story, but to analyse it intellectually like that would be a very sterile approach.

Let us begin by reminding ourselves that the System states that in the First Cosmos (the Absolute) the Three Forces are one; and though the ordinary mind cannot grasp the meaning of 'Three in One and One in Three', we can use the following symbol:



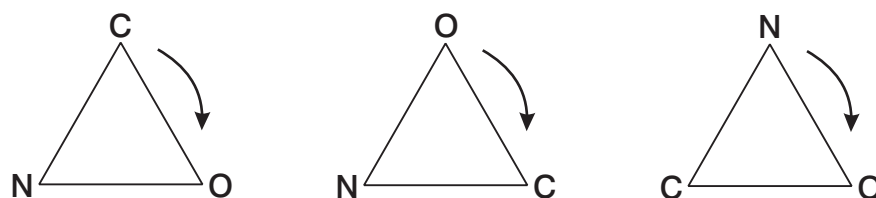
In the Hagiocosmos – 'Holy World' – which corresponds to 'All Galaxies' taken together, there are three combinations of the Forces – three Primary Triads – conscious in their origin and in their operation. The first begins with Carbon, the second with Oxygen and the third with Nitrogen. We can show them like this:



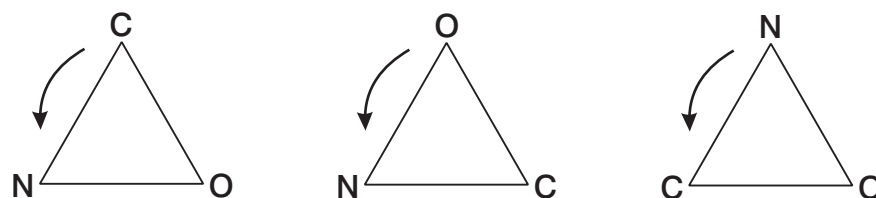
We are expressing their 'order of action' in a clockwise direction and we see that the first two end in Nitrogen, being as it were a preparation for the third which begins with Nitrogen, which we can equate with the word 'Love', as used in this story. The Russian word for 'Love' is as much abused as in English, so we must realise that on this level we have no idea what the word means.

Tolstoy was brought up in the Russian Orthodox Church, but all through his life he drew his inspiration direct from the Gospels. So we may well turn to the Gospels for clues to this story, and we were told that the Lord's Prayer contains the key to the study of Triads. The last sentence (doxology) describes the Three Forces on the scale of the Holy World, the other name for which is 'Eternal Unchangeable.' 'For Thine *is* the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory for ever and ever.' These three words 'Kingdom', 'Power' and 'Glory' represent the three triads continuously existing in Eternity and as yet unmanifested.

The manifestation of 'Kingdom, Power and Glory' is developed in the Macrocosmos – the ideal Galaxy or Island Universe. Here the three triads have lost a degree of freedom and have become three fixed and immutable laws. In addition their mechanical counterparts have arisen within the Galaxy itself – we can show them with the arrows counter-clockwise: (overleaf)



Macrocosmos



What we call 'Space' and 'Time', 'Accident', 'Error', 'Evil' make their appearance on this level as limitations to the Scheme of Creation, the Cosmic Plan and the Will of God.

These six triads are repeated in increasing complexity as matter becomes more dense in smaller and smaller worlds.

The first part of the Lord's Prayer describes the primordial three triads on the scale of the Solar System: 'Our Father which art in the heavens,

Hallowed be Thy Name,
Thy Kingdom come
Thy Will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.

The three triads which are conscious in origin have to reach fulfilment within our small Earth – a little planet in the early stages of its development.

The remaining part of the Lord's Prayer shows how the triads work out for humanity. You will notice that the word 'I' does not occur: 'Give us this day our miraculous bread' – give us the Higher Impressions which we should naturally have. 'And dismiss from us our debts insomuch as we dismiss the debts of those who are indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation *but* deliver us from Evil' – (the evil of taking it all *personally*), 'for *Thine* is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory for ever and ever, Amen'.

Though the prayer dwells on the three Conscious triads, it hints at their counterparts – unselected impressions (ordinary bread), debts, temptation, evil in the life of man – and describes in what the work of a School must really consist.

With this description as a background perhaps we can look again at the story: 'What men live by'. In the purely human events in the story we see the genesis of Love in Simon and Matrena in vivid contrast to its opposite – 'the stench of death', and we can see the other triads on the scale of human psychology and human activities. But in the Archangel Michael's descriptions of his relation with God, his own instruction and forgiveness we see from above their operation in the development of man. But we cannot go further until we actually experience what the word 'Love' means – for this is no ordinary love. It may be equated with

the System word 'Nitrogen' on this particular scale, or with 'Sattva Guna' of the Sankhya philosophy.

Once again we turn to the Gospels for help in understanding: When the lawyer asks Jesus the question we are asking now, 'What shall I do to inherit Eternal life?' the reply is: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God... and thy neighbour as thyself'. In reply to the further question 'And who is my neighbour?' comes the story of the Good Samaritan ending with the question, 'Who then was neighbour unto him that fell among thieves?' And it is answered, 'He that showed mercy upon him'.

This description was cited by Mr. Ouspensky as the clearest example of the conscious triad beginning with Nitrogen. It represents School work in epitome; it requires the harmonious co-operation of all three storeys of the organism from which all sorts of personal elements have been eliminated. The nearest equivalent to the meaning of the word 'mercy' is, therefore, 'understanding', and you will remember that the Fourth Way is based not upon faith but upon *Understanding*. So let us just try to experience more and more of this through the meditation and through our work for the School, rather than indulging in more mental gymnastics.

Next week we can discuss the psychological lessons we can learn from the story, which today we have treated from the point of view of Alchemy.

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