

29 October 1962

THOUGHTS ON THE COSMOS OF ALL LIVING

FOREWORD

In an earlier paper a description was given of the world within the solar system – the world of all living beings under the sun, which was called the Cosmos of All Living. It was shown how this world could be compared with the world within ourselves – how the form and the principles embodied in our ‘food table’ applied equally on this enormous scale. It was shown that the three octaves in the food table – the octaves of food, air and impressions – could be discovered also on this larger scale; that the first applied to the planetary world, the second to organic life on earth, and the third to mankind. To describe the different steps in these three octaves the names of the different levels of being in the ‘step diagram’ or ‘diagram of all living’ were used; and it was found that the hydrogen numbers in each case were the same. The following paper is an attempt to develop some of the ideas on which the original conception was based. Many of the ideas are tentative, and much has yet to be proved. But if it opens the door to a new understanding of man’s purpose in the scheme of things, and raises a number of questions, something at least will have been achieved.

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THOUGHTS ON THE COSMOS OF ALL-LIVING

The ‘Cosmos of All Living’ can show us many things in a new light. It can help us to see the real meaning of the world in which we live, and it can put everything in its right place – show us what everything is for. But first let us try to see what each octave is all about – what each octave means taken as a whole.

The first octave is concerned with planets. Planets, taken on this scale, are the physical structure of the solar system. And within this structure it is our own earth which provides a ground in which the other two octaves can develop. The earth, supported by the planets, held most delicately in balance by their influences, is the environment in which life and intelligence can flourish.

Everything belonging to the earth, from the heaviest state of matter to the finest; everything from her metallic core to the subtle layers of her upper atmosphere, mountains, seas, rivers, rocks, lakes, mineral deposits and so on – all these are included in her octave. And just as in our own food table the first octave culminates at the highest level – at Si 12 – in the evolution of the germ cell, so the planetary octave culminates at the same level in the evolution of ‘angels’. Angels are planets which are sufficiently complete to be able under certain circumstances to develop into archangels – into solar systems of their own.

The second octave, the octave of Nature, is concerned with living things; not individual living things, but species, for as yet there is no question of individuality. In this octave it is *kinds* of things which are significant – different experiments of the Great Laboratory, different prototypes – dogs, cats, mice, lizards and different insects, plants and flowers, and so on. And

just as in our own food table the second octave – the air octave – culminates at its highest level in the instinctive mind, the ‘mind behind the machine’, so in the Cosmos of All Living the second octave culminates in the Great Laboratory of Nature – a mind on exactly the same level as the instinctive mind within ourselves, responsible for the development and growth of organic life on earth, with all its infinite variety of species, its different experiments.

And the third octave – the impressions octave – is concerned with mankind. At this point it is no longer a question of species – it is not man as a species – *Homo sapiens* – it is man’s individuality which is significant. And just as our own impressions octave is concerned with the development of our different ‘I’s, culminating at the highest level in the creation of a permanent principle – a permanent ‘I’ within ourselves, so the development of the third octave in the Cosmos of All Living is concerned with different levels of men – with vertebrates, men and angels – culminating at the highest level in the creation of a permanent principle within humanity – the Inner Circle.

These three octaves represent quite separate and distinct streams in the world around us – streams which in a sense are so obvious that we do not realise their significance. The being of a stone and the being of a tree; and then again the being of a tree and the being of a man; each of these is quite distinct – its *time* is quite different. A stone belongs to the earth, is part of the earth and breathes with the earth. A tree is part of Nature, and breathes with Nature. But man himself – he has his own breath, his own time.

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So each of the three octaves is quite different. They each exist for a different purpose, yet they are all three necessary for the fulfilment of the one cosmos. They exist in order that all the laws of the universe may be expressed on a particular level. If one of the octaves is incomplete, certain laws will not be expressed. We know this to be true in our own food table; it is strange to think what it might mean on the scale of the Cosmos of All Living.

Suppose the impressions octave on this scale does not develop fully, for instance; suppose man’s development in relation to the Inner Circle is incomplete, and there exist insufficient men of a higher level of being; it will mean that the second octave also does not develop fully – that Nature’s development as intended by the Great Laboratory is stifled or impeded in some way. The higher levels of energy in Nature may be prevented from circulating properly, and wrong results may follow. Nature may become starved – deprived in some way of her beauty and her loveliness, wrongly used perhaps for man’s selfish purposes... Yet the earth lives on; for the higher development of the impressions octave is not essential for the ordinary purposes of life – the earth lives on in a dull sort of way.

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But fortunately times change; and even if the world is lost in barbarism for a thousand years, another civilisation will return. Provided only one thing – that man *remembers*. The memory of man’s possibilities, the knowledge that is necessary for his development, all this exists within the Inner Circle. Memory, on this scale, *is* the Inner Circle. The Inner Circle continues to exist when the rest of the world has forgotten – it continues to exist through the long days and nights of the earth.

How is it that the Inner Circle is able to remember? How can it retain something

permanent, when the rest of the world is changing? How can it remain outside time – subject to different laws?

Let us return to the question of time, in its relation to each octave of the Cosmos of All Living. In relation to the Cosmos taken as a whole, each of the three octaves has quite a different *sort* of time. The first octave – the Planetary octave – is concerned with the measure of time – with the passing of the days and the years. The planets in this sense are very exact – nowhere within the solar system does there exist a measure of time so exact and invariable as the year, for instance, the day of twenty-four hours, the lunar period of twenty-eight days, the precession of the equinox and so on. Nature, on the contrary, is never exact. Her rhythms, although controlled by the planetary movements, are subject to variation. No-one knows exactly when the Spring will come, no-one knows exactly when the fruit will ripen, and above all, no-one knows exactly how long life will last. Everything is changeable and variable, and at the same time, everything repeats itself again and again. This is the real point about Nature's time – it is not really time at all, it is repetition.

Now Nature's repetition is concerned above all with life and death, and in this sense there are two kinds of repetition. There is that kind of repetition by which one generation follows upon another, i.e. repetition in time; and there is that kind of repetition by which your individual life and mine is repeated again and again, i.e. repetition in eternity, or eternal recurrence. In Nature, eternal recurrence shows itself in the instinctive behaviour of living creatures. It is the means whereby complicated manoeuvres are carried out without having to be learnt. When a bird builds its nest it already knows how to do it, even when it has never built one before. And of course it has no choice – it has to do it in exactly the same way again and again.

But with man it is different. Although his instinctive life may remain unchanged – although the instinctive part of him may be subject to the same laws, yet there is something added – something that animals have not got. This something is the possibility of individual choice – of individual freedom from the laws of recurrence. And this is what the third octave in the Cosmos of All Living is all about. The third octave, the octave of man's development, moves in a direction at right angles to the circle of repetition, away from the wheel of recurrence. And the Inner Circle of Humanity, which is the culmination of the third octave, consists of men who are outside the ordinary laws of time – the Inner Circle is that part of mankind which is able to *remember*.

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Now one of the most interesting of all questions is the way in which the second and third octaves in the Cosmos of All Living influence one another. How obvious it is, seen on this scale, that man's development can only proceed in harmony with Nature, and that Nature cannot develop fully without man. Perhaps it is because Nature's octave begins on a lower level – perhaps that is where the idea came from that man has to struggle *against* Nature. In reality man has to help Nature, and if he does so she can play an essential part in his own development.

But the relationship between Nature and man is by no means easy to grasp, and even on ordinary levels we fail to see it clearly. We are unable to see the whole thing long enough in time. We cannot see that a rose, for instance, could never have grown into so beautiful a thing on its own – that it needed hundreds, even perhaps thousands of years of man's influence.

We cannot see that man's influence exists everywhere in Nature – in the fields, the landscape, the hedges, even in the very shape of the ground itself. We think that Nature develops best on her own, when really she is helpless without man – she overruns herself, becomes entangled, very soon begins to go downwards. And we do not realise, too, how much we are influenced by Nature – how close Nature is to us, how much she is trying to tell us, but we do not listen.

Glimpses of understanding, and new feelings about Nature are often associated with the sensation of different time. We feel connected, momentarily, with a much bigger world than that of everyday life. This is one way in which Nature influences us, and maybe her influence is more direct than we supposed. Consider, for instance, the following account of Jacob Boehme's illumination:

About the year 1600, in the twenty-fifth year of his age, he was again surrounded by the divine light and replenished with the heavenly knowledge; insomuch as going abroad in the fields to a green before Ney's Gate, at Goerlitz, he there sat down and, viewing the herbs and grass of the field in his inward light, he saw into their essences, use and properties, which were discovered to him by their lineaments, figures and signatures. In like manner he beheld the whole creation, and from that foundation he afterwards wrote his book, *De Signature Rerum*.

Now the 'signature of things' which Jacob Boehme beheld was written first of all in the Great Laboratory; and it must have been a glimpse of the Great Laboratory which Boehme saw. This is how the idea of the Great Laboratory is described in the *New Model*:

In looking at the vegetable and animal worlds we may think that in some immense and incomprehensible laboratory of Nature there are produced one after another a series of experiments. The result of each experiment is put into a separate glass tube, is sealed and labelled, and so enters our world. We see it and say 'fly'. Next experiment, next tube – we say 'bee', next – 'snake', 'elephant', 'horse', and so on... But gradually we begin to see a system and a definite direction in the work of the Great Laboratory. We begin to understand that the laboratory experiments *only* with man. The task of the laboratory is to create a 'form' evolving by itself, that is, on the condition of help and support, but with its own forces. This self-evolving form is man.

In the Cosmos of All Living, these experiments of the Great Laboratory belong to the first three notes of Nature's octave – the notes Do, Re, Mi, – 'plants', 'invertebrates' and 'vertebrates'. At the note MI a form is created which is able to evolve 'on the condition of help and support, but with its own forces'. And so man's octave begins. It grows out of Nature, so to speak, as a branch grows out of a tree. But this in itself is not the end of Nature's octave; for provided man is able to evolve – provided the experiment is successful – Nature's octave develops also – develops to a very high level indeed.

These higher notes in Nature's octave – the notes Fa, Sol, La and Si – are difficult, if not impossible to express in words. They correspond to that which, in ourselves, we have come to associate with *essence*. If one realises this it opens the door to many new discoveries, both about Nature and about ourselves. For somewhere hidden in Nature's octave is the key – the key to the whole story of life on earth, how it began, how it unfolded and how it will end – the key to all the past, to all the present and all the future of the Cosmos of All Living.

Man's octave, by contrast, is concerned in its beginning with something more akin to *personality*. If one does not take it too exactly, this idea can also open many doors. It explains why the world in which we live is so false and so full of lies, yet from it can come a limited number who seek the Truth. And it explains, too, how useless it is to struggle against all this, for it must be so, and change can only come from above, from a higher level. And it explains why Nature and man must develop side by side – how man has the knowledge and intelligence which Nature needs, and how Nature in her turn has the power. And it explains why, if man will unite himself with Nature, nothing will any longer be impossible for him.

C. L.

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