

11 May 1964

READING 2

It was intended that you should, if you wish to, go further into the big field which was opened up at the meeting at Colet House on Monday, 4th May. It can perhaps be taken in three parts, but these should be kept separate – being on different scales.

PART 1. A TRIAD WHICH DEPENDS ON ‘BEING PASSIVE’

Dr. R. I would like to take up the conversation of last week at the point where Alan Caiger-Smith and Alice Bolton asked some questions which did not get good answers. One was: ‘I would like to understand what we learn about the Meditation in practice this way?’

The gist of their questions referred to our description (which we owe to Mr. Lucas) about the essence of the triad which makes for successful meditation, and the form of this triad (which is the same as that of the Food Table) rather surprised some of you.

The triad begins with *Oxygen*, the *passive*, and is passive throughout. It was pointed out that, provided you are passive, everything will come along, but if you begin being active it doesn’t work. The triad goes on: in the second place there is this *Carbon* – in the middle place of the triad, which is always as you know unsuspected and invisible. It is something which is out of sight – not under the control of one’s will; and then the triad ends in the *Nitrogen*, which is what we are after for obvious reasons.

But why this Carbon in the second place? I would like to remind you of the recent discovery that we have been talking about since November last – about the three-fold mechanism for the setting-up of Consciousness. Before I do that, I would like also to remind you of the Food Diagram.

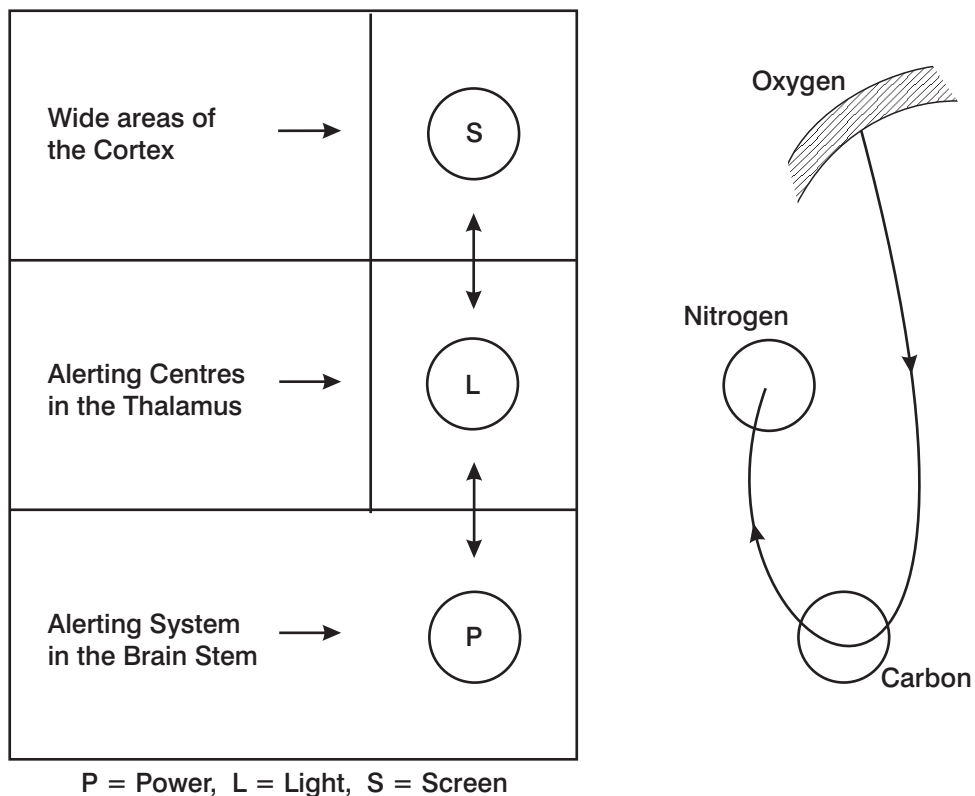


Figure 1

You will remember that if appetising food is swallowed at a time when one is hungry, on entering the lower storey, it meets with Carbons (active matters) already prepared at the right place by Nature – far below any will of ours, out of sight and not easily observable; but their presence ensures that digestion proceeds by a series of steps.

It is rather the same thing with the mantra and the alerting to Consciousness, and this is a fact that we have only recently found.

Before the Light can shine at point (L) and reflect on the Screen (S), the Power (P) has to be switched on; you cannot just sit in a chair and be conscious without some definite, special, artful way of switching on the Power. Now this ‘alerting system’ in the brain-stem is far below anything our wills can reach or of which our consciousness can be aware. By being passive the mantra goes down and down through the levels of the brain and, sure as Fate, if you are passive it will turn on that switch! But any intervention of one’s own will and of the ordinary psychological activity will merely impede its progress.

This is not just theory; we have felt it and seen it again and again. I have seen it hundreds of times in giving people the meditation – unprepared people. It suddenly hits them at the Initiation, and if we know enough about this ‘alerting system’ we recognise the signs. Within this ‘Reticular’ system is the higher control of the breathing and the circulation, of posture and of muscle-tone; so that at once these things change – even in the first minute. If the meditation has gone to the right place, to this ‘alerting system’, people begin to breathe deeply and wash out the acids – that is because of this breathing centre in the mid-brain; they relax – their facial muscles relax; their posture becomes easy; their circulation changes, the heart-beat becoming quiet and economical, and so on. We know clearly the signs which result from allowing the mantra to hit the target. Does, that, Caiger-Smith, explain why that Carbon is in the second place from one point of view?

Mr. Caiger-Smith. Yes.

Dr. R. Then that nice substance, Nitrogen. Why is it the wrong triad if that is in the second place? (We all like to think of this Nitrogen as Sattva...) But the point is the mantra is stopping short at the wrong place – point L not yet being alerted – the Light bulb, but no power switched on. Though it can give quite pleasant results, it will not lead to full evolution of the mantra. It is just in the wrong order and, therefore, not the right triad. Is that clear?

I don’t want you to be analysing these things *during* your meditation. Just meditate – be passive, enjoy it. But from time to time ask yourselves, Why was it good today, and why was it not good yesterday? I believe then you will *feel* the difference between the two triads.

Is that in accordance with your view, Lucas?

Mr. Lucas. Yes, very much.

Dr. R. And it is really through the meditation that we have got so interested in these discoveries about neurology. Any questions on that? We will come back to it again whenever you like.

Miss Bolton. Would you say that the ‘turn-on’ works better because of the ‘feed-back’?

Dr. R. Yes, you see every time you are fully attending to the mantra and fully passive it will come down through there (S) down to (L) and down to (P) picking up good things as it goes

along, and this will help the future results. You begin again, and it goes through the same progress again and again; and whereas the mantra when you first hear it comes (as the Shankaracharya puts it) 'light on the tongue', it gradually acquires weight, power, 'feed-back', if you like to call it that.

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PART 2: 6 TRIADS IN THE RAY OF CREATION

Well now, Mr. Lucas and I have both arrived (or rather he got there first!) at the conclusion that if we are going to speak about triads, we should do it in the way that Mr. Ouspensky suggested, and I luckily turned up the report of what I feel was really the finest meeting on the subject in January, 1938 at Warwick Gardens – just before the zenith of his work here when he was at his most inspired. I would like to read you how that meeting began and show you on that scale how we can see this idea of the Six Triads enlarged: (reading)

Mr. O. In two questions triads were mentioned. What do you really remember about them? You see, I want to put it in the simplest form, because if people come and ask you, I want to know how much you remember and what you will say. First, do you remember how the idea of triads starts? It is said that every action, every manifestation is the result of the conjunction of three forces: positive, negative and neutralizing. This is the first idea that was explained in the System, and at the time when we first spoke of it in St. Petersburg, when we first learned it, I realised that this idea is the same as the idea of triads in Indian philosophy. In Sankhya philosophy you find the idea of three Gunas and it is explained there that they are three forces and their combination produces all the phenomena in the world. In Sankhya philosophy it is put like that: three Gunas have seven combinations, one combination incomprehensible for our mind and six combinations comprehensible for our mind. This is the principle, this is the idea. And if we connect this possibility of seven combinations with the Ray of Creation, we will get something out of it. But of this we will speak later. First we must begin with the general idea, and you must understand how you can start to study it. One way is from the point of view of human actions... The other way of approaching this subject is from the side of the Ray of Creation.

Dr. R. We will put up the first part of the main Ray of Creation (on screen, overleaf) and read what Mr. Ouspensky goes on to say: (reading)

The incomprehensible triad belongs to World 1. (Dr. R. The Absolute). In this triad each force occupies each place. World 3 consists of three triads, and World 6 consists of six triads.

Try to remember what you know about these worlds from the Ray of Creation. We know that World 3 is under the Will of the Absolute, so the three triads of World 3 are controlled by the Absolute, but the control of the Absolute ends at World 3. In World 6 enters mechanicalness. Mechanicalness means limitations, so we can call the second three triads in World 6: Mechanicalness, Space and Time. The first three triads we can call: Intelligence (or Mind), Consciousness and Will. But this is all on a very big scale, not comparable with our ordinary scale. This is all we can say, without trying to invent, approaching it from above. Then we can start on our own level with trying to find differences in human activity.

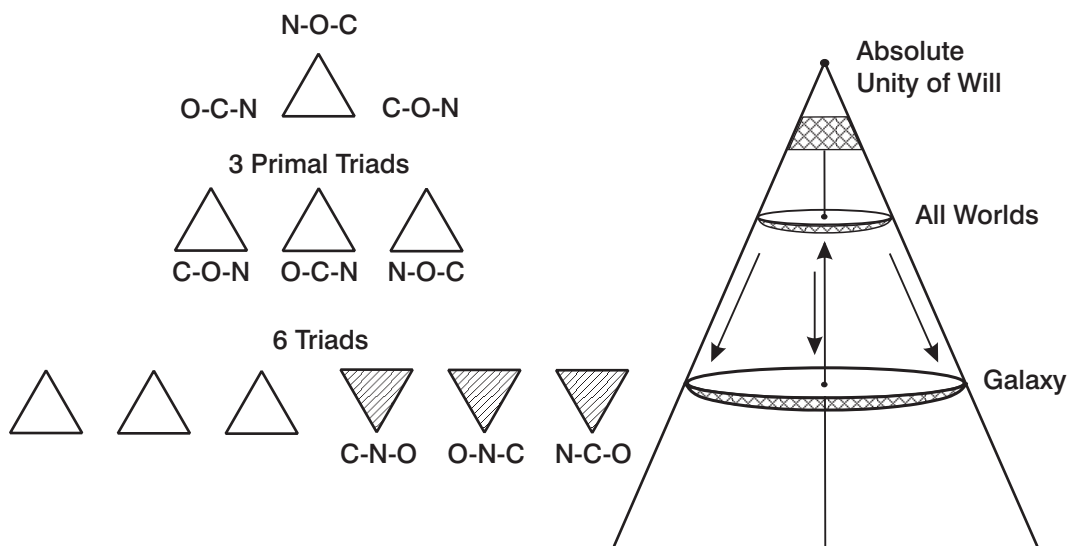


Figure 2

Dr. R. Don't pay too much attention to the labels that Mr. Ouspensky affixed to the triads at that meeting. He changed them; he tried this label then another label feeling for the way to describe the three Primal triads in World 3 and the three limiting ones which enter at World 6 on the level of the Galaxy. It is not the labels so much; it is the *principle* that the first three are under the control of the Absolute as far as All Worlds, and after that limitations enter.

Now we have learned something since then; we have understood something which makes what he was saying far clearer to us now, and I feel Mr. Lucas puts it very well in this suggestion that he wrote to me, that we should start again in this way. Mr. Lucas writes:

You know I believe it would help to bring in this question of the differences between the three triads on the level of World 3 and the three further triads which start from World 6. I believe this is the clue to an understanding of the rest – perhaps one should start by explaining it. I mean that the three triads on the level of World 3 correspond, when reduced to man's scale, to that which goes on in the place within him where consciousness dwells. The further three triads which start from World 6 correspond to the level where functions begin – the point where the architect of the universe instructs the builders to begin their work. So you can always tell the difference, because these further three triads cannot exist without functions of one sort or another going on...

Dr. R. And do you remember that recent discoveries have proved that there is a mechanism for the setting-up of Consciousness or the alerting of Attention for its own sake, and quite irrespective of functions; Consciousness can exist without functions and functions without Consciousness. Proper understanding of this point would get rid of the mistake made in the modern way of talking about consciousness referred to in Reading 1.

So those primal three triads on the human scale are concerned with Consciousness itself and are to be found in the Fourth Room – the place where Consciousness has to be set up; whereas the other three limiting triads are in the machinery of the mind-body and are associated with functions – the wrong and right use of functions, and so on. In other words, you have a room, and this room is 'mind', and the furniture and everything in it are the 'functions of mind'. *Consciousness is like the Light*; you switch on the Light and the man sees his mind and its contents, and there can be more or less light. But light is not content; it is

what the Light shines on that is content. Do you agree with that? Is that how it feels? The same old mind is going on, the same old functions, and suddenly – for a moment – some Light comes on, and you see it all; then the Light goes out and you stop seeing it.

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Now the meditators had it all their own way in our talk last Monday and I want to hear some Dervishes speak this time, because it seems to me that in their Mukabeleh (the Tradition of seven-and-a-half centuries) is provided everything of the three Primal triads that any Dervish could want. I believe we are seeing there the clearest illustration of those three triads. The first triad is of course C–O–N and is the multiplication of all created forms – more and more complex, more and more multiplicity. The second triad O–C–N is the ‘Return to the Source’ – Unity out of diversity, return to the Will of your Creator on the level of World 3, return to the Absolute. Now in the Mukabeleh, to give you just one instance, the Sheikh Effendi is leading the Dervishes three times round the Circle of Creation and he begins by descending through all created forms; the second half-circle is the return to the Source. That is only one example, but there are those two triads in front of one’s eyes. I believe that the Turning itself (revolution, rhythm, repetition) is an example of the third of these Primal triads (N–O–C). But this I want to leave debatable. (to Mr. Crampton) Has anything else occurred to you about the possibilities of the Mukabeleh that could be said from this point of view?

Mr. Crampton. Almost too much.

Dr. R. Is there anybody who has ‘turned’ who wants to say anything?

Mrs. Allan. We used to talk in the old days about the two preparatory triads, and we used to think of methods and ways by which we could work on these triads. Last Monday it struck me that we had found a method connected with each of them in a sense of both containing all.

Dr. R. And three, if we use the third in the right way. But it is quite true about two triads leading to the third; and this does not deny any of that at all (as shown in the diagram).

In thinking back about the Turning, Mrs. Koren; hasn’t it often come to your mind that the Mukabeleh contains all in One and gives each person every chance? Think about it and tell us if something comes up. (Mrs. Koren nods)

Dr. R. There is a unity and a diversity too about the turners (collectively), and many things of that kind that give you this very strong feeling of the primary three triads all under one Will. But then, of course, there are the Dervishes themselves, and each of them probably knows very well by now the three different kinds of limitations which occur inside the mechanism of a Dervish! These limitations which he finds in himself – more one week, less another week – are why it takes seven years to make a Dervish. These limitations are gradually overcome. He finds how he himself has *to Be*, and the Mukabeleh helps to overcome these limitations. I am quite ignorant, but this is how it seems to me looking at them.

Mr. Crampton. It also contains the idea of the three lines of work: work on oneself, work with other people, and the meaning of the whole Mukabeleh itself. These in a sense are all in one Mukabeleh, reminding one all the time of all three – how they all come together.

Dr. R. That these three lines are necessary and each Mukabeleh brings them all together.

Mr. Crampton. And in this way it connects with the three triads which one sees operating at different stages of the Mukabeleh itself: there is the silence and the activity, and they alternate. Then there are the moments when everybody feels something, when everything comes together at once.

Dr. R. There is another rather wonderful thing shown in the Mukabeleh. It used to be said that the triads ending in Nitrogen were continuous processes – the processes which went on. The triad C–O–N is the process shown in the Ray of Creation. The Absolute creates – through a model Galaxy creates all Galaxies, through a model Star creates all Stars, and so on.

The second triad, O–C–N, is the triad of the Food Table. Food is of three kinds – is brought in, acted upon, taken a step higher; it goes on continuously like that. Nitrogen at the end of the triad means continuity.

The third triad which ends in Active Force, N–O–C, provides the additional impulses which are needed in the course of either of these first two triads to ensure this continuity. You know in the Food Table the First Conscious Shock has to do with Self-remembering, and it is the triad of N–O–C bringing Carbon to the right place; the Second Shock has to do with the transformation of negative emotions into positive.

Well now, in the Mukabeleh there is plenty of continuity, there is plenty of rhythm; and one part of the Turning leads naturally to the next, as the Dervishes come through, and so on. But there are certain moments when shocks are given and one of these is where the Dervishes beat on the ground, 'Get up, get up!' You can find other examples like the sudden ending of a period of Turning, where they have to go quickly and huddle together. Evidently Mevlana and his Tradition knew a very great deal; and that has been wonderfully preserved for seven-and-a-half centuries and is so alive still, that it has taken root over here in an alien country, and grows stronger and better every week.

Miss Burdett. Surely one of the main things about it is that it is a method which can genuinely release us from the shackles of thinking and theorising, and enable some of these things to happen in a way one never expected?

Dr. R. Good! All right, we will leave it at that; thank you.

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PART 3: SIX TRIADS IN ORGANIC LIFE

Now in case it is too far away for us to be able to think or feel much about the Absolute, all Galaxies and the Milky Way, we have been told that in the smaller octave, the creation of Organic Life on earth is a replica of the big octave; and that from the point of view of Organic Life on earth the Sun represents the Absolute. So we put in the Lateral Octave, the small octave of Organic Life, where man appears for the first time. (Lateral Octave added to the main Ray of Creation on screen, Figure 3) We take the Sun as Unity with the incomprehensible triad where all Three Forces occupy each place. Of course it will be more complicated – each atom of matter will be fourfold – but the principle remains. Then on the level of the Planets will be the three Primal triads (as it were the 'Conscious' triads) –

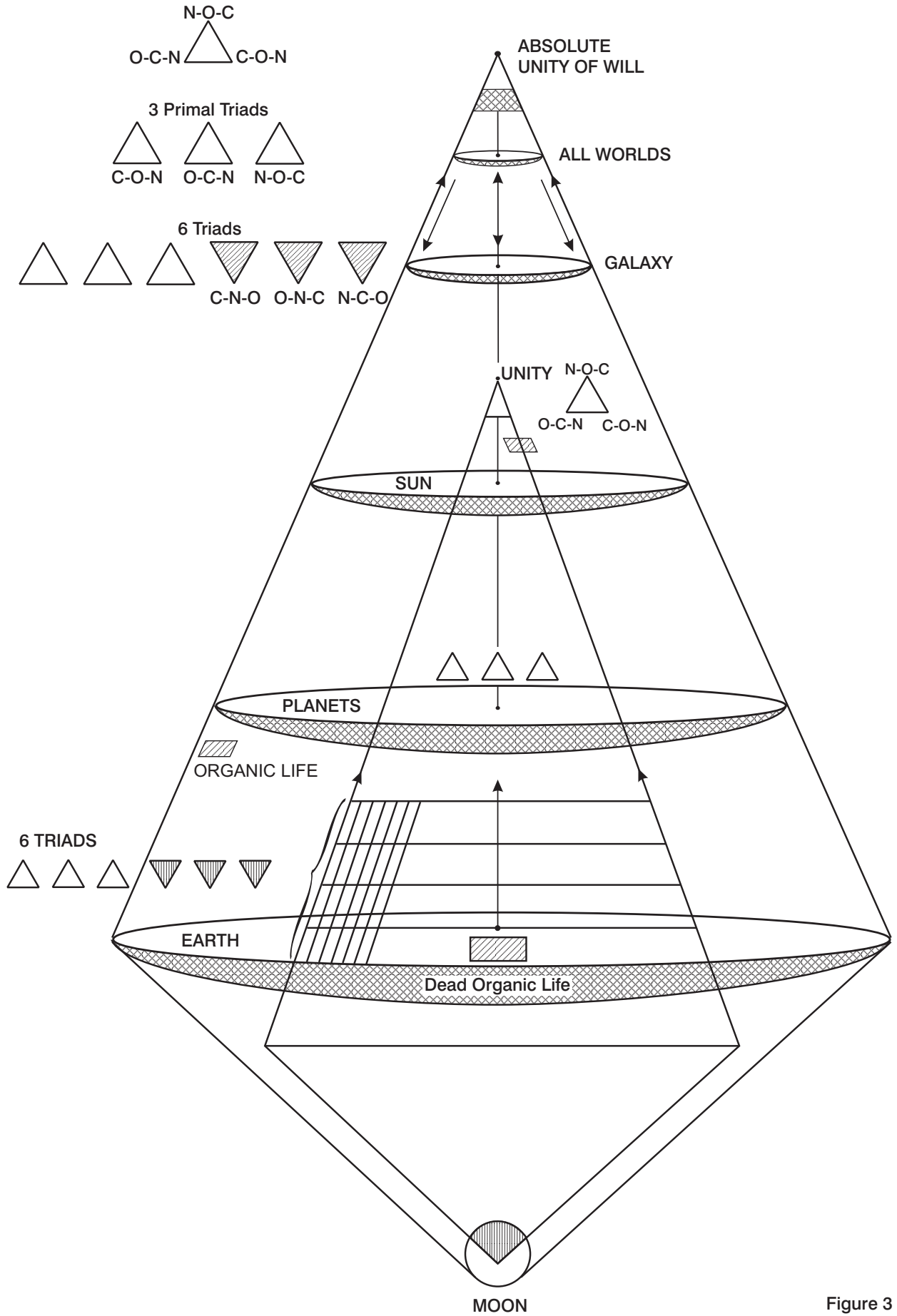


Figure 3

C–O–N, O–C–N, and N–O–C – the continuous multiplying process, the returning process upwards, and the ‘shocks’ at certain intervals. These with the 3 mechanical Triads will, on the next scale of Organic Life on earth, represent six Orders of Laws. Three of these will have the essence of the three Primal triads in them and three will be part of the machinery of Organic Life.

The first three the biologists don’t see; they may all have to do with the formation of a ‘self-creative being’ who can know the Plan and in time, we hope, be Regent of Organic Life; in other words, the three triads for the setting-up of Consciousness we originally spoke about appear here on the Scale of the Biosphere. In the other three the biologists can see the manifestations of the mechanics of Organic Life, genetics, survival of the fittest, the elimination of the unfit, and so on and so forth. A very interesting study of all the different phenomena of Nature that go under the name of ‘evolution’ can be made by an understanding of the six triads, and I feel that we can only understand the six triads in ourselves if we realize ourselves as part of Organic Life.

What limits multiplication of forms and species? What governs the rise and the dying out of species?

Q. Is it not lack of adaptability?

Dr. R. Well, I had in mind the whole question of habitat, of food supply, of the gradual loss of supplies due to the great multiplication of numbers. The ‘fittest’ probably survive because of their strength and their adaptability. A limitation to evolution (in the sense of ‘variation’) is also to be seen very much in Nature because the inferior forms breed so much faster, very quickly common and inferior forms overrun the rarer and more exotic strains. You notice that on islands where ships have called; for the rats they carried have decimated the original multiplicity of the varied stock of the island; though still the most intelligent tend to survive.

For what is it that limits the upward-going of a given species, the improvement of the stock? You might say that one mechanical limitation is *over-specialisation*. Greyhounds became very swift, but have lost other assets, like strength and stamina, through over-specialisation of breeding and training. At last you get to a point where some species cannot live without the aid of a host, since they cannot manufacture things necessary for their own lives without living on and stealing from something else – *parasitism*. All these different processes are interesting to look at. Whenever you read about biology try to see where they come into this scheme.

Another thing is the production of *new forms*. It is thought that this is due to mutations – genetic mutations. Sometimes horrors are produced and don’t last, and sometimes successful forms survive and increase. This may be something to do with this last triad. But without labelling, it is rather valuable to try to think of six triads on that larger scale of Organic Life; try to think after the meditation and see if ideas come to you.

Q. Has not man survived as far as he has because of his non-specialisation? He can live on many kinds of food and live in many different parts of the world.

Dr. R. Yes, it is a remarkable fact, often pointed out, that men have survived in the most extreme conditions because of their extra intelligence. There are many, many questions that

come to one's mind and we must admit we are very ignorant about it; but doesn't this begin to give one a feeling of the scope and magnitude of this idea of the six triads and how, as Lucas has repeatedly pointed out, there is probably no triad which is wrong in itself? Evil arises when a triad is in the wrong place.

In trying to be Conscious we need only the first three triads. The other three are operating inside the machinery as valuable 'side-effects' maybe; but they are not wanted for trying to be conscious; so there is no intrinsic wrong. After all the world is made of six triads, so how can they be wrong? We just have to choose the right one for the purpose.

One example of that I would like to mention – one of the most refreshing things about the Shankaracharya. I have just had two more letters from him answering the various questions. The most noteworthy feature about all his conversations and his letters is that he is only man I have ever met *who always finds something to be pleased about!* That is the triad which he uses for us here, and other things just don't come into his orbit at all. How he does it I don't know; but I think we might well take a lesson out of his book and find things to be pleased about as often as possible.

Let me end by reminding you of the three *languages* about which we have to be very careful:

When we speak of Triads on the Scale of 'All Worlds', we are talking *Philosophy* and use broad and simple terms. On the Scale of the Biosphere it is *theoretical*, but we must assemble the evidence and quote the facts before concocting a theory or any 'working hypothesis' expressed in current technical language.

Only what we actually experience can we describe to each other in the ordinary *practical* language of every day. That is, perhaps, why the introduction of Religious language into ordinary conversation so often sets up resistance, since it implies a free and easy relationship with the Absolute which maybe the speaker has no special right to claim!

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