

29 September 1969

## A NEW LOOK AT THE 'FOOD DIAGRAM'

### INTRODUCTORY: FOR GROUP TAKERS ONLY

There have been many requests that this term we should again make a study of the Food Diagram which belongs to our Western System. I think this desire is based on a need to communicate with each other, so that when we talk about things belonging to 'body', 'mind', 'Soul' or 'Spirit', as when we say, 'I had a feeling that...' or 'I experienced so and so', we can be quite certain that other people know what we are trying to describe!

This introductory paper is only for you who are helping to take groups; to keep by you and to refresh you throughout the term. At our first group meetings we want to prepare people for Reading 1. Therefore it will be only necessary to put up the figure on page 91 (which will be familiar to most of them) and to make sure they understand the three stages. Remember that the diagram refers to the Universe as seen by man – its application to ourselves will follow in the Readings.

### PART 1. WANTED – A CODE FOR COMMUNICATION

The branch of the System that leads up to a description of the plan on which the human organism is designed to work, is really a *code*; people who are well-versed in this code can use it for precise communication, but to those who don't understand the code its terms are meaningless. Some of us learnt this code years ago but since then its meaning has been frozen in printed books and its symbols repeated parrot-wise. I don't want to go all over *that* again. So we'll begin by trying to understand why a code is needed, how this particular one is constructed, and how it can be used as a practical language.

Why a code? A code is defined (OED) as a 'body of laws so related to each other as to avoid inconsistency and overlapping; a set of rules, a system of signals (as in a telegraphic code); a set of letter or figure or word groups with arbitrary meanings (e.g. equivalent to long sentences) for brevity or secrecy'. Nature, 'the Creation', appears to the human observer as incessantly in movement, everywhere melting, changing into something else; the human organism likewise. Our minds have their own code for classifying all the sensory and extrasensory impressions received, the code here consisting of volleys of impulses conveyed by nerves or collections of nerve cells, sorted and classified at different levels of complexity and related in consciousness entirely according to the pathways they take on their journey through the nervous system. Not only does the nervous system of man use a code, but Nature employs many codes for purposes of her own – witness the 'DNA' code (only recently 'cracked') by which information is passed through successive generations of cells and through successive generations of men.

If you read again that dictionary definition of a 'code' you will see that it brings together certain ideas – 'the relation of a body of laws to each other', 'a system of signals for communication', and the idea of 'brevity' by which a single symbol stands for long sentences. Now both our own Western System and the far Eastern System of the Shankaracharya's maintain that the 'body of laws' consists of the compounding of two fundamental cosmic Laws – the Law of Octaves and the Law of the Three Forces, and that understanding of everything depends on

understanding the interaction of these two. The code of our Food diagram cunningly shows us how to relate those two Laws to each other in the context of everything that could happen in the organism of a single human being. So it's really worthwhile to understand how this code is put together, and how eventually this same code can be used to understand everything in the Universe – Nature's various codes included.

## **PART 2. 'OCTAVES OF RADIATIONS'**

The whole of this part of our System stems from what we see of the Universe as we look at it from our tiny planet earth. Within the sphere of influence of the earth is the moon, its only satellite. The earth belongs to a System of Planets; the planets are a part of a star or solar system. These are immediate and important to us; but, more remotely, our whole solar system is just one of the myriad stars of our galaxy, the 'Milky Way', and our Milky Way is just one of uncountable aggregations of stars which make up the nebular universe. And the whole Universe is just one thing, so to this single Whole our System gives the name 'the Absolute'. So these seven steps from the Absolute to the moon comprise one large octave particularly applying to anything that lives on this planet earth. That is just common observation; but *we* have to get accustomed to relating everything together in that way.

The idea of an 'octave' is that it is a cycle, and between each note there is another octave and between each of these notes another octave still, and all in perpetual movement. But this would give us a picture so complicated that our minds could make nothing of it; so this is where the code has to begin; it simplifies things for us and it simplifies in true perspective, by taking only three octaves, one from moon to earth, a second from earth to Sun, and a third from our Sun to the Absolute. This is the way we *have* to look at things; we have to know all about our own house and the street in which we live, but we don't have to know nearly so much about the rest of the city of London and even less about all the other cities and countries.

Although these octaves are really cycles within cycles, our code again simplifies by showing these three octaves as divisions along a straight line, thus making the idea quite easy to grasp by means of a deliberate falsification which we can easily rectify at a later stage (Figure 1). You can see that the short distance from earth to moon (which has so recently been covered by the first men to land there) occupies the same space in the code as the much bigger distances within the solar system comprising all the planets with their satellites, the asteroids, the comets and the meteorites and the 'dust,' together with the high-speed particles emanating from the Sun, and the electromagnetic fields, the gravitational force also which links all parts of the Solar System together into one single 'Star'.

This picture expresses not their proportionate size, but their comparative *importance* to living things on earth. In spite of its tiny size the moon, because of its nearness, exerts an enormous pull on all fluids on the earth (not only on the tides), and therefore on all the movement of those fluids; thus the moon's gravity and its 29-day cycle produce a profound effect on the organs and fluids of the physical body; though there is no reason why we should allow our minds to be weighed down by it! The pull of the moon is as great as that of all the other entities within the solar system put together; and equals moreover the influence of all the other stars within our galaxy and of all the other galaxies of this expanding universe which, though

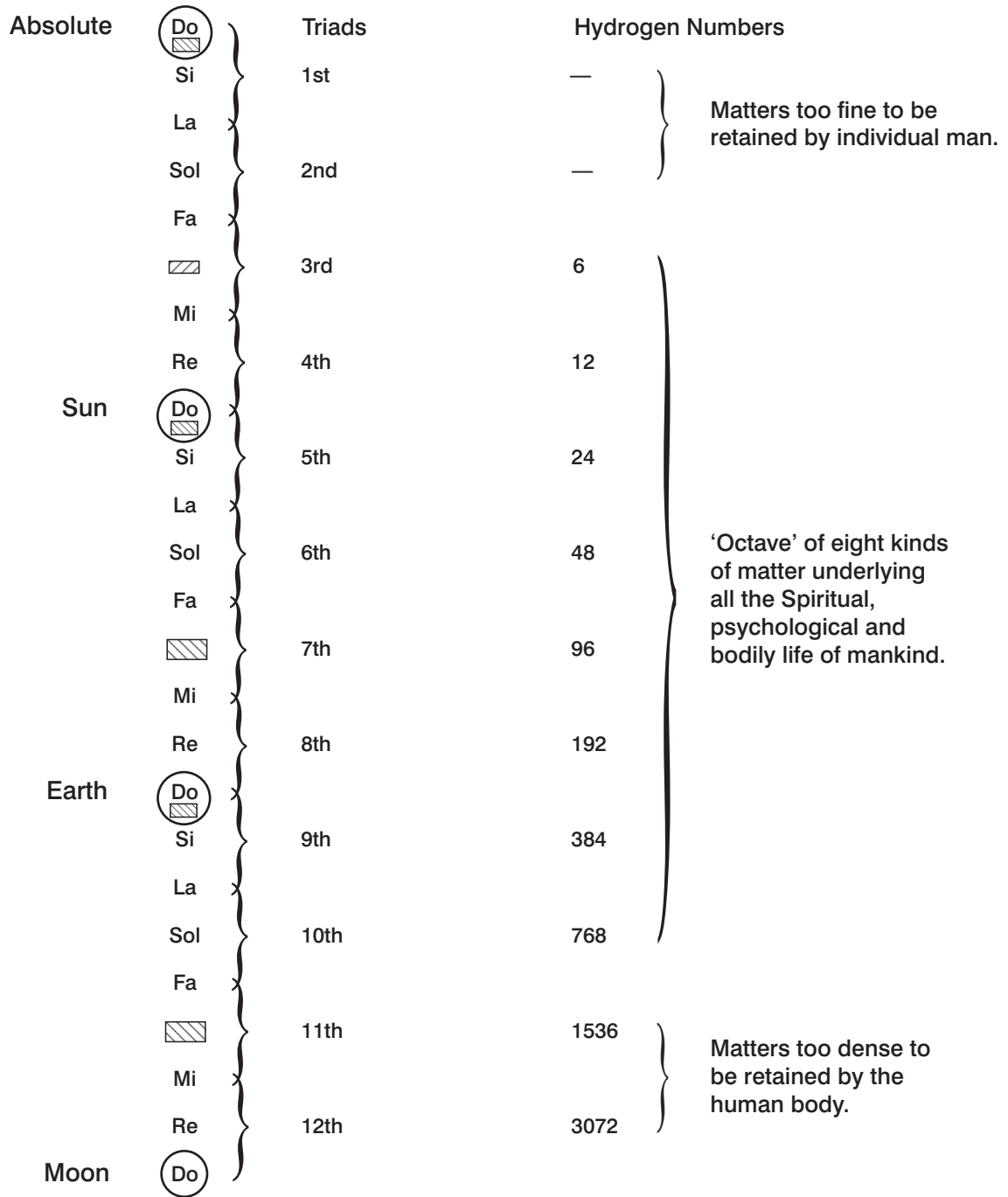


Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

enormous in size, are too distant to affect our biosphere. So this code shows us a way to think – to think in terms of relativity and scale. Neglect of these principles and the consequent misunderstanding of the relation between a part and the ‘whole’ to which it belongs, leads to the many wrong conclusions that are drawn from carefully collected scientific data. Our solar system, for example, is a *growing* branch; at present the earth carries a biosphere, Mars has passed through this phase, Venus is coming on and will be ready to take over from the Earth. The Mariner rockets (unmanned of course) have recently passed very close to Mars and their records confirm this view. It is quite impossible that any form of bodily life (as we know it) now exists on its surface since its atmosphere is far too thin and its temperature too cold. But in its

atmosphere in the neighbourhood of its polar ice-cap traces of methane and of ammonia are taken as proving that organic life did at one time exist on Mars. But the moon belongs to a second order of planets, grandchildren of the Sun as it were, and is on the way to becoming like the earth. Recent observations have proved conclusively that the moon has a hot interior and is not dead as it was thought to be.

From Figure 1 we also learn that any octave contains two points where an additional impetus has to be given (shown as a shaded bar). In cosmic arrangements this additional push is provided in the Conscious plan.

### PART 3. 12 TRIADS

To continue with the code, we again apply the Law of Three Forces by grouping together three 'notes' to form what is called a *Triad* of three 'Forces' or 'Gunas'. Each triad leads into the next because they overlap in a 'chain reaction'. Figure 2 (p. 91) shows 12 triads in order (from the top) of diminishing frequency of vibrations and increasing density of matter, and these 12 triads show 12 great orders of matter to be found in our branch of creation from the Absolute to the moon.

The term 'density' needs precise definition as the word is used currently in different senses. Here its meaning is like the term 'density of a population' – in country areas the population is sparse, but in the big cities there is great congestion and overcrowding. Similarly, the further 'out into space' you go the more 'empty' it is, but in the earth and the moon matter is tightly compressed so that a given volume weighs much heavier. This increase of 'density' brings many consequences with it as we shall see. In Figure 2 we are representing a scale of 'density' only; and we say nothing about the order of action of the forces or the relative proportion of the forces in a given triad.

To complete the code we have to understand that *matter is different physically* (though not chemically) according to which of the three Forces it is conducting in the particular reaction – matter which is the conductor of active force is called 'Carbon', matter conducting the negative force is called 'Oxygen'; and matter which is conducting the intermediate or 'neutralizing' force is called 'Nitrogen'. By compounding these three densities the level of the given matter is designated 'Hydrogen'. These terms were borrowed by our System from the chemistry established in Europe about the year 1800 by the discoveries of these elements chiefly through the researches of Cavendish, Lavoisier and Priestley. When we first heard the System we thought them very out of date, but recent work during the last two or three decades has confirmed that these four elements are indeed the basis of the chemistry of living things, of DNA and protein synthesis within the cell, and of the nitrogen and carbon cycles within the Solar System. Every star like our Sun is a vast furnace, in the interior of which Hydrogen (the basic 'stuff' of the physical universe) is transmuted into helium and neighbouring elements of the 'periodic table'; and the light of each star therefore has its own characteristic spectrum which shows what elements it manufactures.

In Figure 2, the matter of the first two triads is too fine and too 'energetic' to be received or retained by ordinary man; like the cosmic rays they pass right through us. From the third triad downwards, matter doubles in density at each step so that the 'Hydrogen number' (Figure 3, p. 91) can be determined by the simple formula

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{(C) (N) (O)} \\ 2^n (1 + 2 + 3) = H \end{array}$$

Thus where  $n = 0$ ,  $2^0 = 1$ , and  $H = 6$ ; where  $n = 1$ ,  $2^1 = 2$ , and  $H = 12$ ; and so on.

We have then 12 orders of matter in our branch of creation, each in 'octave' relationship to its neighbours; that is, each step denotes a doubling of density or halving of the frequency of the vibrations conducted; and these steps correspond to qualitative differences, which are observable and definable by us both in the outside world and in each fully developed human organism. Duality as between 'Spiritual' and 'material' or between 'body' and 'Soul' is thus eliminated; and the outer and the inner worlds are composed of the same 'elements'. This code conveys the same implications as the mediaeval one of 'earth, water, air and fire', but is much more precise. Further it conveys the idea of a continuous 'chain reaction' – what is Carbon (fire) on one level becoming the 'earth' of a higher one.

Within each of these large orders of matter an infinite variety is possible, since there are not only six possible ways in which the conductors of the three forces can combine, but each may be in very different relative concentration. Moreover these different matters are forever melting into one another, either 'warming up' and becoming more refined and energetic or 'cooling down' as they become more dense and insoluble. For example water, (H384) when frozen becomes solid ice, and when boiled becomes steam, which will condense again to water, its contained heat (H96) being converted into energy.

It is a useful exercise to ask ourselves which of these Hydrogens belong to what the Shankaracharya calls the coarse (solid) 'physical' world, which to the 'subtle' world and which to the 'causal'. I'd like to hear your views on this.

#### PART 4. CREATION SEEN AS A DANCE

We shall not get far with this if we approach it only in a heavily intellectual fashion. We need just a little solid thought to see how the code is constructed, but then we must acquire a more instinctive or emotional insight; and we can begin to do that best perhaps by seeing it with Elizabethan eyes.

In 1947 Professor Tillyard (then Master of Jesus College, Cambridge) republished a poem by Sir John Davies (1569–1626), a younger contemporary of Shakespeare, called 'Orchestra'. Davies must have written it around 1594 (about the date usually assigned to Shakespeare's early love plays which led up to *Romeo and Juliet*) since he dedicates it to a fellow-student at the Middle Temple; and he says he wrote it down in 15 days which accounts for the 'looseness' of the verse.

In his introduction to the poem Tillyard wrote: 'It is precisely the union of solid thought and extravagant expression that makes the poem so satisfying, and so typically Elizabethan... The solid thought of 'Orchestra' is simply the world organisation generally valid in the day of Elizabeth I...

Men then looked at the world under three figures: a *chain*, a set of corresponding *levels of existence*, and a *dance*. It is this last figure that Davies has chosen to elaborate but he implies the other two.'

It is probable that the diagram you are now looking at would have found readier acceptance with the first Elizabethans than with us, except that they used the symbols fire, air, water, and

earth instead of Carbon, Nitrogen, Oxygen and Hydrogen which only appeared two centuries later. With the three octaves in view listen to one or two stanzas:

17 Dancing, bright lady, then began to be  
 When the first seeds whereof the world did spring,  
 The fire, air, earth and water, did agree  
 By Love's persuasion, nature's mighty king,  
 To leave their first disorder'd combating  
 And in a dance such measure to observe  
 As all the world their motion should preserve.

18 Since when, they still are carried in a round  
 And changing, come one in another's place;  
 Yet do they neither mingle nor confound,  
 But every one doth keep the bounded space  
 Wherein the dance doth bid it turn or trace.  
 This wondrous miracle did Love devise,  
 For dancing is love's proper exercise.

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Most people can see the dance more easily in the three octaves in Figure 1, but if some want to see it 'in the round' they can turn to the Enneagram where each octave is shown thus: (Figure 4, below)

The circle represents the basis of the dance, while the triangle shows how the dance can be consciously kept under control. The three octaves then are going on simultaneously one within the other.

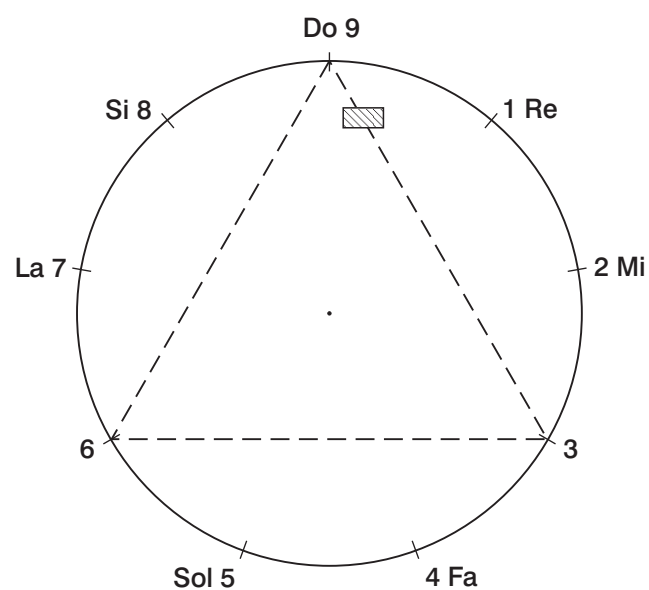


Figure 4

This is not a new idea to us – to dance in order to understand the Laws of the Universe. It is the whole essence of the ceremony of the Mukabeleh of the Mevlevi; and in our ‘Movements to Music’ there are two dances based on this very symbol. For one does not *understand* until one’s Being is pervaded with the ‘measured motion’ of Nature.

But then, just as *we* are going to do (by going on to study the Food Diagram by which this same dance can be seen in detail in our own organism), Sir John Davies went on to describe the chaos of humanity of which Love evidently takes a dim view; and the second poem on which his reputation is based (written later at Oxford) was called ‘Nosce Teipsum’ (Know Thyself). Thus in stanzas 29 and 30 of ‘Orchestra’, Love takes a look round his creation:

29 The comely order and proportion fair  
 On every side did please his wand’ring eye;  
 Till, glancing through the thin transparent air,  
 A rude disorder’d rout he did espy  
 Of men and women, that most spitefully  
 Did one another throng and crowd so sore,  
 That his kind eye in pity wept therefore.

30 And swifter than the lightning down he came,  
 Another shapeless chaos to digest;  
 He will begin another world to frame,  
 For Love, till all be well, will never rest...

So then may we hope for humanity that Love will eventually take over when the police in Piccadilly and the army in Ulster have done all they can to restore order! But this can come only when more individuals learn to apply to themselves the two shocks (to be shown in the Food Diagram) and can express them in the language of example.

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