

Correspondence and Analogy in the Constitution of Man

DHY Course 110 Short Paper

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What is man? What is the constitution (composition, structure, make-up) of a human being? The human form in the three worlds of human endeavor (physical-etheric, emotional/astral, lower/concrete mental) is what the personality tends to identify with in manifestation, even through early stages on the Path of Return. If we look up “human being” in a dictionary, not surprisingly, it is defined in terms limited to the veil of illusion, the three lower worlds of human endeavor. It refers us to “human”; used as a noun, the definition is restricted to the lower/concrete mental level and solely references the physical level in scientific terminology (the *institution* of science being a constituent of the veil of illusion, as distinct from scientific *method*). The dictionary tells us that a human is “a bipedal primate mammal (*Homo sapiens*),” “any living or extinct member of the family (*Hominidae*) to which the primate belongs.”¹ This essay was written to review the answer to this question from the point of view of the Ageless Wisdom.

We know from study of the Ageless Wisdom, contrary to a dictionary definition of a human, that the mental, emotional/astral and etheric-physical levels with which we tend to identify as “self” even through early levels on the Path of Return are not what we truly *are*; they are *vehicles* for the expression of soul and ultimately of Spirit as we progress on the Path of Return, the evolutionary path from immersion in matter back to the experiential knowledge of Oneness. As we struggle to progress on that path, how can we best understand the constitution of man?

The Master DK gives us two means for understanding the constitution of man: analogy and correspondence. Analogy is a general comparative means of imparting understanding: if we understand A and B and the relation between them, then the statement “A is to B as C is to D” gives us information of a general nature about C and D and the relationship between them. This is an analogy. However, this analogy does not give us *detailed* knowledge of C, D, or the relationship between them. Correspondence, on the other hand, is a specific and *detailed* means of understanding one level by reference to understanding of another level. Given detailed knowledge of A, we have detailed knowledge of C if we know that there is *correspondence* between A and C.

Correspondence

In the Ageless Wisdom, the terms “macrocosm” and “microcosm” are used when referring to knowledge of one level derived via knowledge of correspondence to another level, or “as above, so below.” “The relationship between the microcosm and the macrocosm is accurate, and exists not only broadly but likewise in detail. This is a fact to be grasped and worked out. As knowledge increases and progress is made, and as the ability to meditate results in the faculty of transmitting from the higher Triad to the Personality, via the causal, then these facts will be ever more clearly demonstrated in detail, and perfect comprehension will ensue.”²

Again, “as above, so below” describes the macrocosm-microcosm relationship. Two points must be made before developing this concept further: (1) As the Master DK tells us, we are better able to know

and understand the details revealed by correspondence the further we are on the Path, so at this point in our journey, although correspondence accurately reveals the esoteric facts in detail, our understanding may be less comprehensive. (2) The terms macrocosm and microcosm may appear to represent a simple duality of higher and lower, yet there are many levels at which we can compare macrocosm and microcosm, so these are actually relative terms. What is macrocosm at one level may be microcosm at another level, and what is microcosm at one level may be macrocosm at another level. For example, each of us as an individual is macrocosm to the billions of cells that physically comprise the body; they are microcosm to us as an individual. At the same time, we are microcosm to the Planetary Logos, which is macrocosm to us. The Planetary Logos, in turn, is microcosm to the Solar Logos, which in turn is microcosm to yet greater Entities.

To start with the “big picture,” or cosmic-level macrocosm, there are 7 cosmic planes. From higher to lower vibrationally, these are (1) the Cosmic Adi or Divine, (2) Cosmic Monadic, (3) Cosmic Atmic or Spiritual, (4) Cosmic Buddhic or Intuitional, (5) Cosmic Mental, (6) Cosmic Astral, and (7) Cosmic Physical. To briefly address a few of the higher of these, there are 7 Cosmic Logoi on the Cosmic Monadic plane, each of which contains 7 Solar Logoi. On the Cosmic Buddhic plane there are the 7 Rishis of the Great Bear, which are the 7 centers in a Solar Logos. On the Cosmic Mental plane is located the causal body of a Solar Logos.³ Only when we reach the Cosmic Physical plane, vibrationally the lowest of the cosmic planes, do we find the 7 systemic planes (the 7 planes of the solar system), which are to us what we ordinarily reference as “the 7 planes” Master DK informs us that the cosmic physical plane is the only cosmic plane which “the finite mind of man can in any way comprehend.”⁴

In the 7 systemic planes, which are the 7 subplanes of the cosmic physical plane, we have the more familiar “7 planes” to which we refer. From higher to lower vibrationally, these are (1) the plane of Adi or the Divine (the first cosmic etheric), (2) the Monadic plane (second cosmic etheric), (3) the Atmic or Spiritual plane (third cosmic etheric), (4) the Buddhic or Intuitional plane (fourth cosmic etheric), (5) the manasic or mental plane (cosmic gaseous), (6) the astral or Emotional plane (cosmic liquid), and (7) the physical plane (cosmic dense).⁵

These systemic planes can be viewed as microcosm of the cosmic planes, and the cosmic planes as macrocosm of the systemic planes. That is, the systemic planes *correspond* to the cosmic planes. On the Monadic systemic plane, of course, we find the Monad, the monadic triangle consisting of three points of Will, Love-Wisdom, and Activity or Active Intelligence. On the Atmic or Spiritual plane (in its highest subplane) we find the atmic permanent atom or Spiritual Will, a vibrational descent from the Will aspect of the Monad. On the Buddhic or intuitional plane (in its highest subplane) we find the buddhic permanent atom, or intuition, a vibrational descent from the Wisdom aspect of the Monad.

On the manasic or mental plane (in its highest aspect) we find the mental permanent atom or mind, a vibrational descent from the Activity or Active Intelligence aspect of the Monad. The mental plane is dual, and in the highest 3 subplanes of the mental plane we find the causal body or egoic lotus. In the lower 4 planes of the mental plane we find the concrete mind, that mental function with which the personality can identify, also known as the “mental body” of the lower or manifest self; and here we find much of the illusion which is to be dispelled by energies from the plane of intuition. In the astral or emotional plane we find the emotional substance and reactivity which constitutes the glamour which it is the task of the probationer and disciple to dissipate. In the physical plane we find both the etheric body and the dense physical body. Of note, each of the 7 systemic planes has 7 subplanes, a further level of correspondence and macrocosm-microcosm. Thus the cosmic planes are composed of 49

subplanes (7x7), or 343 in total (7x7x7), just as the systemic wheels (individual constellations) are grouped under correspondence, as are each of the sub-subplanes or levels of consciousness.⁶

In addition to these (and other) correspondences of 7, one can view the constitution of man first at a more general level in terms of correspondences of 3. Power-Will, Love-Wisdom, Activity-Intelligence as a triplicity at higher levels (macrocosm) correspond in progressively more manifest levels in microcosm:

The Monad, which expresses Power-Will, itself a triplicity. The Spiritual Triad, also a triplicity, is the *expression* of the Monad (first level of descent of the Monad into denser manifestation).

The soul, which expresses Love-Wisdom, also a triplicity (see below for further details).

The personality, which expresses Activity-Intelligence, or active intelligence, also has 3 aspects: the (lower) mental, the astral/emotional, and the etheric-physical.

To trace the correspondences in the constitution of man more detail between systemic planes, we can see “lines” of vibrational descent more specifically as follows (the higher correspondences noted above have progressively further vibrationally lower correspondences):

From Will on the monadic plane, descending vibrationally to the atmic permanent atom on the atomic subplane of atmic plane, we can trace vibrational descent to sacrifice petals of the egoic lotus on the higher manasic plane. From here we can trace vibrational descent to the vibrational level of the base of spine center on the fourth subplane of the manasic plane (highest level of lower mind), down to the head center at the level of the atomic subplane of the astral plane; from here we can trace vibrational descent to the base of spine center at the level of the fourth subplane of the astral plane, then to the head center at the first subplane of the physical (first ether), then down further to the base of spine center at the fourth subplane of the physical (fourth ether).

From Wisdom on the monadic plane, we can trace vibrational descent to the buddhic permanent atom on the atomic subplane of the buddhic plane. From here we can trace vibrational descent to the love petals of the egoic lotus on the higher manasic plane down to the levels of the solar plexus center on the fourth subplane of the manasic plane, then further to the heart center at the level of the subatomic (second subplane) of the astral plane. From here we can further trace vibrational descent to the solar plexus center at the level of the fourth subplane of the astral plane, down to the heart center at the second subplane of the physical (second ether), then down to the solar plexus center at the fourth subplane of the physical (fourth ether).

From Activity on the monadic plane, we can trace vibrational descent to the manasic permanent atom on the atomic subplane of the manasic plane. From here we can trace vibrational descent to the knowledge petals of the egoic lotus on the higher manasic plane, down to the sacral center (“generative organs”) on the fourth subplane of the manasic plane. From here we can further trace descent to the throat center at the level of the third subplane of the astral plane, down to the sacral center at the level of the fourth subplane of the astral plane, down to the throat center at the third subplane of the physical (third ether), and down to the solar plexus center at the fourth subplane of the physical (fourth ether).

In this further series of correspondences, we can see not only elucidation of the relationships respectively between centers 1 and 7, 3 and 4, and 2 and 5, but we can also see the Spiritual Triad reflected in increasingly lower/slower vibratory form first in the egoic lotus on the upper mental plane (although this is temporary until a certain point in evolution is reached), then in the triangle of heart,

heart and throat (a) in the upper astral plane (head in the astral atomic subplane, heart in the astral subatomic subplane, and throat in the astral third subplane), and again (b) in the upper physical plane (etheric: head in the first ether, heart in the second ether, and throat in the third ether).⁷

It is of note that there is not a *simple* correspondence between points in the Monad, Spiritual Triad, or soul on the one hand, and the three lower vehicles (concrete mental, astral-emotional, and etheric-physical); rather, we see the higher triplicity reflected in a triplicity of dualities between centers: centers 1-7 reflecting the Will and its evolution, centers 3-4 reflecting Love-Wisdom and its evolution, and centers 2-5 reflecting Active Intelligence and its evolution. The transference from 2 to 5 represents the first initiation and transcendence of identification with the physical body; the transference from 3 to 4 represents the second initiation and transcendence of identification with the emotional body; and the development of a triangle that includes resonance between 1 and 7 represents the third initiation, or transcendence of identification with the lower mental body. We see all 3 lower levels (lower mental, astral/emotional, and etheric) of each of these centers involved in these transfereces and resonances as spiritual evolution proceeds.

Analogy

Analogy is what we could call instructive similarity, that is, a likeness that can help us understand a concept, but which is not accurately comparative in detail, and in fact too much reliance on analogy to provide detail could lead us astray. A is to B as C is to D is an analogy; for example, "First metacarpal is to thumb as first metatarsal is to big toe." The first metacarpal is a bone in the thumb and the first metatarsal is a bone in the big toe. This gives us some information about the naming of bones in these digits, but this statement gives us no further information about any of the components of this statement. (Although stating that these are *corresponding* digits on hand and foot respectively would give us more information.)

In the context of the planes, we can schematically diagram them with lines and spaces on a page, the space between each line representing a subplane. We then appear to have one plane "above" another in a layered series. This layered structuring is analogy, which can be instructive and is an excellent way to introduce to the concrete mind to the idea of these higher, non-solid levels, as well as the complex relationships and correspondences between them (some of which are outlined above). However, we need to remember that this apparent spatial arrangement is *analogy only*, and thus limited as an instructive tool. The soul, for example, is not physically/spatially above the physical head, with the Monad located further above that in space, etc. The very structure of the physical body leads the concrete mind to take the above-below analogy as literal truth, with the parts of the body that represent "higher" functions being physical above the parts that represent "lower" functions. The idea of the "lotus" structure of the "egoic lotus" and the centers is analogy as well to represent what in fact are patterns of energetic flow, vibration, and interrelation. Analogy can be a useful sign post.

However, we must remember that this is analogy only, and that the planes are not found in physical space one above the other. Likewise with descriptions that one can find in a number of contemporary sources that refer to the vibrational levels as ovoid structures of progressively larger size around the physical body. This too is physically (spatially) focused, and is analogy only. The apparent aboveness and belowness represent vibrational frequencies, with some levels having finer/faster vibration than others.

A third analogy, which may prove further instructive, is the concept of within-ness and externalization instead of higher and lower, as long as we keep in mind that this analogy is not literally true in a spatial

sense either. If we think of the manifest levels as emanation or projection (in one sense of this term) which appears concretized when viewed through specific concretized sensory apparatus, it can help us understand the value of this analogy. We can use this analogy with our own consciousness by imagining that instead of seeing *from* our eyes, “we” (the experiencing awareness, a focal point within consciousness) are centered further back in the head, behind the forehead, looking *through* the eyes as if from within the head, as it were. From this focal point that is experienced as within the head (another analogy), if our intent is service and spiritual evolution, we will start to experience additional energetic connections and resonances between different energy centers and/or vibrational levels. Regardless of which analogy we use, we must remember that the planes and subplanes, etc., actually fully interpenetrate and are coextensive, the same way we can understand the idea that different radio waves, or different sound waves, or different EMFs coexist in the same “space.”

The very highest of the planes are right here, right now. We can also see from the above brief review of the planes that our tasks on the Path of Return include progressively lifting our focal point or point of identity, through vibrational levels from the very lowest of the low! When we have turned in the arc from descent through the vibrational levels into further identification with matter, back to ascent through the vibrational levels to progressive identification with, or placing our focal point of awareness in, higher vibrational levels, we have embarked on the Path of Return. As we place our focal point in progressively higher levels, we are progressing on the Path of Return.

In conclusion, correspondence is a means by which we may start understand the constitution of man (and many other aspects of the greater Reality) in detail. Analogy, on the other hand, while a useful tool, should not be taken too literally or it can lead us astray. That is, analogy should not be interpreted to be accurate in detail in physical, astral, and/or lower mental terms. Again, the higher levels to which we aspire are not actually spatially distant (that aspect of the analogy represents the fact that we are still *vibrationally* separating the self from them); rather, they are right here, right now, thought by us to be separate only to the extent that we are identified with lower levels. We experience separation from them in space and time to the extent that we have not yet shifted the focal point of our awareness to those vibrational levels.

Spirit expresses through soul, which expresses through personality, and eventually Spirit expresses directly in a more pure form through matter. Consciousness (which can be viewed in part as an epiphenomenon of the relation between spirit and matter) experiences the increasingly purified expression as the Path of Return. We ultimately transfer awareness progressively back “up” the continuum of vibrational frequencies on the Path of Return or Evolution (having made the journey down the continuum on the Path of Involution or identification with matter).

Endnotes

¹Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed., p. 564.

²Alice A. Bailey, *Letters on Occult Meditation* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1950), p. 225.

³Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire* (New York: Lucis Trust, 1951), p. 344.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 117.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 1086.

⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 817 and 823.

Bibliography

Bailey, Alice A. *Letters on Occult Meditation*. New York: Lucis Trust, Fort Orange Press, 1950.

Bailey, Alice A. *A Treatise on Cosmic Fire*. New York: Lucis Trust, Fort Orange Press, 1951.
Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10th ed. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1993.
Of note, prior reading in other Alice Bailey books has informed the writing of this paper; listed here are the references directly consulted for the production of this paper.