

The Cross of Life, or the Transformation of the Vertical and the Horizontal

Cornelia Schaum

Summary

This article describes in meditative terms the relation of the human being on the physical plane to the plane of the Divine Self. Each sentence or pair of sentences can be used as a unit of meditation for a shorter or longer period of time. Deep meditation leads to an understanding of the wider context and, beyond that, to a new space of awareness; to a space through which one can become aware of what has previously been concealed.

Awareness of these thought processes can be seen as a first proof of an existence that differs from the material states of transience as we have known them. This existence is not subject to physical laws because the separateness has been overcome through a process of “seamless merging” and through “being part of the whole.” This awareness requires higher cognitive capacities, a capacity for abstraction, and a willingness to engage in intense focus.

Introduction

The Cross of Life signifies God’s relationship to the human being and, in return, man’s relation to his Divine origin. It does not matter which name—Christian or otherwise—one gives to this “origin.” Even though this article has a Christian focus, the origin of man is always the same. Christ’s words are cited here, and they are given a special emphasis because they illustrate the path that a Son of God might take on the way to his Father. They are cited because Christ was the first to embark on this path. His words provided a lasting image of this path for us, making it possible for us to follow him. A person from any other cultural or religious background could follow this path, as long as due preparation is made. The in-

dividual will no longer distinguish him- or herself from Christ’s point of evolution and will therefore become one with the Christ. This is why the Bible excerpts quoted below are seen as characteristic of the path of a Son of God who returns to his own origin, back “to the Father’s house.”

Whenever the human being on his Horizontal plane comes into contact with the spirit on any of its planes of manifestation, the Cross of Life appears.

Fundamental Method

A deeper understanding of the intent of this article is awakened by the living interaction of two geometric lines, each of which represents a particular abstract thought. This interaction fosters insights which go beyond the purely rational understanding of strings of words. Through the living relationship that is described here, the subjective, subtle, mental experience which lives like a seed within the human being can come to conscious inner maturation. Rhythmic processes contribute to a mental understanding, but they also create something that goes beyond that. They show that through abstract mental activity something begins to exist on the mental plane that is similar to a living being; at the same time, real life processes between the thoughts can be observed. It is best described as a “flowing,” a living flux that exists between two independent thought complexes and demonstrates that the

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two thought complexes are interacting with each other. Through these explanations, the reader can become aware of the living reality that lies behind the words of which he or she might previously have had no real knowledge. Thoughts are living beings that come together in the thinker through the substance of his or her own self.

This reality can only be found on a level that is above the mental level. What is shown here are the seeds of the Buddhic plane that emerge into consciousness and through which conscious perception becomes possible, either on the Buddhic plane alone or in connection with the lower planes. The Buddhic plane is connected with the astral plane, and this could make the perception seem astral. Behind the “astral seeing” lie the mental and the Buddhic planes, both work together on the person’s imagination.

Thoughts are the sublimations of physical things. They are of a higher vibration than the physical, fast-moving and more easily impressed. They can also be less transient but harder to pin down. They can be found here and there, not bound to a particular outer human shape but able to change their quality and quantity arbitrarily. Understanding the process constitutes a first step towards becoming consciously aware of life on the mental plane, which has its closest source on the Buddhic plane but stems from an even higher one. The following description of the Cross of Life should help the reader understand this living interaction.

The Cross and the Initiates’ Task

The cross, as we know, consists of a Vertical and a Horizontal line. The Horizontal line of the cross is subject to temporal-spatial limitations and is objectively manifest. The other one does not have these limitations and is found in purely subjective existence. The one is therefore transient, the other not. In what follows, the transition point is described, the centre, where the four arms of the cross merge.

Where the one becomes the other in the presence of the other, a transformation takes place.

The one is one form of consciousness; the other is a consciousness that is different from the former. The transition from the one to the other means nothing more than that the two lines, the Vertical and the Horizontal, meet and are able to merge and become one in a temporal-spatial point. One plane can then add to the present status quo something of the content of the other plane. Both meet at the transition point and, for the human being, this means transformation and expanded consciousness, or, in other words, evolution and progress.

Progress in the development of the individual becomes progress for the whole of mankind. To promote this is the task of initiates in our second solar system. It is their task to bring to realisation in each human being the Divine-human cross and, from the centre of the cross, to let the fruit of all our earthly development—genuine love for each other in every respect—flow into the entire Horizontal; to flow, that is, into the entire human evolution in order to raise humanity on the Vertical from the point which it has reached.

The Cross as an Opportunity for Consciousness Expansion

Time needs timelessness and timelessness needs time in order to be able to express itself objectively in our three worlds of experience, until time and timelessness become one and form a unity in consciousness. This means that, when the Horizontal of human experience becomes capable of becoming absorbed into the Vertical of the subjective spirit, the Vertical can flow into the Horizontal at that point. The “eternal now” thus increasingly becomes reality.

The union of the spirit on its own plane and of human physical experience yield two different dimensions of conscious perception. When both lines meet and time and timelessness or separation and unseparatedness form a conscious unit, we rise above the plane of which we are conscious. This is God and man, man’s subjective reality and his objective representation on earth and man’s ability to “grow into the heavens”, as well as the spirit’s ability to “stream”, under certain conditions, into the human being.

The consciousness we know well consists of three dimensions or three worlds, in which we live on earth: the physical-bodily, the physical-emotional and the physical-mental. The gradual merging of the Vertical and Horizontal planes of consciousness leads to an expansion of consciousness, that relates to how the one can become the other, how the one line can flow into the other; and—as we have seen—this can be understood in both an upward and a downward direction.

Theoretical knowledge usually comes before practical knowledge. The practical implementation of the theoretical insights described here can take many lives of work and service on and within mankind. Knowledge of what we try to convey here can be achieved through immediate conscious experience on a spiritual level. As long as this work has not been consciously transformed, to a certain extent, from theory into practice, subjective perception of the Vertical plane remains beyond consciousness and cannot be perceived by the brain. This means that the spiritual world of the Vertical plane remains inaccessible for the human being. In this case all these words will remain incomprehensible to the reader.

The Transformation of the Horizontal and the Vertical

Man's work on his conscious Divine seed within the Vertical makes the Horizontal seem to shrink and the Vertical to grow longer. This means that the shorter the apparent objective extension of the Horizontal, the longer becomes that of the Vertical, signifying a raising of the Horizontal on the Vertical, which is, in

other words, the transformation of coarse into finer substance. This raising continues until the Horizontal becomes the Vertical. The law of conservation of energy applies here. The area of this energy transformation denotes the complete conversion of the lower personality first into one that is ensouled, then into one that is penetrated by the spirit and finally into the pure body-free spirit on its own plane. The personal desires of the lower self that were

dominating until then are increasingly pushed back and transformed in favour of the higher subjective reality; the further the substance of the Horizontal shrinks, or, in other words, the higher up the Horizontal is raised on the Vertical.

Where the Horizontal and the Vertical meet, this is the centre point in the cross, the point of the greatest opportunity. It is the point where—symbolically speaking—the “stars coincide with the earth.”

In this place the timeless fabric of the “star light” can be found again in the temporal robe of the earth. It is the mysterious place where water, earth and

air meet. It is the place of initiation.

Individual Boundaries within Vertical Wholeness

The cross or, in other words, the Vertical in connection with the Horizontal carries a certain symbolic task. The Vertical line runs from the top, from the uppermost point of all existence to the point on the lowest plane. These two points are just conceptualized, imaginary boundaries in our consciousness, because there are no boundaries on the Vertical unless the

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human being projects them onto the Vertical plane from the restrictions of his own Horizontal consciousness. The merging of the two arms of Horizontal and Vertical expansion in the cross's centre point becomes the point of entry and exit. It is here that impulses from the Horizontal enter the Vertical dimension and vice versa.

Each human being, each existence and each natural realm has its very own Horizontal at some point on the Vertical. This line represents an individual's point in evolution on the Vertical and it lies within a spectrum that is typical for mankind. This point or moment is expressed in a language that is typical for this point in evolution, so that the Vertical as a whole can appear, for each individual at a given point in time and on his particular plane, in the language of mankind. This process guarantees the evolution of mankind through the raising of the Horizontal on the Vertical in the course of time. Through the work on the cross the human being grows beyond the plane to which he was bound until then.

The Three Crosses as Markers of Evolution

The Cross of Life is the point where the individual encounters the all-oneness of God's spirit. The further the human being moves on the Horizontal towards the centre of the cross, the closer he is tied to the cross itself, and the further he moves on in his spiritual development. The three crosses are the mutable, the fixed and the cardinal cross. They are different presentations of the human being on his way from the periphery of the Horizontal to the centre of the cross, on his way to reach the Vertical, to the marginal point that is only just connected to the centre of the cross. In the end, this last point of connection with the Horizontal is also recognized as a boundary and cast off as soon as the time has come to move forward on the Vertical alone. The state described here escapes the normal consciousness and time experience of an objectively manifest human being and emerges in the eternity of all existence.

The mutable cross occasionally becomes aware of the influence of the Vertical, which is why

the aspirant's spirit is still wavering. The power of the physical material plane continues to alternate with phases of spiritual aspiration. The human being has established contact with the subjective realm of his existence, but these are not yet strong enough to interest or occupy him permanently.

The fixed cross reflects the sphere of influence of the Vertical in a human being who has entered into permanent contact with the Vertical. The former aspirant has moved forward in the course of time on the Horizontal towards the centre of the cross and is finally subjected to the continuous attraction of the Vertical stream. At this point the master enters the life of the human being who has now become an accepted disciple.

The cardinal cross is already on the other axis, the disciple's consciousness is already on the Vertical, slightly higher up from his own original Horizontal and through this the disciple becomes a master.

If this last point still shows a sufficiently strong connection with the Horizontal line, an initiate emerges on the physical plane as a master and, through him, the impulses of the Vertical flow into the Horizontal. This last state represents the double life of the high initiate who through careful practice can perceive and express himself on both lines at the same time.

The Significance of the Cross on the Human Plane

Whatever happens among human beings expresses their Horizontal connection at a particular summarised point of arrival with some point on the Vertical. This is the evolution point of mankind, which it is able to take up as a uniform Horizontal on the Vertical at a given point in time, because humanity consists of the sum of its individuals. As was mentioned above, the Vertical extension that the individual has achieved is also represented on the Horizontal by an expression of personality that corresponds to this Vertical point, by the objective incarnation of a human being. The individually achieved milestone of human development on the Vertical is always expressed via

a particular Horizontal relationship between the individual and the whole of humanity.

In other words, the more selfless and developed the human being is, the higher up in the spectrum of Vertical evolution of mankind lies his individual Horizontal line. The further down this individual Horizontal lies, the more egoistically the human being will want to express himself among his fellow human beings. The degree of Vertical extension in relation to its physical manifestation indicates the point, which the "Vertical son" was already able to objectively transform during his Horizontal development on earth.

The Work of "the Son" on the Cross

That which wants to flow from the Vertical into the Horizontal is determined by the evolution point of mankind. The human being on the Horizontal has therefore always a point of equivalence on the Vertical line. If the human being can come into contact with the spirit, he enters for the first time the sphere of influence of the three crosses. The closer he gets to the centre of the cross, the stronger becomes the influence of the hierarchy on him, that is, the influence of the Vertical. Through this work he transforms himself from aspirant to disciple and, ultimately, he will work as master from the Vertical on the Horizontal.

The further the disciple moves on the Horizontal towards the centre point, the more he becomes master and "son." In a life of special importance, the work on the cross becomes ever more magnetic for the aspirant; this happens even more intensely for the disciple the closer he comes to the Vertical. Such intensity causes the son to begin his work on the physical plane. The developmental state of the son who works on the physical plane depends on how much of the Vertical the Horizontal is able to absorb. In other words, the "son" who now, at this particular moment of the Vertical scale, appears on earth in the Horizontal, is only free as long as the Horizontal is prepared to absorb the flow from the Vertical. The free spirit depends on the developmental state of humanity.

The more noticeable man's attraction towards the spirit becomes, the further the Horizontal moves upwards on the Vertical, and the "son" can make himself increasingly felt out of the Vertical plane on the Horizontal. The closer the aspirant becomes to being a disciple and the disciple to being a master, the stronger the influence of the son can grow on earth until the day when each individual has become a "son."

The point of relationships that have been achieved between human beings therefore represents the boundary of the Vertical on earth. It shows the degree that the "son" was already able to achieve on earth.

If the love "of the son" is sufficiently expressed in the Horizontal, the Vertical can make itself felt in the human being's brain consciousness. It becomes possible to transform the world into the substance of the Vertical, and this happens through the transformation of the Horizontal matter that is part of man into its finer equivalent. This means a finer depiction of the human being in his expression towards his fellow-men and to his surrounding, no matter whether this surrounding is of a material or spiritual nature.

Progress Means Increased Vibration

This higher expression of the human being happens through stimulated vibration. This stimulated vibration leads, via the work on the Horizontal, to the raising of the Horizontal on the Vertical and gradually to complete integration. This is what will make the world a better one. This progress becomes noticeable through the son who, in his objective manifestation, becomes increasingly visible in "all that is," the further the Horizontal moves upwards on the Vertical.

This is really the transformation of coarse matter into its higher equivalent. It is a transformation of a low vibration into a higher one. The becoming visible "of the son" within the whole of humanity is the progress of mankind in its evolution from the transient to the eternal. It is a path from the coarse vibration of physical matter to the higher and finer vibration of spiritual substance. This path is that of

the disciple from the darkness to the light. It is the way from the darkness of unconsciousness to the radiant day light of a newly rising sun.

The Responsibility of the Individual

Each individual takes part in the Horizontal overall development of mankind. Each individual prepares himself to bring a little bit more timeless “Vertical starlight” to the earth in order to improve the general condition of mankind. The further the individual moves towards the centre of the cross in this development, the more he becomes an integral part of the cosmic plan. Thus the human being finds himself suddenly “in the midst of the spiritual hierarchy” on the Vertical whilst acting on the Horizontal. Thus he himself becomes the path. A path that he himself can follow. A path that, depending on the progress made, illuminates his way. This realisation happens progressively and very slowly, depending on the willingness of the aspirant to reach his aim—the crossing point of the Vertical. It depends on his willingness to increase his selfless striving “for the better” and to bring, through his service on earth, spiritual development to all human beings. This progress will make human beings free in every respect.

Cosmic Laws and the Disciple on the Cross

When the disciple’s work on the physical plane has reached a certain developmental point on the subjective Vertical plane with the “son,” he realizes that he works under the influence of the three main cosmic laws. But the son is always working with the “father” who works with his “son” on the physical plane at the point of spiritual realisation that the individual has reached.

The three cosmic laws are introduced gradually, depending on which point in evolution the disciple or initiate has reached, depending on how prepared he is to enter the Vertical line. Only once the aspirant has become able, after developing a certain Horizontal susceptibility, to respond to the attraction of the Vertical “son” can these lines become meaningful for

him. At this point the Horizontal contracts in its previous configuration and the Vertical streams into the Horizontal consciousness. In this way, the Horizontal is gradually overcome. Thus the spirit enters the earth sphere by means of a legitimate reproducibility. And thus the spiritual hierarchy appears through its masters of wisdom on earth and an Avatar descends into the world.

The further the Vertical can enter in the Horizontal the more the Vertical can expand along its own axis—which means progress for the pure spirit—and the more the substance of the Vertical can consolidate within the Horizontal. Earth substance is being transformed. This is nothing else but an even stronger visibility of God’s realm on earth. The human being becomes the son through a particular lawfulness, and the son becomes one with the father.

Conditions for Fulfilling the Law

Christ’s words, spoken 2000 years ago, are, however, important in this context: “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me.”¹

The qualities of the son cannot be changed. It is up to man to work on becoming more and more like the “sons of God” in his earthly development and, ultimately, to become one with them and work on earth in a new way. This is true reincarnation.

He who separates himself from the divine self through selfishness will take a much longer way and will, ultimately, still find himself at the end of all times. But the time of suffering will be greatly extended for all involved.

The Vertical can only be “extended upwards” insofar as it can become absorbed by the Horizontal, that is, insofar as the Horizontal can and is willing to bring to expression the Vertical in every moment of its existence. In order to make this possible the initiates must strive to make the Horizontal ever more susceptible to the influence of the Vertical. This is, in the end, nothing else but the raising of the point of evolution of all of humanity through the service of the aspirants, disciples and initiates on earth, so that the Vertical finds itself entirely within the Horizontal. Then the spirit of God

is in unlimited conscious unity with his expressed personality—the human being. Then the “new born Son of God” can say again as he did 2000 years ago: “My Father and I are one.”²

Conclusion

The Horizontal plane of man is perfectly suited to bring to physical objective expression the existence of the pure Vertical spirit which comprises the seventh cosmic plane and reaches beyond it, because both form a true symbiosis. The two can only express themselves objectively together, not independently from each other. Both together generate our physically objective reality.

At this stage we could, of course, ask why the formless subjective spirit should enter an objective manifestation. The answers are as varied as there are different consciousness points along the eternal thread of life itself. But we can say with certainty that the more conscious the diversity of life becomes on the objective level of physical experience of its common subjective origin, the less painful life on earth will be and the world will be a better place while the spirit is elevated in its relation to physical objectivity.

Then the words spoken by Christ 2000 years ago will become reality: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.”³ Because every human being will recognize himself from then on in his neighbour, as part of the one great life, and no man will ever do harm to his neighbour again.

The shift in polarisation of the aspirant’s and disciple’s Horizontal consciousness on a higher plane of the Vertical causes an increase of “good will” on the Horizontal line itself due to its effect on the whole of mankind.

For this reason, the next endeavour for all of humanity all over the world is the development of “good will”. Through the good will of each individual human being the pure spirit is enabled to appear in man on earth because the relationships between human beings signify the Vertical point of development which mankind has already reached. The “good will of mankind” creates the “opportunity” to spiritu-

alise the earth, because all high and noble desires, thoughts and deeds lift man above his own plane and thus above himself.

The Vertical and the Horizontal merge in one point. Together they form the shape of the cross and those who accomplish this work of the cross live according to the words of Christ: “He said to all: ‘If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.’”⁴ Those who take on this work of the “father” will more and more *become* the “son,” an active son of God on earth.

¹ *John 14:6.*

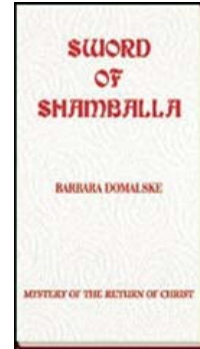
² *John 10:30.*

³ *Matthew 22:39.*

⁴ *Luke 9:23.*

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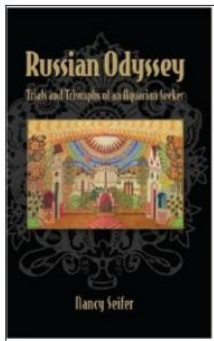
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