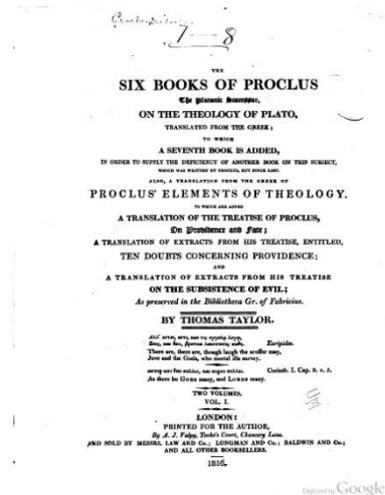
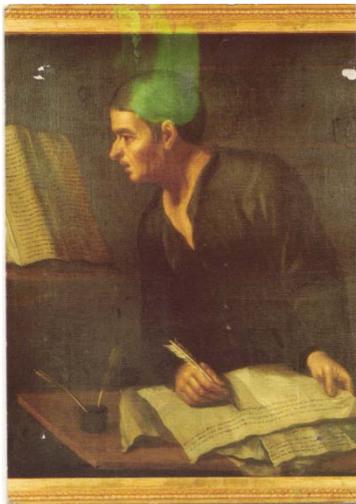


A MEDLEY OF THOUGHTS

In the last piece I gave extracts from the works of Thomas Taylor, a 19th century Neo-Platonist who translated all the works of Aristotle and Plato as well as numerous other classical authors. The thing is this. Up to 1953 there was no mention of *hyparxis* in Bennett's writings but by the time he published Vol. 1 of *The Dramatic Universe* *hyparxis* was well ensconced in the framework of his ideas. In a footnote of this book he ascribes the term *hyparxis* to Aristotle and cites a passage in Greek from the *Posterior Analytics* to support his usage. I've tried a few times to get this passage translated but all the evidence is that JGB's reading is idiosyncratic. In the same footnote (on page 135) he also quotes Taylor's translation of Proclus: "Everything subsists in its own order according to *hyparxis*". This is a much better bet.



If you look up *hyparxis* on Google most of what you will find stems from either (a) Neo-Platonism *a la* Taylor or (b) JGB himself. My speculation is that somewhere in the interval 1953-6 he adopted *hyparxis* from Taylor and then tried to trace it back into the two original greats Plato and Aristotle. He realised he needed a single term such as 'eternity' for his third dimension of time. Up until then he had used various words such as Number, Correspondence, etc.



The feeling of the term *hyparxis* one gets from Taylor is quite close to 'ableness-to-be'. There will of course be a kind of 'cloud' of related concepts one can encounter and I would include Duns Scotus' term *Haecceity* or 'thisness' in the sense of making individual (related to *ipseity* or the 'essence' of something that pops up later in JGB's canon as crucial for the pentad). I find it quite strange that JGB never made any reference to Duns Scotus and wonder whether perhaps this was due to his own affiliation to Aquinas – the views of Duns lost out to those of Aquinas, so much so that his name was debased into the word 'dunce'.

The general sense of *haecceity* is 'this thing in particular and not just as one of a kind'. It's in the obvious sense of e.g. falling in love with Susan and not just 'a woman'. I feel that *hyparxis* is closely kin to such a thought. Out of a thousand acorns one grows into a towering tree. Looked at naively, we can say all had the potential of being a tree (eternity); some seeds fell on rocky ground, etc. and failed (time), but there was 'something' in this acorn that won through, that enabled it to be (*hyparxis*)!

One can see why JGB called his worldview *dramatic*: everything, right down to the meanest particle has a will of its own however tiny. He could claim that Gurdjieff shared this view. In G's writings, so JGB claimed, will is called *okidanokh* and G says that every cosmic concentration – every thing or entity – has its own *okidanokh* as well as being within the framework of the ultimate *okidanokh* (of the Holy Sun Absolute). Will, as I've suggested before, somehow acts along the dimension of *hyparxis*. As far as it enters existence it is limited.

JGB then throws in the idea that this limitation is *self-limitation* and not due to anything like 'external forces', etc. This is a brilliant and subtle play on Christian theology, since one of the primary tenets of the faith is that *God became man*. He had to become man in order to act in the human world. In Hindu thought, the limitation of will is ascribed to ignorance and it is important to remember the doctrinal differences between Hinduism and Christianity. Hence the latter's ideas of sin.

There is a recurrence of abstract jargon: essential will 'becomes' existential will through *hyparxis*. It's like players have to put on a mask in order to come onto the stage of existence. Or is it like gamers adopting an avatar to operate in the virtual game world? I think again of the Gnostic existentialist shock of feeling that *one is pretending to exist*. In a different vein, of the Sufi injunction to 'be in the world but not of it'.



A picture that epitomised for JGB the contrast between essence and existence is that of St George 'rescuing' a maiden from a dragon painted by Ucello (1395). One can see the fierce, brave, vigorous knight thrusting his lance into the dragon; but one can also see how the maiden holds a silken thread that goes round the dragon's

neck. Who is in control? JGB suggested that the maiden is essence. One can see how the two halves of the picture complement each other.



As you see, I drift from this to that perspective and it may be difficult to settle on any one. JGB never did manage to even start a mathematical treatment of hyperaxis, though his efforts to do so for eternity had some results and were tidied up later by Ken Pledge (this for another time!). He tried to be as scientific as possible in much the same vein as Jung did in respect of his own work. At one time it seems that JGB was convinced he could marry modern physics with Gurdjieff's cosmology. What a venture! Crazy but inspiring.

No explanation anybody gives can be truly satisfying because real understanding necessarily involves that you *create* an explanation for yourself. You need your own ableness-to-understand; it can't be borrowed or given as Father Giovanni insisted to Gurdjieff (in *Meetings with Remarkable Men*). In pages 7-8 of JGB's *Gurdjieff – Making a New World* he quotes Ouspensky writing on Gurdjieff's teaching methods, a section that was not included in the published version of *In Search*. Well worth a read.

So, each of us must find material from our own realm of experience to give flesh to our thinking.

I was thinking yesterday of money (!). I thought: well, there are assets (including capital) we can call eternal; there is cash flow which is obviously temporal, but what is hyparchic in all this? It might just be knowable as 'business'.

What many people feel and sense in their own ways is that what seems 'invisible' bears on what is visible. This can be hard nosed as well as superstitious nonsense.

The Watchers look upon you from eternity but you have to carry the can.

