

DuVersity 48 - Summer 2019

We are delighted to be able to show this remarkable photograph of our colleague Travis Jarrell. Taken in 1993 she is seen dancing in front of the Ark of Buhkara, the only westerner allowed to do so. We are honoured that she has agreed to dance for us in the forthcoming Nashville seminar on The Ark.

This issue brings together various threads many of which feature in the book reviews and manifest in our Nashville Gatherings.

Threads

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The Claymont Series on Movements

The Ark lands at Nashville

Bennett's Vision

Extract from Deeper Man pp. 137-139 (first edition)

“I have been developing this picture for you because it is really necessary if you are to have any kind of image of what it really means to be transformed. We see and touch the world around us, but we do not realise that it is not this world but the higher worlds that are substantially real and we cannot understand this until we have begun to experience it for ourselves. To do this we have to learn how to exist differently, how to exist in more than one world at a time. Altogether we have spoken of seven worlds, all of which can influence our lives. So far, we have spoken as if these worlds were quite separate; and while this is largely true in terms of the interactions that can take place between them, they are all nevertheless co-existent. All the worlds penetrate everything existing. We do not have to change our place physically to enter a different world, but we have to learn how to place ourselves under the influence of higher laws which are present here and now. Practically speaking, to study this system of worlds in detail we have to study all the various laws which apply in each world, as well as the ways in which one set of laws can be superseded by another. All these various orders of laws are workings of the law of three in one or another aspect or combination, acting with correspondingly different, as Gurdjieff termed it, “degrees of vivifyingness” in the different worlds. We cannot study them and their operations theoretically, but only by coming to see them operate in ourselves. The practice of observing ourselves itself places us under different laws and gives us the possibility of experiencing our existence in more than one world at a time: the one who observes is not the one who is observed and they reside in two different worlds under two different sets of laws. If one tackles the scheme of worlds in this manner, with this investigative attitude, it becomes a very valuable framework for thought and useful instrument for putting our understanding in order.

“For the most part, as we are, we live in Worlds 48 and 96. We may do various mental exercises of the sort which enable us to form some sort of mental image of different dimensions, higher worlds. We may read various descriptions of the different worlds which describe them more or less convincingly, but there is the very great danger in all of this that we will not interpret these exercises or descriptions correctly. The idea of the system of the worlds is very valuable, but we can mislead ourselves with it because it enables us to speak about things that are not within the reach of our senses, and that we cannot point to. The scheme itself is the result of influences from the higher worlds, a symbolic language that we cannot use and correctly understand until we have had some corresponding experiences of our own. We ordinarily confuse understanding with the ability to talk about things, to use words convincingly: in reality, understanding is non-verbal. Understanding a certain law, for example, involves seeing and participating in its action in and upon us. Like the being of which it can be said to be a measure, understanding is hidden, inward, a result less of changing what we ‘know’ than of changing ourselves and the way in which we exist. To understand more, we have to be more, have to become transformed.

“The true test of our understanding is not that it gives our ordinary selves more to talk about, but that it enables us to create these higher worlds within ourselves, to enter into the higher worlds which, until then, must remain for us only words. And to make this entry, we may find that we have

to learn how to empty ourselves of all that we ordinarily acclaim as our ‘riches’, all our ‘understanding’, ‘attitudes’, ‘opinions’ and all the rest of the material that has become fixed in us over the course of our lives. If we can empty ourselves, can be empty inwardly, then everything (an enter into us. We can have everything if we can learn to separate from our ordinary selves, how to get out of the way. It is the hardest thing to empty oneself, but if we can once learn how this is to be done, then everything can come”.

A Discourse on Method

Anthony Blake

The ‘fourth way’, associated with the work of Gurdjieff and his followers, has barely been the subject of review as a method. Without such a review, what is propagated in the name of this ‘way’ is likely to remain an ad hoc collection of techniques and practices.

Gurdjieff’s basic formulation of the ‘fourth way’ took as its point of departure the notion that there were three traditional ways, each associated with a specific power and centre of initiative belonging to our human nature.

The way of the fakir: centred on the physical body and emphasised effort, ordeals, asceticism, etc. In Hindu terminology, this would be hatha yoga.

The way of the monk: centred on the heart and feelings, emphasising obedience, devotion, self-surrender, etc. This would be bhakti yoga.

The way of the yogi: centred on the mind and intellect and emphasised concentration, mental calculation and contemplation. This would be raj yoga (as according to the *Patanjali Yoga Sutras*).

Gurdjieff argued that there could be a way in which all three ‘centres’ of a human being – of thought, feeling and sensation (movement) – could be brought into operation simultaneously. This he sometimes called the ‘harmonious development of man’. He implied that such a method would address the whole of a human being and not result in lop-sided and therefore limited development. His Man no. 1 was fixed in the body, Man no. 2 fixed in the feelings and Man no. 3 fixed in the mind. Man no. 4 would be balanced in all three parts and, as a consequence, could become attuned to the ‘whole of himself’ and take on the role of his individuality: he could ‘become’ a Man no. 5.

The Three Pillars

The direction his teaching took meant that special attention would be paid to the following three aspects (we have added terms from current psychology as suggestions of corresponding concerns):

1. That the human being would be truly in his or her own body. Both what came to be known as the ‘morning exercise’ (NOT a meditation) and the ‘movements’ were significant

in this respect. Gurdjieff argued that western people in particular had little sense of their own bodies and lived according to distorted images of it. The power or energy called 'sensation' proved to be a remarkable addition to psychology. It remains largely neglected in standard practice (e.g. in psychotherapy – though things are changing). The two practices of 'sitting' and 'movements' should also involve the other two 'centres' of thought and feeling. Sensation is the key to effective function.

In psychotherapy, this would be connected with 'being grounded'.

2. That the human being would be truly conscious. Gurdjieff's dictum that 'man is asleep' is well known. But what it means to be conscious may be poorly understood. Gurdjieff himself said our true consciousness is what we call the 'unconscious'. Hence, we are in a realm of ambiguity and contradiction. The search for consciousness is deeply connected with the feelings. According to J. G. Bennett, it is the feeling centre that enables us to participate. True consciousness is not essentially a matter of intense 'observation' at all. The 'participative consciousness' is the kind of consciousness that brings in the whole of ourselves with the whole of what we are dealing with. This consciousness relates to being.

Being-consciousness could be linked to what is called affect. The disorganisation, blockage and wrong working of affect is a major study.

3. That the human being would have one 'I'. This is the most problematic of Gurdjieff's teachings. He taught that man was 'many' or 'has many I's'. Which meant that he acted as if he was a multitude of people, some of which have mutually contrary aims, perceptions, etc. - a cacophony of impulses. The idea of attaining one 'I' led to much confusion. Was this to be some 'super-I' that could 'take over' the other smaller I's? Would it emerge by a fusion of the many I's into one? And, what did 'one' mean anyway? How we would see such a single 'I' would depend on our understanding. This would entail our capacity to see, which derives from the intellectual centre. Unity of 'I' relates to will.

In psychotherapy, this concern is bound up with issues of control. It is widely known that a mere 'part' of us can control or dominate all the rest, as in a compulsion. The quest for the 'authentic' in our doings is complex.

In drawing up these three descriptions, we have made use of the three categories of John Bennett: Function, Being and Will. These correspond but are not identical with the nature of the three centres: moving, feeling and thinking.

Nature of Practices

Practices can only evolve in relation to function. The word 'practices' here means what can be repeated and perfected. In other words, a practice must follow a knowable pattern. It is problematic to practice consciousness! It would make no sense to practice 'unity of I'.

Though different states of consciousness might arise by 'sitting' and 'movements' these would be only by way of affording glimpses or tastes. The 'real thing' must arise in life. At one point, Gurdjieff said that the real 'work' must begin exactly where a man is. Increasing the amount and even variety of practices will not do this. Practices are always artificial. Consciousness roughly means 'knowing together' and implies a wholeness of participation. It means, for example, that anything done is done 'whole-heartedly'.

The unification of will – which is what the overcoming of multiplicity of I's is about – involves such considerations as obedience. Therefore, it has become associated with work under a teacher with whom a demanding contract has been made. In this guise, the teacher is said to 'play the role of true I' for the pupil. Needless to say, this may be rare. It might also involve a further necessary step of 'eradicating' the teacher from the pupil's presence so that he may come into his own. The teacher may only play the role of a stepping stone and his main function may well be to thwart the student so as to elicit a deeper act. In fact, we may be no more ready to obey an external person as we are to obey an internal one (such as a supposed inner 'master'). Externally or internally, the same problem remains: obedience requires a total response.

In Gurdjieff's teaching conscience has a crucial role. In crude terms, this is the sense of what is 'right' in any concrete situation. In his *Beelzebub's Tales* Gurdjieff says that this 'inner organ' is not yet atrophied in man and can be awakened by contact with one who has this consciously. His mythical spiritual teacher Ashiata Sheimash comes to Earth to teach the way of conscience. Shiemash does his work by bringing about a conviction about the reality of conscience in people who can then, in their turn, bring it about in others. Conscience develops by obeying conscience.

The Act of the All

J. G. Bennett advocated the use of a 'decision exercise'. Decision, in this approach, is an act of will that has command over the whole of oneself (it is therefore not at all like the usual 'decisions' we make and break in everyday life). However, in being an exercise, it remains subject to the laws of artificiality and there is no evidence that the practice of this exercise makes any significant difference. Or, one can say that the practice is fine just until it begins to 'work' and must then be abandoned!

One good reason for saying this is that every true decision or act of will must be unique.

The act of will also comes into play in undertaking tasks. Commitment to a task is a common feature of fourth way practice. A task provides an opportunity for acting as one whole. Hence Gurdjieff's 'make your aim your God'. An aim need not concern an external task. An aim need not be anything large. The decision as to what aim is a crucial test of intelligence.

Obedience to a teacher, acting from conscience, fulfilling a task and achieving an aim all fall under the heading of 'acting as one will'. They bring this central issue into practical focus. This is what Bennett meant by a 'true decision'.

Another aspect that needs to be added is this: in a true decision, all levels involved in the act of realisation are actualised and mutually harmonious (this means that they form a system)

As If

The 'magical as-if' (as John Allen calls it) is an application of Gurdjieff's remarks in The Third Series that self-deception is both the source of human slavery and the way of liberation from it. Since we are capable of deceiving ourselves, it should be possible to 'deceive' ourselves into reality!

It is not possible to advance if one persists in regarding oneself as incapable of will. One has to pretend to have will in order to 'really' have it. This should only be undertaken with respect to definite aims which can be realised. Repeated failure is debilitating. The choice of objective is crucial. It must not be too easy nor too hard. It must present a challenge, without being beyond reach.

'Challenge' is the name Bennett gave to anything that stimulates consciousness. Consciousness cannot be produced by effort alone.

An important form of challenge is when we play a role. This is to act otherwise from one's habitual pattern. Whenever we do this, our perception changes. In speaking about 'types' Gurdjieff said that it was necessary to play the role of a type other than one's own just in order to be capable of seeing types at all: one's own as well as those of others. This is not so easy in practice.

All true challenges serve to 'separate oneself from oneself'. This is almost synonymous with consciousness (the minimum requirement for consciousness is having two independent 'parts' and one of them 'observing' the other). What happens may be described as having an 'encompassing' or being-consciousness within which the ordinary reactive (and observing) consciousness is enfolded. The challenges offered through our relationships with others, with the undertaking of tasks, and so on use 'external' realities as a 'lever' to move oneself from the confines of a restricted consciousness. Obedience to a 'form' enables this encompassing kind of consciousness to come into effect (as Rumi says, the pupils need to imitate the form of the master and not his 'essence').

Experiments can be done in this domain. It is useful to be able to 'play' since play involves taking on a role.

Being Un-natural

Not acting as oneself seems essential; though it can only be undertaken in restricted areas to be successful. It is implicit in the Gurdjieff line of approach that no amount of meditation or 'inner practice' can provide this necessary ingredient. As soon as we do anything, the usual pattern locks in. The work to be done has to be done in life – without succumbing to life.

Not acting as oneself can lead to disturbances in the feelings. The person engaged in what Bennett called the 'psychokinetic' path can be more bewildered about himself than those who are not. The term 'psychokinetic' refers to 'making a move in the constellation of oneself' (which teachers such as the late Castenada spoke of in terms of the 'assembly point'). One is in this path only when one does it. It must always involve thinking, feeling or acting in a different way.

In the practice of the Gurdjieff 'movements', one is required to move differently. Habitual patterns of moving need to be inhibited, if new patterns are to be liberated. This is a 'law' of sorts: to realise the new, the old must be suspended. This 'law' holds sway in even the most subtle and non-dramatic disciplines such as the dialogue process. In order to practice dialogue, it is necessary to suspend obtaining the usual gratifications of self-expression, persuasion and winning arguments. So, one has to learn to speak differently.

Levels

An implicit but crucial assumption is that the suspension of operations at one level liberates operations belonging to a higher level. In other words, what lies 'above' our present level of operations is not empty! As an extreme example, Gurdjieff taught that there were two 'higher centres' – the higher emotional and the higher intellectual – that were already working in us. The problem is that we are 'not aware' of them, or we are not in communication with them.

The idea that there are higher levels of information is most important. Gurdjieff's main thesis about the 'reason' for the evolution of life on this planet was that life enables higher information to reach the earth. Life, then, is like an organ of perception. Similar ideas can be found in the teaching of Rudolf Steiner. By analogy, we as individuals can bring into ourselves – into our bodies – higher information. Hence, for example, the emphasis on conscience (and Gurdjieff's telling phrase 'shock to organic shame').

The 'mercy of God' is such a higher information.

Active and Receptive

If there are higher levels, implying a 'higher intelligence', then we need to take on a receptive role in relation to them. The lower levels in ourselves tend to be 'self-assertive' or

‘active’. Since that is their nature, then they have to be exercised in a corresponding way. In other words, the need for receptivity towards the higher does not mean quietism.

In a classical painting of St George and the Dragon, we can see George battling against the monster with his lance. At the same time, the maiden, far from being a helpless victim, stands quietly by holding the dragon by a silken cord! This beautifully depicts the dual relationship, one involving force and the other non-force.

The receptive way is not passive.

Bennett spent a considerable amount of time and effort in pursuing a purely active way, taking as his brief Gurdjieff’s ‘struggle against the denying force’. It was only later in life that he came to the conclusion that there had to be ‘receptive lines of work’. Later still, he came to think that there was also a line of work that was of the ‘reconciling force’.

As a way of making a brief summary:

1. The active ways involve function. Our functional powers are developed by effort. We need to master thinking, feeling and moving.

2. The receptive ways involve being. Our being is ‘within’ higher being. It is necessary to allow the higher to ‘organise the lower’. This includes the quality of being able to be taught (which Idries Shah made much of). A contemporary Native American teacher such as Joseph Rael will express this as ‘combining with child-like innocence’. ‘Innocence’ is a real power in the world of being. In Gurdjieff’s teaching we find such expressions as ‘learning to participate in non-desires’.

3. The reconciling ways involve will. Here we have the issue of ‘acting as one’. Since will is generally understood in terms of ‘will power’ this point is often misunderstood. Will pertains to our act and act is always in relation to other acts. To act in a free way means neither to assert or deny. Effort and consciousness are subsumed under the free act.

Non-separateness of the Fourth Way

By its very nature, the fourth way has no fixed form. Neither is it operative in a vacuum. In many ways, it could be taken as the formulation of a research programme. A main reason for arguing this is that its practice always involves the exercise of intelligence. Every positive move in the fourth way has to be undertaken by individuals responding to their concrete situation. All the various practices developed and handed on over time serve only as a stimulus.

Hence the relevance of Gurdjieff’s assertion that ‘all true initiation is self-initiation’. The term ‘initiation’ must mean ‘initiation into the method’. Such an initiation must be brought about by individuals in an individual way. This raises the question of working in groups.

We would say that when an individual makes the step into the method, then he or she is truly able to recognise and make use of what is done by others who are also initiated. The

initiated individual is able to learn from others. He is not an isolated person caught up in his own limited perceptions. However, there are problems, as we discuss below.

There are many groups attempting the fourth way, which largely follow old practices. A group of initiated individuals is very different. Gurdjieff himself provided an illustration of such a group in writing of the 'Seekers after Truth' in his book Meetings with Remarkable Men. It may well be, however, that such a group can only form for a limited time and for a definite purpose.

People who are initiated into the method may find that their own creativity proves a barrier to co-operation. The initiation is only a beginning. Nowhere in the world do we find people able to co-operate except at relatively superficial levels. To break out of the state of individual 'enlightenment' into being able to co-operate with others to find deeper truths is not at all easy. Initiation into the method can lead into specialisation. Each person acts in a specific way and it cannot be otherwise. As Gurdjieff implied, every 'teacher' will have his own aims. He added that the 'work' does not provide aims, which arise only in individuals.

Initiation into the fourth way is only a beginning. The individual then stands at a threshold. Beyond this threshold is the reality of attaining a true synergy with others. This may begin by a rapid increase in ability to recognise the principles and merits of practices and teachings coming from almost any source. There is something akin to the charismatic gift of Pentecost, of being able to understand the babble of many tongues. The underlying idea is that anyone who has achieved initiation is able to recognise the same in others. Such a person has made contact with the higher centres. He or she may not be wise or all-knowing in any conventional sense, because such measures usually apply only to the lower levels.

Esoteric or Not?

There are countless teachings about hidden knowledge, an 'inner circle of humanity, and so on. All these refer to the higher levels of information, which can never be adequately represented in the thinking of the lower levels. To exaggerate, perhaps, an item of higher knowledge could be taken as a mere banality on a lower level. The hidden knowledge is not denied us out of some conspiracy of silence, but simply not noticed or not appreciated.

The masters in any field tend to ask questions that are regarded as pertaining to the obvious by the mass. It takes a Bertrand Russell to spend years writing two hundred pages on why $1 + 1 = 2$. It is just what is taken for granted that is the deep concern of active intelligence.

Wherever someone asks questions there can be 'hidden knowledge'.

Since we now have hundreds of books about the fourth way, very few people have any questions about it. No questions, no development.

In all probability there needs to be continuing advance in our understanding of ourselves. No model of human being can ever be more than a plausible story. The truly 'esoteric' may be, then, in the capacity to look further than most. It is a possible encounter with higher intelligence; which, in being 'higher' is moving faster than any current explanation.

Monotheism and the Musical Octave

Richard Heath

Traditional religions had an underlying usage for number, natural to the numerate mind of the late stone age. One could therefore say that religious meaning was first borne out of numbers and that religious symbols found their form from their apparent quantification of existence. Living forms have arisen and these were not pre-determined to be the forms we call dog, beetle and plant but had to successfully exploit the natural environment. Human ideas about the higher meaning of the world emerged differently, through the early quantification of the literally higher time-world of planetary astronomy. A harmony of the spheres was seen to embody the ideal numerical ratios found in music, such as the tones and semitones between notes.

Every child first plays the intervals easily available on an instrument, without any musical theory. The ancient near east of 3000-1000 BC despite their elite's prodigious grasp of musical ratios, instruments and tuning methods cannot be assumed to have had the concrete notion which unifies our music theory. For us, there is an octave of only twelve distinct notes which asserts a primal authority as defining the meaning of a melody or chord, its key. The tonic and its octave have become the root (or home note) of the octave's creativity. No evidence has been found of ancient Mesopotamian music having had such a perceptual rule.

1 An octave is named after the eight notes of the octave, one being the tonic which then repeats as low and high versions of itself. The repeated note is called the tonic or "do", doubled in frequency when ascending or halved when descending. Any one of the twelve note classes can become the tonic or key of the octave.

The primacy of the octave explicitly appeared in the first millennium BC, alongside monotheistic ideas of a singular god or source of creation. Around 600 BC, the early Bible was written, and Pythagoras brought Egyptian number mysteries to pre-Classical Greece whilst, in India, Shankaracharya and Buddha found a singularity of a cosmic purpose in the human soul's self-realization. The origins of numerical theories underlying these cosmologies, and of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian mysteries before the 1st Millennium BC, remain to be seen in the astronomical civilization we call the Megalithic. It was only in the 4th Millennium BC that musical cosmological ideas would first have been articulated, since musical tones and semitones exist between the recurring periodicities of the lunar year and outer planets.

The interactions (or *intervals*) between celestial periods seen from earth then became seen as regulative and hence as archetypal gods subsisting on the numerical substrate of friction-free

gravitational dynamics. The legacy of this megalithic astronomical discovery of musical ratios then seeped into the early civilizations of the 3rd Millennium BC.

The melodic music of the ancient near east would then be conceived as giving voice to the music of the planetary gods, wandering like medieval plainchant over a world of tones and semitones coloured by the subliminal influences of the octave's tonic². The ancient popular form of five notes (do-re-fa-sol-si-do) gave music without much trouble, as our 5-note 'Pythagorean' wind-chimes today, played by the wind to marvellous effect. In this and other ways, the popular music of the ancient near east appears not to have queried the numerical nature of music as a holistic structural form, inevitably arising within material vibratory structures because of the interactive structure natural to numbers themselves.

2 The tonic affects music as a centre of gravity which can move affecting the other notes by making them sound different.

The Mesopotamians became quite obsessed with divination and astrological portents, configurations caused by the interaction of the celestial periods. As with the child at a keyboard, we cannot assume our own religious or musical theories were yet present. The Sumerians may have had gods that created the world musically, but these died to be replaced many others and by flood-hero Marduk, who transformed Tiamat and her inharmonious gods, leaving the fewer harmonious ones to define harmony.

The very making of theories is thought a Greek invention and so Pythagoras, returning to his native Samos after visiting the ancient mystery centres, appears to have forged a new cosmological theory based upon numerical tuning. His inspiration for a spiritual cause in numbers came from Babylon to the East and Egypt to the South. In the myth of his life, he conducted musical experiments on string lengths using a monochord.

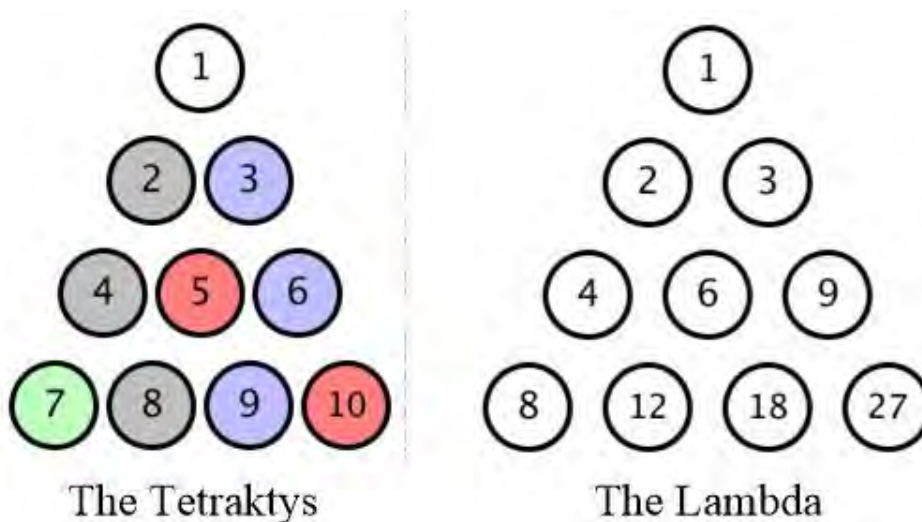


Figure 1 Two powerful diagrams of the Pythagoreans

Pythagoras developed the Tetraktys, a pyramidal array of numbers in which the first ten numbers work their way downwards, from one at the top (see figure 1). An adaptation of the Tetraktys creates

the Lambda diagram, where the left-hand radiant from the top holds the powers of two, of which one is the zeroth power³. This radiant was complemented by a right-hand radiant of the same powers but this time of three. One, two and three, are atop both two diagrams, prefiguring their role in the musical creation. The Lambda was very important for his numerical tuning theory since every cross multiple of the powers of two and three can be found in one location as the Lambda continues downwards. The numbers between these radiants are their interaction as the possible cross multiples which can form the twelve musical intervals, according to *how many* powers of three they contain.

3 since 2 to the power zero is one, as is the zeroth power of all numbers.

Pythagoras discovered, when one vibratory tone is increased by a power of three a new and different note is created, and that after four powers of three a pentatonic musical scale is created, found in “Pythagorean” wind chimes. The pentatonic has five different notes, “-tonic” meaning of an octave, created when the first note (the tonic) is doubled to also end the scale. This is shown in the numbers 1-2-3 atop the two diagrams – the starting tone (1) affirms a tonic for an octave of high and low do (2), this being penetrated by successive powers to create new notes within an octave (3)⁴. Creating a first new note via an ascending interval of $3/2$ shows the new note to be related to the tonic as 2 whilst being 3 halves of the tonic. This showed Pythagoras that a created note belonged to the note it was tuned to, the ratio $3/2$ inherently tied to 2. Eleven successive tuning operations populate an octave of tones relative to the first note. If more successive tunings were performed, this merely created out-of-tune versions of the same note class, due to the fact that twelve fifths (of $3/2$) can never exactly equal seven octave doublings. The ear demands the octave equal exactly 2 but the powers of prime number⁵ 3 (on the right of the lambda diagram) cannot be removed to leave only a power of 2. The answer to this problem lies in the two diagrams above, in that the Lambda has the number 6 beneath the number 1 whilst the Tetraktys has the number 5, the next higher prime numbers to 3.

4 three can divide into two to produce fractions that are different notes.

5 Prime numbers are indivisible by any other number (1 not being a number but the oneness each number expresses). The interaction of early prime numbers are key to understanding ancient numeracy and its available methods.

The creators of ancient flood heroes understood that, by moderating powers of three with powers of five, the de-tuning inherent in octaves tuned using $3/2$ could be mitigated by two new semitones of $16/15$ and two new tones of $10/9$. These could remove the powers of 3 whilst cancelling their own powers of 5.

Pythagoras’ two diagrams allowed music to be understood in a new way: the world of number had a single God (1) who manifested a creation (2) which became populated by up to 12 possible notes classes, twelve being 2 times 2 times 3.

In the sky, Jupiter delineates the twelve gods and a voluntary Zodiac of 12 signs and it was the Indo-European myths of Greece and India that carry this sacred association found also in 12 disciples, regions, Olympian gods, hours in daylight and the note classes; a move toward monotheism having discovered the unity in twelve notes, found by an analysis to be a relic of the numbers defining musical ratios.

This is not to say that, before the 1st millennium, nothing of this was known about music or that, for instance, the creation stories of the near east were not influenced by a musical theory. The Sumerians possessed a cosmology of musical origins without emphasis on the octave and the octave's inferred *requirement* for the world to have emerged from a single Source.

But all notes must refer to a single reference note if the musical system is to be harmonious and that fact was, at some early point, considered cosmological. The musical ratios between planetary periods and the lunar year imply everything in the sky is relative to the Moon. Its creation was the initial creative Act and the cyclic idea of the octave a development from that. Successive notes are bound into their Source through the duality of the octave, and the recurrent archetype of the octave is seen naturally divided into the seven notes of a scale or twelve possible (chromatic) notes. Beyond the moon lay the whole visible cosmos, then considered as organised according to a system of octaves – the doctrine espoused by the most recent monotheist, George I. Gurdjieff.

By the 20th century monotheism had mutated through the new dispensations of Christ and Mohammad, each a new religious vision with number and musical structures forming esoteric versions often culled by Church and Cleric. But the octave view of creation provides the sort of structure that Oneness would need to manifest within existence using the available powers numbers have to be harmonious.

The Fascination of Clouds

Tim Nevill

[This text expands notes made in preparation for a week-end of cloud-watching and conversation with a French friend, Denis Mialhe, an artist and philosopher. Words were sometimes interspersed with music and painted or photographed images].

The everyday world on which we depend for human existence is founded on constant change. But we only see the surface of what is happening. Religion & science then produce theories & stories in attempts to account for the great forces underlying these external manifestations. The hydrological cycle of evaporation, condensation, and precipitation is just one example of that. We are absolutely dependent on water rising and falling between earth & sky as the giver & sustainer of all life. Clouds are an essential part of that process. And clouds are crucial in screening sunlight from the earth, acting as a vast & efficient global cooling system.

All that is of course important but I want to propose that we contemplate something very different, called *Shanshui* in Taoist & Zen depictions of water, mountains, & clouds. Here clouds are seen as manifestations of the invisible processes shaping our world. These clouds have many individual shapes but few basic forms. Traditionally they are seen as an expression of the Life-Force connecting all things in a dynamic rather than a static universe. They serve as a metaphor of the absence of any fixed identity with Earth & Sky perpetually interacting in ongoing transformation & metamorphosis. Clouds are thus comprehended as an ambiguous interface between different levels of understanding & aliveness. This silent realm is largely beyond human comprehension.

In the West intensely experienced aspects of the natural world have mostly found expression in music, painting, & poetry. Such openness to the world can give rise to brief transformative moments of feeling in touch with the secret pulse of the universe.



[Here we listened to music (Debussy's "Nuages" from his "Trois Nocturnes" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEpzZjB6_D4) and looked at painted images of clouds (Titian, Rembrandt, Constable, Turner, & Nolde among others - from good selections to be found on the internet).

Then we moved on to approaching clouds from a different direction. There's a scientifically complex lecture by Karl Popper (author of "The Open Society & Its Enemies") entitled "On Clocks and Clouds". (<http://www.the-rathouse.com/2011/Clouds-and-Clocks.html>) (My interpretation is highly simplified, but Popper's starting-point is that clouds are seen as largely unpredictable & disorderly systems whereas clocks are highly regulated & precise. He then calls in question such conventional views, based on only limited knowledge of the inner workings of these two opposites. So clocks may be more "cloud-like" in some respects than is generally assumed, & clouds may operate with precision in a greater context of significance. Popper's presentation intrigued Gyorgy Ligeti, the Hungarian composer, who then wrote a piece called "Clouds and Clocks" which marries ambiguity & precision (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfVnazeA3zw> .)

Moving now beyond the parameters of science the situation becomes more interesting still. Some writers make use of Martin Buber's distinction between I-Thou and I-It relationships. The I-It

relationship focuses on accuracy of observation based on sensory information. That is the impersonal scientific method as employed in a laboratory situation, excluding supposedly irrelevant influences. But I-Thou requires an interpersonal relationship with whatever is being observed or evaluated. It calls for non-judgemental acceptance of “otherness”.

You’re probably puzzled about how that might be relevant to experiencing clouds. Well that brings me to Alfred Stieglitz and his 1920s photographs of clouds. He called these photos “Equivalents” : “photos of shapes with no evidence linking these with time or place”. The intention was to destabilize the viewer’s relationship with nature so as to lead him or her to think about the feeling evoked by depiction of a cloud formation. Or more directly : “If what one makes is not created with sacredness, with wonder, it has no right to be called a work of art”. To do less than that is seen as an I-It exercise, characterised by Stieglitz as distant & empty, “mental & not real”. To return for a moment to Buber – an I-It form of engagement is typically characterised by lack of relational commitment.



For Stieglitz “If one cannot lose one’s self to something beyond, one is bound to be disappointed ... My photographs are born of an inner need – an Experience of Spirit. I have a vision of life & I try to find equivalents for it”. In his studies of clouds Stieglitz tried to capture that instant of time when the outer reality of clouds merged with, or was equivalent to, his subjective state. He believed that intuitive perception represented a more valid & truthful understanding than could be achieved through intellectual analysis. For him

seeing signified awareness resulting from inner experience. One of his followers wrote: “The Equivalents remain photography’s most radical demonstration of a reality behind & beyond that offered by a world of appearances. They are intended to function evocatively, like music”.

Again another jump. A relatively well-known 14th century English mystical text called “The Cloud of Unknowing” is mainly concerned with obstacles along the way towards encountering God. That gives me the idea of thinking about what passing through such a cloud might involve in today’s world. Rather than being so pretentious as to present my own views here’s a brief poem by Antonio Machado .

*Wayfarer, the only way
is your footsteps, there is no other.
Wayfarer, there is no way,
you make the way as you go.
As you go, you make the way
and stopping to look behind,*

*you see the path that your feet
will never travel again.
Wayfarer, there is no way -
only foam trails in the sea.*

We followed Machado with the ethereal meandering voices of Gyorgy Ligeti's "Lux Aeterna".
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-iVYu5lyX5M>

But that wasn't the end. After a break for something to eat we decided to conclude with Pasolini's 22 minute distillation of Shakespeare as *commedia dell arte* knockabout farce : *Che cosa sono le novule ?* ("What Are Clouds?"). The human puppets playing Othello and Iago only know life as theatre. However with Pasolini they end up dumped on a garbage-tip, lying on their backs, watching clouds passing overhead. Othello is filled with wonder; but Iago mockingly interjects "Oh heart-rending, marvellous beauty of creation" as he "awaits" submersion beneath another load of man-made junk.

Rain seemed imminent as I started to drive home, but the dark clouds swiftly vanished as if to conclude our explorations with a demonstration of the unfounded pretensions of human claims to know what's happening in the sky and most other places too. Something is missing in our way of looking and in our claims to understanding. To me at least it seems that clouds have a potential for opening us to another realm of experience concealed beneath the self-centred concerns of everyday existence.

20.7.2019

On A Musical Logosafari

Edward Matchett

"If music be the food of love, play on..." ... William Shakespeare: *Twelfth Night*

Music is media's Special Emissary for creating the conditions in which miracles happen easily and meaning comes into blossom everywhere. Where there is no music, everyone's world is starved of essential vibrations.

When music, particularly new music and music heard as though for the first time, seeps down into, or wells up from, the soul, the result is electric. Feet start tapping. Hearts start beating faster. People discover suddenly - or rediscover if they had forgotten - that life is glorious. Music brings joy and exhilaration, deep soul contentment: the dissolving of inner - and outer - tensions. Music is itself a miracle: a miracle that projects its own wonderful character to all and sundry.

Listen to some of the music that is part of your heritage. Listen as you have never listened: with rapt attention to both sounds and lyrics ... and then compose music and lyrics of your own.

As you listen to - and create - music and lyrics, allow your total being to journey with these creations wherever they wish to take you. Be hyper-sensitive to all that the sounds and the words are saying to you, asking of you, inviting you, challenging you, daring you, building you up to accomplish. Be cognisant of what all these vibrations - each and everyone of them, including the most simple - is

making possible: what new opportunities they are providing: what guidance they are giving you: in what directions and to what exciting and important ends they are beckoning you. Realise that you are within a hair's breadth of media's own core of being - just as you might be in the presence of an angel or the spirit of some other wonderful being who loves you and is eager to make contact.

Don't be afraid... don't be cowardly about simply letting go. Become the music and song. Permit yourself to melt into it, breathe with it, ignite with it, burn with it, dance with it, fly with it, laugh and sing and delight with it. Be each and every one of its subtle particles as they separate and rush out to every corner of the universe, and as they return and recombine and greet one another as they freely choose to.

There is no telling what you have to give to one another - no telling what you will experience together - no telling what adventures, memories, discoveries, new creations, you will jointly delight in, create and make available for others.

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Compositions

One of the most respected of living composers, Elliott Carter (be — 1908), said on accepting the 1983 Edward MacDowell medal:

I have a feeling that somehow there are these shadowy things behind me, these compositions, which are in a way not me, myself; really, they deserve the medal and not me. They have this strange life; I'm not sure that I invented them. These strange beings began to come to my mind and gradually somehow insisted on being written in their strange and unusual way, difficult to some people, and profoundly exciting to others. I was just sort of something that wrote them down, because they were telling me they had to be done this way and they were rather trying and sometimes difficult and demanding. And sometimes they did things I have never done before and made me do things that bothered me and upset me and sometimes excited me—and puzzled me, too, sometimes.

Musical Thinking

Jerrold Levinson

Extracts from Journal of Music and Meaning, vol.1, 2003, section 2

It has sometimes been remarked that making music - that is, composing, performing or improvising it - involves thought or is a form of thought. If so, what is the nature of the thinking that goes on in making music? And what of listening to music? Is the experience of the comprehending listener also a kind of thinking? How does musical thinking differ from the paradigm of thinking, that is, the formulation and manipulation of thoughts in words? Can musical sequence itself, rather than the activity of producing or auditing it, be regarded as a kind of thinking? In short, is music thought?

.....

2.2. It seems clear from a number of Wittgenstein's remarks, especially ones directed to particular composers, that he was indeed inclined to regard music as thinking Note 1. In one place we find the following invocation: "The strength of the thoughts in Brahms's music." (CV 23). In another place we are told that one "...can point to particular places in a tune by Schubert and say: look, that is the point of the tune, this is where the thought comes to a head." (CV 47) What is most striking about these observations is how natural it seems for Wittgenstein to think of music as a kind of thinking, how little in need of defense he appears to take that to be. What if one invoked, by contrast, "The strength of the thoughts in the cuisine of les freres Troisgros", or "The strength of the thoughts in Michael Jordan's basketball playing"? Would this seem as natural? Could we easily speak of a moment in Jordan's progress to the basket, or of a dish in a ten-course meal at Troisgros, where "the thought comes to a head"? I suggest not.

2.3. In the Investigations and elsewhere, Wittgenstein remarks that one might describe the effect of a passage of music by saying 'Here it is as if a conclusion were being drawn'. (PI 182) There are a couple of things to note about this. First, Wittgenstein does not say that, in such a passage, a conclusion is being drawn; rather, it is as if a conclusion were being drawn. So far, then, we are in the realm of analogy or metaphor, or perhaps of the dawning of an aspect. Second, the character of some passages of music to which Wittgenstein is calling attention is specifically that of seeming to draw or reach a conclusion, as after a period of reflection; it is not the idea of merely concluding, in the sense of stopping or terminating. Compare the endings of Beethoven's Piano Sonata op. 110 or Dvorak's 7th Symphony, which seem to sum up and crystallize what has gone before, with the endings of, say, minuet movements from symphonies of the Classical period, even great ones such as Mozart's 40th or 41st. The former have this special rhetorical character of concluding, whereas the latter have only the mundane character of coming to a close – however satisfyingly.

.....
. Music is not understood in a vacuum, as a pure structure of sounds fallen from the stars, one which we receive via some pure faculty of musical perception. Music is rather inextricably embedded in our form of life, a form of life that is, as it happens, essentially linguistic. Thus music is necessarily apprehended, at least in part, in terms of the language and linguistic practices that define us and our world.

But by the same token, should we not expect that our understanding of linguistic phenomena will sometimes be inflected by our musical understanding, especially in light of the fact that our musical capacities are awakened at least as early as our linguistic ones? For example, we may describe certain speech as "sing-songy", a conversation as not having the right "rhythm", and the papers at a conference as not "harmonizing". Furthermore, in tonal languages, such as Japanese or Indonesian, the distinction between speaking and singing is to some extent effaced. Though language may be essential to the human form of life - whereas music, though universal, arguably is not, since we can presumably imagine human life without music, but not without language – once both are present their interpenetration is assured, and we cannot help interpreting the one in terms that are rooted in the other.

.....

Finally, what is the connection between Wittgenstein's views on understanding music – that it is manifested by a complex of behaviors, such as illustrative gestures, apt comparisons, suitable hummings, and appropriate movings to music, that its criteria are neither inner acts of comprehension nor articulate paraphrases of musical content but a range of outwardly demonstrable responses and capacities - and the claim that Wittgenstein also endorsed, which has been my focus here, that music, no less than language, incarnates thought?

.....

2.17. Parallel to the question at the heart of this essay – Is music thought? – would be the question, Is speech thought? In other words, one might wonder whether a stretch of intelligible verbal discourse was literally thinking, or was instead only the expression of literal thinking, that is, certain occurrences or processes in the mind of the speaker. Wittgenstein, of course, argued that there is no reason to think of thinking as a purely inner process, of which our observable behavior, however intelligent, can be no more than the outer shell, and thus no reason not to recognize as thinking the normal deployment of language. But for those who balk at the idea even that intelligible verbal discourse is thought, that is, that thought has outer as well as inner forms, and who claim that such discourse only manifests thought, the central claim of this paper can be suitably recast. It becomes this: Intelligible music stands to literal thinking in precisely the same relation as does intelligible verbal discourse. If that relation be not exemplification but instead, say, expression, then music and language are, at any rate, in the same, and quite comfortable, boat.

Notes on Will and Love in recent weeks

John Kirby

I say to myself:- “I am Jesus. With our Love my illnesses can be healed, I Will Stop-Being-Ill.”

Obvious as it is, the Gift¹ is a simple and effective means of Uniting with Him (from Him), i.e. Love, Union. The Gift is an Act of Will by both parties, us and Jesus at the dawning of the Age of Will. (Age of Function starting about 2,000 years BC, Age of Being around time of Incarnation, Age of Will starting about now, so Function, Being and Will as Triad of Reality in our evolution) Albeit His Will is always so happily disposed and has been awaiting our species to be able and knowledgeable to give its will to Him. How wonderful that is so, and so well created within our time and space to give to us.

Prayers in Age of Will: they are not, so to speak, prayer statements as in Hail Mary’s for example, but Acts of Will like Luisa Picarretta’s prayers² such as first in the morning prayers of hers. Actions of will. Luisa’s prayer begins, for example, “As our eyes open to the light of day, let us make our whole being rise in the Light of the Will of God, and let us begin our Rounds.

“The first act must be an act of love in the Divine Will. Let us make this act diffuse into all the intelligences of the creatures, in all glances, in the words, in the movements, in the steps, in the heartbeats, in each breath.”

I wish to receive the Gift for others. I think that is valid, i.e. almost “despite me”. I pray that others, I intercede, that others receive the Gift, the nature of the Gift.

The Gift as it naturally increases in one, moves more and more in each individual's time.
 Union with Jesus increases as we more and more accept it.
 Our true individuality matures and increases in knowledge and substance.
 All ancient ways dissolve in time now, but transformations and union come about in a new way.
 More energy from Love and acceptance and growth transformations, increases, because He is Love, He is the Gift.

We can begin to see the reality of Him being the Way, Truth and Life for ourselves in ever increasing depth and meaning. All such is rich Joy, coming about through true Union.

We learn how to allow all this and more to controllably increase in breadth and depth in meaning and maturity.

I care to Love each other.

All of this and more is increasing in the whole world, all people potentially.

Lahut,³ Lahutz...ever increasing out my mouth, of course I just hear it happen, almost no understanding why. Maybe Ramadan now, May 2019..

The main thing about the Gift is that it is HERE/THERE, everywhere to be accepted.

The Gift is not specifically for ones being, which is what one is used to in our religious life. It is a growing awareness of Love, as the Gift is from Jesus who is Love. The Gift is act of Will now for us in the dawning of the Age of Will, which then benefits ones being - as in the 4th of the menorah through the Act and Gift of the Word, of Love which is united with or from, His Will.

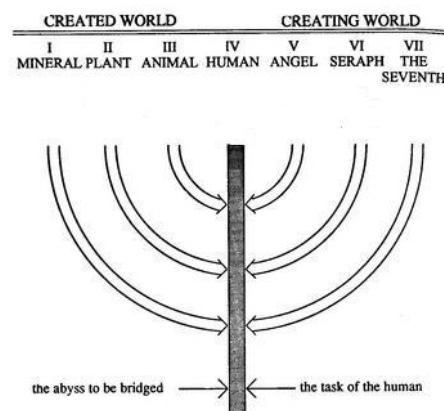
So, to be aware, the Gift is new at the dawning of the Age of Will.

Our accepting of the Gift is an act of Will surrendering, accepting joyfully, to His Will.

I can understand that some people may feel that the Gift is like the *latihan*⁴ but Subud's latihan is from God, whereas the Gift *is* God (half joke!). This is unfolding evolution as we move from Age of Being to Age of Will..

It may be seen as easier for Subud or ex-Subud practitioners to accept the Gift, but actually I equally feel it is relatively easy for anyone to accept the Gift. Perhaps both are true.

And truly this is real Work. Once we have taste of reality of the Gift, before long we begin to find we can be "in this" more and more of the time, it is a far greater reality, and we find we want it, and we find it is real work, work with joy most of the time; it is in the 4th of the menorah symbol (above) for us, accepting the Gift in each moment as we so choose. Then it becomes true individuality and true devotion.



Menora diagram from *Talking With Angels*⁵

The continuation of the Gift for oneself is within itself. Not in the traditional way to achieve a certain something or practicing ways as we have become used to in last 2,000 years. Rather our simple acts of will to become one with Him, to experience His becoming saved by becoming one with Him. That is His aim with us.

Little do we know how endlessly, and I mean practically endlessly beautiful such actions then be with Him. All by us allowing Him to do this for us and uniquely so for each of us individually. (Not unaligned with “action first, experience second, understanding third...”)

And we begin to see more and more that this is Love, endless Love rich in all aspects we discover of the Way, Truth and Life. All endless aspects of Love. Unitiveness.

All we do for all this to take place is accept the Gift, an increasing surrender in the gesture of our hands facing up to His hands a few inches above ours facing down on ours, which is a gesture of us saying yes to His Will, made easy by His offering this as the Gift.

I will that Love stops me being ill, cures me, this is me Stopping Being Ill, I am doing it to myself quite naturally, simple, f-e-e-l oneself doing it to oneself.

Gift and Menora:

Until now we can rightly work on our 3 created centres (I, II, III) to allow what takes place in the 4th by/with Him, by the Word, to bring about our individuality, but now with the Gift He can act very directly on us, for us, in other words He can work directly for us. Again, in other words, with the Gift He can act directly on us from above, rather than what we have been used to where we work from below, i.e. where we work on our three centres as in Gurdjieff and *Talking With Angels*. But with Him working so directly we can still help the evolutionary process by working on – and knowledge of – of ourselves. We are no longer alone. He is among us and awaits each/any persons – joyful and grateful – work, in a sense reward to us after 2,000 years of work, devotion, prayer, transformation etc.

Yes, as JG Bennett has said and written He came to bring Love, and the Gift i.e., new, evidence of this Love for each of us helped to be more possible after development of our, species, soul stuff pool⁶ (SSP)..

I can accept the Gift for others, on behalf of others, as an act of will so as to somehow share and pass it on to others. So, can others??

The Gift is a means of bringing, of uniting, Love with us individually, as many as possible, now made more possible after SSP development in last 2,000 years. We are fairly ignorant of such need and possibility, hence the wonder of the possible need now of Love through such as the Gift. He is Love. How right J G Bennett on this subject...but Bennett was/is must be so happy about such as the Gift. Jesus, Love itself, of course knows how to do this for anyone, along with their willing co-operation.

You will never be more yourself, or never become more yourself. ‘Home, sweet home’

The Gift can bring you to waiting with Him, in Him, at every moment as anything else can seem more and more nothingness compared to unity with Him.

Now, that is Love. Acceptance of His Love required humility, as Mary says in her Medjugorje messages.

Maybe as T S Eliot says. "humility is endless."

After typing up all last week's notes from this diary onto computer I feel the lack of obeying Him over the years, like not having the brain surgery. All so painful and overwhelmed by sin/crime for 20 years. But now – I think thanks to St Matthias⁷ Feast day yesterday - I can begin to bear it, to repent on it, try to go deeper and resolve it if possible. And pass on the Gift.

Is it that the Gift is meant to become permanent or something so transformative probably by perpetual uniting of Will that it is like that, is that? Now I have written that it seems rather obvious this must be so as it must be to do with uniting of Will, i.e.

THE GIFT IS UNITING OF WILL IN MOST JOYFUL, PERSONAL, LOVING, TRANSFORMATIVE WAY. NOW THAT IS A GIFT!

Healing is an aspect of the Gift, ask in Gift which is Jesus, to be healed as Gift is Jesus in Love. And Love is the unitive energy – all the time – which is Jesus, which naturally heals.

For first time I found the 2nd 10 days of Ramadan very personally specific inwardly in action for me:

"This is the time when every Muslim must ask for forgiveness and peace from Allah.

"They should apologise for all their mistakes, change their ways and forgive those who have done them wrong.

"The *dua* for this Ashra⁸ is: 'I ask forgiveness of my sins from Allah who is my Lord and I turn towards Him.'"

I wish all these good things for Gift receivers and potential receivers, I intercede for them all.

Notes

1. The Gift is a reference to a form of prayer discovered by John a few years ago, that involves making direct contact with Christ through a gesture. See 'A New Way, a New Gift' in DuVersity #45.

2. Luisa Piccarretta (1865-1947) seemed to have lived entirely on communion wafers, Though renowned for her life of extraordinary holiness, what has drawn the attention of the world has been the vast, decades-long diary that she kept of her mystical conversations with Jesus. Those conversations present a number of astonishing claims and promises. For the first time in 2000 years Jesus invites all of mankind - through his revelation to Luisa - to experience the ultimate state of union with God: "living in the divine will". What had previously been experienced on Earth by only four persons - Jesus, Mary, and Adam and Eve before the Fall - could now be experienced by anyone. Even more remarkably, Jesus described his invitation - and Luisa's (and our) response to it - as the Third Fiat of God, claiming that it would somehow complete and even surpass his First Fiat of Creation and his Second Fiat of Redemption.

3. *Lahut* is an Arabic word, originally used to refer to the divinity within man, adopted by John Bennett to mean the 'Unfathomable'.

4. Introduced by Pak Subuh and taken up for a while by John Bennett in the early 1960s.

5. *Talking with Angels* by Gitta Malaskz.

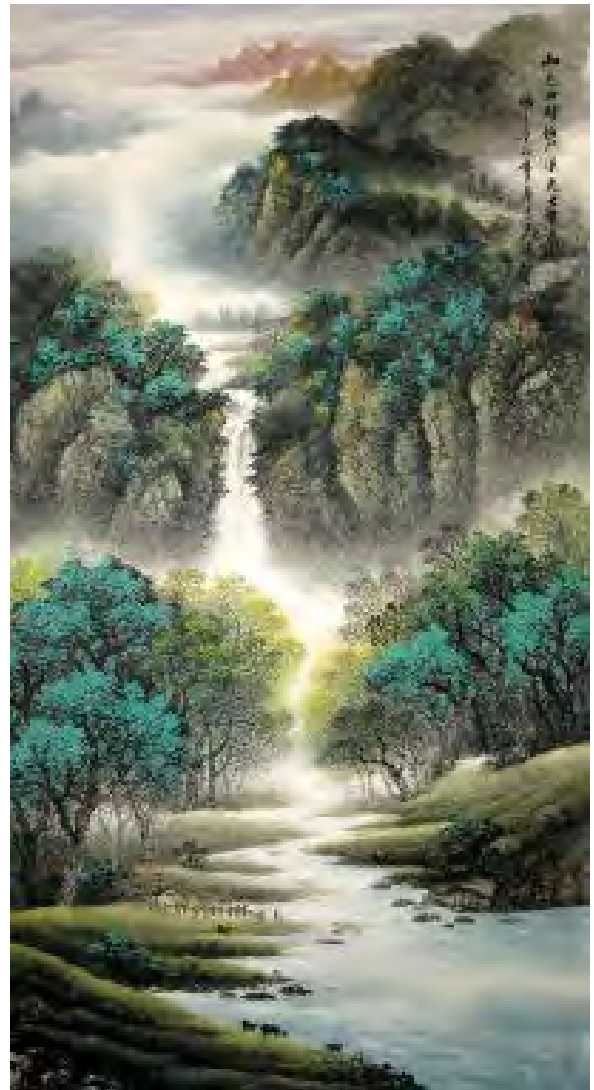
6. The 'soul-stuff pool' is the idea that there is a reservoir of subtle material which is drawn on when a human being is conceived and born. This provides the 'raw stuff' from which we may create our own souls.

7. Matthias (died c. 80 AD) was, according to the *Acts of the Apostles* (written c. AD 80-90), the apostle chosen to replace Judas Iscariot following Judas' betrayal of Jesus and his (Judas') subsequent death. His calling as an apostle is unique, in that his appointment was not made personally by Jesus, who had already ascended into heaven, and it was also made before the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the early Church.

8. *Dua*. In the terminology of Islam, du'ā' literally meaning invocation, is an act of supplication. The term is derived from an Arabic word meaning to 'call out' or to 'summon', and Muslims regard this as a profound act of worship. The Arabic word "Ashra" means ten. Each Ashra comes with its own sanctions and recompense.

POEM by Michael White

mountains and rivers are full of life
even rocks are alive
the stones talk to each other
 the trees speak
go out at night
you can hear them
it's not conceptual
not spoken in words
you have to have a heart for the deep
 for the still
 for the mysterious stand
 in a cedar grove
 in the winter
the silence holds a vivid presence
everything breathes
 observes
 gesticulates
everything is aware of your presence
every moment is filled with intelligence
not with thinking
 but a direct pulse of the immediate



REVIEWS.....

Gurdjieff and Objective Consciousness in Fiction: Kathryn Burdekin, *Proud Man* (1934) and C. Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant* (2003)

Carole M. Cusack, University of Sydney

G. I Gurdjieff: A Brief Outline

For George Ivanovich Gurdjieff (c. 1866-1949) the ‘natural’ state of human beings is that of sleeping machines, lacking both consciousness and a soul (which he termed a *kesdjan* body, a higher-being or finer body that would survive physical death). Gurdjieff taught that the purpose of human life is the acquisition of a soul through work on the self and “conscious suffering.” People who do not work on themselves perish at physical death and their energy goes to feed the Moon, which seeks to develop into an Earth, as the Earth seeks to develop into a Sun.¹ Humans in the “Work” or the “Fourth Way” (as the Gurdjieff teaching is known) have no “real I” or single self, but are an agglomeration of competing “centres”, notably the intellection, emotional, and sensory centres.

The “Fourth Way” refers to Gurdjieff’s transcendence of the three “ways” of the major religions: the way of the *fakir* (Sufi ascetic) is focused on the body and sensory centre; the way of the monk (Christian ascetic) is connected to the emotional centre; and the way of the *yogi* (Hindu ascetic) is linked to the intellectual centre. Andrew Rawlinson argues that these ways are all inadequate because no human is restricted to a single facet of being. He notes that failing to take all three centres into account results in “two kinds of imbalance ... individual neurosis (... [as] centres try to do the work that is proper to one of the others) and ‘spiritual lopsidedness’ (...[as] no centre can reveal the whole nature of man).”² The teaching methods used by Gurdjieff from his emergence as a spiritual teacher in St Petersburg and Moscow in 1912 to his death in Paris in 1949 were designed to bring about the unification of the centres, enabling the development of a “real I” or *kesdjan* body.

Gurdjieff taught that there are four states of consciousness; sleep, waking consciousness (which is almost the same as sleep), self-remembering, and objective consciousness.³ The state of objective consciousness is linked to the attainment of a *kesdjan* body. Gurdjieff first taught a complex cosmology, which is found in Pyotr Demianovich Ouspensky’s *In Search of the Miraculous* (1949), the first published account of the Work.⁴ Gurdjieff and his pupils left Russia in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and in Tblisi (Tiflis) in 1919 the first demonstrations of the “sacred dances” or Movements took place after Jeanne de Salzmann, a talented pianist and teacher of Emile Jacques-Dalcroze’s Eurhythmics became his pupil. It was in that city that Gurdjieff founded the first Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man.⁵ Movements are central to Gurdjieff’s teaching, as are his writings, chiefly *Beelzebub’s Tales to His Grandson* (1950) on which he collaborated with

¹ Garrett Thomson, *On Gurdjieff* (London: Wadsworth, 2003), pp. 45-46.

² Andrew Rawlinson, “Gurdjieff,” in Andrew Rawlinson, *The Book of the Enlightened Masters: Western Teachers in Eastern Traditions* (Chicago and La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1997), p. 288.

³ Sophia Wellbeloved, *Gurdjieff: The Key Concepts* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 39-40.

⁴ P. D. Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous: The Teachings of G. I. Gurdjieff* (San Diego, New York and London: Harcourt Inc., 2001 [1949]).

⁵ John Mangan, “Thomas de Hartmann: A Composer’s Life,” *Notes*, vol. 53, no. 1 (September 1996), p. 25.

Alfred R. Orage, an Englishman who edited an influential magazine, *The New Age*.⁶ A third cultural product is the Gurdjieff-de Hartmann music, which Gurdjieff composed with Ukrainian Thomas de Hartmann, a classical composer who, with his opera singer wife Olga, was an early pupil of Gurdjieff's in Russia. Gurdjieff and his pupils left Tblisi and, after sojourns in Constantinople and Berlin, settled at the Prieuré des Basses-Loges at Fontainebleau-Avon south of Paris in 1922.

Gurdjieff's teaching was intended to wake people up, and consciousness is central to him. Spiritually undeveloped humans are machines and lack consciousness: they can neither be, nor do. *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* (1950) the 'First Series' of Gurdjieff's collected works, known as *All and Everything*, is a science fiction story more than 1200 pages long, in which Beelzebub tells of his adventures, chiefly among the "three-brained beings" of Earth, to his grandson Hassein as the spaceship *Karnak* travels from Beelzebub's planet, Karatas to the solar system Pandetznokh.⁷ Gurdjieff's followers understood him to be an authentic teacher or an enlightened being. A sketch by a pseudonymous pupil, later identified as Gorham Munson, stated that "[m]any people attributed impartial objective knowledge to Gurdjieff ... He could read character at a glance. He had powers of clairvoyance, thought-reading and the like. In short, it was claimed for him by some people that he was a veritable God-man."⁸ John Godolphin Bennett, one of Gurdjieff's most important pupils, noted that though Gurdjieff usually made ambiguous statements about himself, "[s]ometimes he came very near to claiming he was an *avatar*, a Cosmic individual incarnated to help mankind."⁹

Katharine Burdekin, Proud Man (1934): A Depiction of Objective Consciousness?

Katharine Burdekin (1896-1963) was born Katharine Penelope Cade, and began writing novels while living in Australia with her husband Beaufort Burdekin, the father of her two daughters. The marriage ended in 1922, the same year her first novel, *Anna Colquhoun*, was published in London. In 1934 with the publication of *Proud Man*, she adopted the pen name Murray Constantine, under which her best-known novel, *Swastika Night* (1937), a prescient dystopia that imagined aspects of Nazi Germany with considerable accuracy.¹⁰ Gurdjieff appears in a number of fictions as a character (as will be demonstrated in the discussion of C. Daly King's "Curious Mr Tarrant" stories), but Burdekin was not a Gurdjieff pupil, though she may have been familiar with some of his ideas.

Anthony Blake first drew attention to *Proud Man* in a chapter on the legomonism (means of transmitting knowledge to initiates) of "objective reason" in the Gurdjieff tradition. He noted that Burdekin's book, like *Beelzebub's Tales*, was a critique "of the human race from a distant viewpoint" and that A. R. Orage had admired the novel.¹¹ Burdekin's book is the tale of a Genuine Person who

⁶ Martin Seymour-Smith, *The 100 Most Influential Books Ever Written: A History of Thought From Ancient Times to Today* (Secaucus, NJ: Citadel Press, 1998), p. 449.

⁷ G. I. Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* (New York: Penguin Arkana, 1999[1950]), p. 51.

⁸ Armagnac (Gorham Munson), "The Strange Cult of Gurdjieff: An Insider's Story of the Most Mysterious Religious Movement in the World," *Practical Psychology Monthly* (1937), reprinted in *Gurdjieff International Review*, vol. III, no. 2 (2000), p. 53.

⁹ J. G. Bennett, *Gurdjieff: Making a New World* (New York and London: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 82.

¹⁰ Daphne Patai, "Afterword," in Katharine Burdekin, *Proud Man* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1993 [1934]), pp. 320-321.

¹¹ Anthony Blake, "Gurdjieff and the Legomonism of 'Objective Reason'," in Carole M. Cusack and Alex Norman (eds), *New Religions and Cultural Production* (Leiden and Boston, MA: Brill, 2012), pp. 242-243.

travels from to future to the England of the 1930s, and lives sequentially with a clergyman, a woman novelist, and a child murderer. The Genuine Person is neither male nor female, and comes from a society without sexual reproduction, war, racial prejudice or animal cruelty (all such Persons are golden-brown in skin-tone, beautiful, hermaphrodite, vegetarian, and able to read the minds of humans, whom the Person calls “subhumans”, taking Personhood as the true standard of humanity). The Person lives first in female attire with Andrew Gifford, a Church of England clergyman who bestows the name “Verona” on the Person. Gifford has an awakening of conscience and resigns his clerical commission to emigrate to Australia; the Person goes to London and becomes the flatmate of Leonora Simons, a novelist and modern woman who met the Person in the British Library Reading Room, as Alethea Gifford Verona. In the fourth part of the novel the Person, as Gifford Verona, nicknamed Paris, lives as a man with Gilbert Hassall, a young man who has murdered two small girls and is traumatised by his mental aberrance and crimes. At the end of *Proud Man*, the Person and Hassall have agreed to part, as Hassall has been cured. The Person is struck by a truck and dies, but finds that the impact does not in fact kill, but effects either the end of the Person’s dream, or a return to “the time of humanity.”¹²

The novel is enormously impressive, both as a strikingly original piece of speculative fiction, and as a ruthless critique of three aspects of inter-war British society: privilege (economic, social, and so on), gender, and militarism (and violence in general). Burdekin’s criticisms are far-reaching, and envisage a relationship between Genuine Persons and 1930s humans that “is similar to that of the first hominoids to 20th century humans.”¹³ For those familiar with Gurdjieff’s ideas, the uniqueness of the Person (in which the intellectual, emotional, and sensory centres – and arguably the sexual centre – are undeniably integrated) renders the reflections on subhuman society chilling and a somewhat uncomfortable idea of what “objective consciousness” might look like. For example, the concluding paragraph of Part 1, “The Person,” is as follows:

So I came into what was perhaps, even for subhumans, an unusually dark and thick atmosphere of guilt, hatred, envy, contempt and misery. The nations were in a peace of exhaustion, but national general hostility, or *patriotism*, was still fully vital enough to set them, as soon as they could stagger, again at each other’s throats. The sexes were in an acute state of irritation, while the tension between the privileged bourgeoisie and the unprivileged proletariat was gradually becoming more vibrant in all industrial countries and could only be eased, as I thought, by violent accession of patriotism which must lead to another war. Besides these large general jealousies and discontents, there were personal and private envies, fears and contempts without number, and if you asked me how to subhumans spend their time? I might almost answer, ‘In hating’.¹⁴

The title must therefore refer to the delusions of twentieth century subhumans: they glory in their pride, and in particular men glory in their violent domination of the world in general, and of women in particular.

A particular chill that a reader might experience in reading *Proud Man* lies in the fact that the Person’s relationship with Gilbert Hassall, who has cut the throats of two little girls, is described in the same fashion as the relationships with the (apparently) more admirable Andrew Gifford and Leonora Simons. In fact, the Person remarks, with reference to Hassall, “I think any subhuman who

¹² Burdekin, *Proud Man*, p. 316.

¹³ Carlo Pagetti (trans Clara Mucci and Maria R. Philmus), “In the Year of Our Lord Hitler 720: Katharine Burdekin’s *Swastika Night*,” *Science-Fiction Studies*, vol. 17 (1990), p. 362.

¹⁴ Burdekin, *Proud Man*, p. 62.

was considerably more conscious than his fellows was open to the charge of abnormality, and the man I met who, in the end, reached a very high state of consciousness, was considered for a large part of his life a lunatic.”¹⁵ Moreover, the clinical discussions of sexuality, which include detailed descriptions of the hypocrisy attendant upon distinctions between men and women, wives and prostitutes, homosexuals, the elevation of virgins, sexual shame and other topics, recall Gurdjieff’s assertion that “seventy-five percent of thoughts come from the sex centre and they color all the rest.”¹⁶ Sophia Wellbeloved says that a properly functioning sex centre is “helpful towards producing a **permanent centre of gravity**” (emphasis in original).¹⁷ The Person’s detachment, and overcoming of sexuality, are objectively conscious, but chilling to the ordinary mortal reader of Burdekin’s novel.

C. Daly King, The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant (2003): Monsieur Hor/ Gurdjieff

One clear link exists between *Proud Man* and *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*; Alfred R. Orage, who admired Burdekin’s novel and was Gurdjieff’s representative in America from 1924. Charles Daly King (1895-1963) trained as a psychologist at Yale University, served in World War I, became a pupil of Orage, and produced a systematization of the Gurdjieff teaching that was “published as [the Oragean Version] in 1951.”¹⁸ In addition, King was a distinguished author of fiction, specifically the variant of crime fiction known as “locked room mysteries.”¹⁹ In two of the twelve stories he authored about the freelance detective Trevis Tarrant, he featured a mysterious and powerful character, Monsieur Hor, who may be understood as a correlative of Burdekin’s Genuine Person in terms of the depiction of objective consciousness, and also to be a fictionalisation of Gurdjieff himself.²⁰ The Tarrant stories are narrated by the affable but not especially bright Jerry Phelan, who wins Valerie as his wife in an early tale, fails to recognise the sterling virtues and high intelligence of his sister Mary, and that she is beloved by Tarrant, a much older eccentric bachelor. Tarrant’s speciality includes solving mysteries regarding magical codices, trapdoors that facilitate murder, the disappearance of a cursed Irish harp, and other unexplained phenomena.

Monsieur Hor appears first in “The Episode of the Man with Three Eyes.” He enters the action when Tarrant, Jerry, and Valerie go to dine at a *demi-mondaine* establishment, Food Club. Monsieur Hor is described by Jerry as:

A most remarkable man. He moves like a tiger, and his eyes are very calm and dark and clear. But when all his physical attributes have been put together, the essence of his impression is still left out; an intangible something felt, something you are just about to name but never can quite name. It is an uncanny impression but totally without that slight inspiring of fear that accompanies the

¹⁵ Burdekin, *Proud Man*, p. 35.

¹⁶ Gurdjieff, quoted in Wellbeloved, *Gurdjieff: The Key Concepts*, p. 191.

¹⁷ Wellbeloved, *Gurdjieff: The Key Concepts*, p. 191.

¹⁸ Johanna Petsche, “A Gurdjieff Genealogy: Tracing the Manifold Ways the Gurdjieff Teaching Has Travelled,” *International Journal for the Study of New Religions*, vol. 4, no. 1 (2013), p. 58.

¹⁹ Michael Holquist, “Whodunnit and Other Questions: Metaphysical Detective Stories in Post-War Fiction,” *New Literary History*, vol. 3, no. 1 (1971), pp. 135-156.

²⁰ C. Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, introduction by Edward D. Hoch (Norfolk, VA: Crippen and Landru Publishers, 2003).

unknown; as impression as if the commonplace and ordinary had been raised to a degree of vividness that transformed them into quite other characteristics.²¹

This description echoes various portraits of Gurdjieff, and Monsier Hor's manner of speaking accords with representations of Gurdjieff's conversation and teaching style. There was a fatal stabbing at the restaurant that night; Olga Markova, a Russian refugee, was murdered. The police arrest the men who were in the booth with her, a Russian spy named Sam Ginsberg, and Katoh, Tarrant's Japanese valet (who is also a spy, though this is not generally known).

Monsieur Hor assists in solving the case by giving Tarrant a message sealed in an envelope that Tarrant consults when it becomes clear that the police intend to charge Katoh. Hor's note states that there was no murderer in the booth (he was sitting in the adjacent one). Before Monsieur Hor gives Tarrant the note, he explains to Tarrant, Jerry, and Valerie that true observation involves looking inside oneself, which enables looking inside others:

"It is not X-ray eyes one needs; it is three eyes. Here" – he touched his eyelids – "I have two eyes; but also I have another eye, that does not look out, but in ... I did not look at those men, Mr. Phelan; I looked at myself [...] You see," Monsieur Hor continued to Tarrant, "there are a great many things registered in your body which you miss, not because it is impossible to observe them but because you never look. This is not an easy kind of observation; it is much more difficult than to note what you call outside happenings; it is unaccustomed; it takes very much energy."²²

Monsieur Hor knows that there was no murderer in the booth beside the one in which he was seated through inner observation; it turns out he is correct and the murderer was in fact outside. Tarrant reconstructs the crime scene, which proves that the waiter had thrown the knife at Markova in revenge for her slighting him.

"The Episode of the Final Bargain" is the final story of the original eight that Daly King published. This tale opens with Jerry reflecting on five years of friendship with Tarrant, the subsequent six years in which they have been separated, and the fact that his sister Mary "is twenty-nine now and in the past six years has declined twelve proposals ... Mary can't forget Tarrant. And neither can I. That's that."²³ The six-year absence of Tarrant is the result of a dramatic situation; while driving with Tarrant, Mary Phelan is struck by paralysis, leaving her "conscious though she can neither speak nor move."²⁴ Despite the expertise of the finest brain specialists in America and England, Morton Baker and Roger Britt, Mary's condition worsens and it seems she will die. Katoh, Tarrant's valet, qualified as a doctor in Japan, and he opines that Mary's illness is the result of magic; he recommends consulting Monsier Hor, who "with his tiger-like tread" appears when his name is mentioned.²⁵ He asks Tarrant to explain the situation, despite Tarrant's question, "I wonder if you already know?"²⁶

Until this point the story has been alarming but not unduly, and the reader still appreciates Monsieur Hor as a potential solver of the mystery, and restorer of Mary's health. He asks Tarrant to get a photograph of Mary's etheric body taken, and bring it to him by early evening. This image

²¹ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 132.

²² Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 133.

²³ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 143.

²⁴ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 146.

²⁵ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 150.

²⁶ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 151.

reveals great distortions of Mary's etheric body, which Katoh attributes to evil magic. When Monsieur Hor views the image, he explains that:

“normally man has three conscious bodies. Nature supplies him with only the first of these, what you call the physical body; the other two he must build, or develop, himself, consciously. All three are physical bodies, that is, composed of physical material, although of different fundamental octaves. Man, now being abnormal, fails to develop his two further bodies; the material for them is present within him but not organically arranged. That he must do for himself, and he has sunk so low that he does not even know the possibilities that exist for him. Your friend, of course, possesses only the first of these bodies.”²⁷

This explanation accords with Gurdjieff's teachings, described above, regarding the development of a higher-being-body through the integration of the three centres by self-remembering and the other techniques taught as part of the Fourth Way,

The story becomes truly chilling when Tarrant and Monsieur Hor discuss the person whose powers have reduced Mary to her parlous state. Monsieur Hor indicates that he can assist Tarrant “to transfer [his] consciousness to [his] own etheric body,”²⁸ a process that leaves Tarrant sobbing and disillusioned. He exclaims, “My body lay there. I did not see it, I *felt* it, *as an automatic, irresponsible machine* ... I am nothing.” Monsieur Hor says he has proof of Tarrant's love for Mary, that while Tarrant and his friends do not understand it, there “is a certain, objective importance in your friend's death,” but that Tarrant could pay a price of devoting seven years of his life (which may prove insufficient) to working to move from the state of Nothing to Something.²⁹ Mary recovers, and Tarrant prepares to keep his bargain telling Jerry:

“I don't know, but I strongly suspect Monsieur Hor was responsible for the beginning as well as the end. He made one slip. He said the advantage, yes the advantage of the business could be ‘renounced’ for a higher value. He was not proposing to attack some hypothetical diabolist; he was offering to give up what he had started. I don't think he would have carried it out if I had refused. But I don't know. I couldn't chance it.”³⁰

The story ends with Tarrant leaving on his quest. It is clear that by this point Daly King has left behind the conventions of the “locked room” mystery that the early Tarrant stories had relied upon, and has entered esoteric territory that is probably bewildering to his readers.

There is no doubt that this story raises questions of the chilling nature of objective consciousness, as it is so remote from human emotions and “normal” values. That Monsieur Hor, knowing that Tarrant loved Mary and wished to marry her, used his powers to imperil her with death in order to set Tarrant on the path to developing a real I or to become Something seems cruel and evil. Yet, Daly King insists we should not think that, but perceive Monsieur Hor as enlightened, and his actions as directed toward the good. Mary (an “ordinary” human without a finer body) may die, but that is not especially important.³¹ Tarrant, a man with some capacity beyond the ordinary, might be put on the path to becoming real. The end justifies the means.

²⁷ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 155.

²⁸ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 159.

²⁹ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 160.

³⁰ Daly King, *The Complete Curious Mr Tarrant*, p. 161.

³¹ P. D. Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous: Fragments of an Unknown Teaching* (San Diego, New York, London: Harvest Books, 2001 [1949]), pp. 85, 139, 305.

Conclusion

These two portrayals of “objective consciousness” in Katharine Burdekin’s novel and C. Daly King’s short stories were both admired by A. R. Orage, who worked closely with Gurdjieff during the writing of *Beelzebub’s Tales to His Grandson*. Burdekin was not a pupil of Gurdjieff, but it is possible, perhaps even likely, that she knew of his ideas. Daly King, in contrast, was a pupil of Orage³² and explicitly set out to depict Gurdjieff, or a Gurdjieff-like persona, in *Monsieur Hor*. His portrayal in “The Episode of the Final Bargain” shows the pitilessness of objective consciousness, just as Burdekin’s Genuine Person does when the child murderer Gilbert Hassall is named as the most advanced subhuman encountered in 1930s Britain. Daly King’s fiction raises important questions about what the Work is for, and how a teaching directed toward a small number of potentially enlightened beings regards “ordinary people.” There is much work yet to be done on fictional portrayals of Gurdjieff, and this short essay makes only a modest contribution to a potentially large research area.³³

A Seminar on Time, Anthony Blake, Claymont Publications

Peter Basset

A Seminar on Time began with a call from Dr. Pierre Elliot, Director of Studies at the Claymont School for Continuous Education to Anthony Blake in a country cottage in Somerset, England in the 1970’s. Pierre provided a very open brief to Anthony for the seminar, namely, “do something on time that shows where it fits into our work”. The book is not only a record of talks given and discussions that took place with participants but also is a continuation by Anthony of the ideas developed during and after the event.

As a student of the ideas and methods of Bennett-Gurdjieff, I have found this short work an incredible key to ideas that I have read for years but have only faintly grasped. Anthony does a fascinating job of unlocking insight regarding time, different kinds of time and “not time” and how they weave and interact and connect in our experience and moreover how “our time”, “the time of man” fits into a much larger happening on a cosmic scale that is drawing us towards a created future. For students of the ideas of Gurdjieff-Bennett, I highly recommend this book as a very valuable aid to many of the ideas expounded in that way but also as a source on its own of new thinking that Anthony brings to the ideas of time. I have found that as I have been reading this book with the aim of writing a summary about it, that the ideas have been having an active effect on my perception of myself and the world and as I read and re-read it I find that I keep finding new depth of ideas that I somehow missed the first time. This is a book that I will be reading for years.

³² See C. Daly King, *The Force of Gurdjieff Vol. 3: Oragean Version* (Magisteria Publishing, 2014).

³³ Two articles discussing fictional portrayals of Gurdjieff are Carole M. Cusack, “Gurdjieff and Katherine Mansfield Redux: Alma de Groen’s *The Rivers of China*,” *Journal for the Academic Study of Religion*, vol. 27, no. 3 (2014), pp. 325-345 and Ricki O’Rawe, “ ‘Should We Try to Self Remember While Playing Snakes and Ladders?’: Dr Gambit as Gurdjieff in Leonora Carrington’s *The Hearing Trumpet* (1950)” *Religion and the Arts*, vol. 21, iss. 1-2 (2017), pp. 96-122. Important work on other writers influenced by Gurdjieff, including the African-American authors Nathan “Jean” Toomer (1894-1967) and Zora Neale Hurston (1891-1960) has been done by Jon Woodson, *To Make A New Race: Gurdjieff, Toomer and the Harlem Renaissance* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1999) and Jon Woodson, *Oragean Modernism: A Lost Literary Movement, 1924-1953* (Self-Published, 2013).

It is beyond my capabilities to provide an overview of what this book is about as Anthony takes 190 pages to attempt to lead the reader through a progression of ideas that all tie together as a whole. I therefore find it more useful to summarize and, in many cases, directly quote some of the ideas that have impacted me and which I find valuable in my own search for meaning. These passages are glimpses of material that is acting as steppingstones towards fragments of understanding of my own human experience and attempt at an understanding of the context of our role in the local cosmic system. I will therefore try to share some of the ideas contained in this book in the hope that it will trigger some of you to fill in the gaps and buy it and gain your own value for yourself.

The book begins with: “some of the oldest records we have of man’s feelings about himself and his destiny are found in the epic of Gilgamesh”. “The calling of the future is not a shout from a distant place, but a whispering in the ear. Utnapishtim, the Sumerian Noah, listened to wisdom, Ea, wisper to him by the wall. He harkened to the future that he would have to create and began to build an ark. Ea is the greater present moment in which both the facts of the causal world-the destruction to come by flood and the way out of danger, the ark-can be experienced. If we look honestly at ourselves and the world, it is easy to see that we neither experience the facts of the determined future nor the opportunities of the unconditioned future. That is why we say that communication with higher intelligence is necessary for our survival and progress. Something calls us. What calls us? It is the end. We have only to see that at the beginning we do not know the end; yet, we can have confidence in starting towards it, because it is really there, though in a different world”.

Contained in this simple passage is one of the core messages of this book, namely that as humans, our perceptions of the big picture and “whole” are limited and we need access to intelligence which has a longer frame of reference and is closer to the purpose of the whole. There is something to be born into this world that comes in the time of a human being. Every living creature has its own time; but man’s time can be something more than his own. The undertaking becomes the work. It is not a purpose but a source of purpose. There must be purposes for balance of the whole. What is needed of us? It is to say, “Let there be this undertaking. Let us be a particle of the undertaking”. Our destiny is caught up in the destiny of the solar system. If we ask, “what is it we have to do?” it is quite impossible to answer. *The way has to be discovered in action.* Doing is really different from how we picture it. What is required is much simpler than we believe. The clue is that in our ordinary state, there is a combination of activity and images. To put it crudely, we are actualizing in a certain way, which we call “doing something” and we are having thoughts about what is going on and what it is for. As long as it is like this, we are dreaming, we are asleep.

Inherent in this interaction between the human level and a higher level is the receptivity to information entering the present moment from the future and the ability of a human being to hold an expanded awareness of potential within which choice is exercised. To do this requires going beyond the dreaming in time and eternity and to move on to hyperparxis or “will” time. It is here that Anthony provides an extensive articulation of the concept of hyperparxis as a fusion of the inner and the outer into a 3rd kind of time, namely hyperparxis, meaning ableness to be. It is the difference between “being there” and “being there in potential”. In our ordinary state, we are disordered by time and tempted by the dreams out of eternity. In our minds is the pattern of what we are but it can remain the pattern of a dream. To develop the pattern something has to be done that requires *presence*. Can we actualize in time while becoming a higher pattern of ourselves. Our actualization

is needed in the economy of the world that we share with other forms of life. From increased presence, we can make a new connection between time and eternity, the actual and the potential and we can realize a pattern of potentiality and thereby become instruments of the future. It is here that we can begin to find the beginnings of purpose. Everyone and everything serves the purposes of Great Nature, but man can serve voluntarily, consciously and gain something for himself.

In conclusion, I have brought together the following quotes that I find convey a taste of the spirit of this significant book:

- Our experience has a significance because of the possibilities of freedom in it. This has to do with the ableness to make an independent contribution to the whole.
- There is a whole. I become aware of a chain of orders of time. When we come into a relationship with the time of life, what is more than life begins to come into a relationship with us. This is the beginning of an experience of synergy, cooperation.
- We live in a time of the higher powers, but only in the higher part of ourselves. To tune into that, we need to accept that we are in their time and living within their action. Significant events have to do with the intersection between our personal lives and the history that is being made. We can say that the higher powers are our meaningful history, rather than looking at them as beings. They are primarily a mode of action which affects all people.
- There are special constructions such as man - that is, three centered beings - in which the three kinds of time (time, eternity, hyperaxis) can be unified. When there is manifestation, the three kinds of time are coalesced. But to attain any real seeing, we have to get hold of the fact that there is not time. The real event of manifestation does not take place in time; it is the creation of time. This is what I called "God's time".
- One of the roles of the psychokinetic people is to bear the experience of maximum uncertainty. Because the pull of the future is very weak, we have conditions for a free commitment, a leap of faith.

In closing, I would say that *A Seminar on Time* is an extension and discovery of ideas conveyed by Gurdjieff and Bennett but translated through an integration and depth coming from Anthony Blake wherein he adds his own contribution to the lineage. For seekers in this "way" which is not a "way", I highly recommend that you make your own journey of discovery through this important book.

The Ark of Memory

The Memory Code by Lynne Kelly, *Where Spirits Ride the Wind* by Felicitas Goodman and *The Master and His Emissary* by Iain McGilchrist.

Darlene Franz

In contemplating the theme of "the Ark" and the question of how knowledge may be preserved for future generations, the images that come to mind for many contemporary people are those of our own modern storage devices such as books, databases, and computers. Yet before these technologies existed, long before the era of any possible historical Noah, let alone the Ark of the Covenant, prior even to the advent of written

language, how might humans have encoded what was most important to remember?

Two books that make remarkable forays into this question are *The Memory Code* by Dr. Lynne Kelley, and *Where Spirits Ride the Wind* by Felicitas Goodman.

Via a compelling account of her own late and serendipitous path through academia, Dr. Lynne Kelley gradually reveals her thesis: that ancient wood and standing stone circular structures such as Stonehenge were very likely “memory palaces” -- a kind of device, technology, or “Ark” for preserving the oral cultures of the people who made them. Such structures were necessary during the transition from nomadic to more settled agricultural lifestyles. Why? As is still the case in some modern aboriginal societies, ancient nomadic cultures preserved voluminous essential knowledge needed for their survival in stories and songs that were linked to specific landmarks or geographic features of places along the routes they regularly traveled. Once nomadic groups began to settle in specific places, they built wood or standing stone structures that were a replication of the landscape on a smaller scale, through which they could travel and thereby access the stored knowledge still needed for the preservation of their existence, society, and culture.

Kelley lays out clear support for her thesis from both archaeological evidence in structures and artifacts, and anthropological evidence in the memory methods of surviving indigenous cultures that retain ancestral practices of knowledge preservation. Her account, though based in academic research and ongoing data collection, is a compelling piece of storytelling which she also grounds in her lived experience of her own research. Dr. Kelley's fascination with the memory methods she was uncovering, as well as the modes of thought underpinning them, led her to rigorous and long-term experimentation with the practice of various methods, including song lines, memory boards, and memory palaces she constructed and reinforced along the routes of her daily walks.

What continues to resonate with me long after I finished reading this book was a richer picture of how ancient oral cultures had an entirely different way of approaching reality, an all-encompassing worldview with its own mode of preserving knowledge, grounded in the physical world and instantiating cyclic motion on various scales. At this time, written language and its correspondent linear mode of thought had not yet fully emerged as organizing principles of human life and mind. Kelley enumerates many instances in which contemporary words used to describe ancient cultures and practices can tend toward inaccurate and misleading compartmentalization and reduction.

I was also struck by how much effort was involved in the memory work of the ancient cultures described in Dr. Kelley's account. Survival depended on accurate preservation of knowledge, and the body of knowledge was very large and diverse, including the behavior of numerous and varied animals needed for food, the locations and healing properties of myriad plants, along with seasonal data (such as solstices and equinoxes) for insuring proper timing of nascent agricultural efforts. For the specialized class who preserved this

knowledge, rigorous training and initiation were probably required, with apprenticeship periods lasting 30-40 years. Those in possession of such encyclopedic and essential knowledge also had power, up until the rise of a later trend toward warrior culture.

Though the book is somewhat repetitious as Kelley recounts evidence from various locations and cultures around the globe, I found that even this annoyance to my modern linear mode of thinking actually allowed a new and more holistic picturing-understanding of the topic to emerge, almost like a photograph being developed. I'm grateful for Dr. Lynne Kelley's simultaneously rational and personal account of how knowledge can still be grounded deeply in one's organism, an embodied body of knowledge, with resonance and staying power.

There are remarkable similarities between Kelley's *Memory Code* account, and Felicitas Goodman's *Where Spirits Ride the Wind*, which lays out both a personal and anthropological research journey through and beyond academia. Both women had initial interests (Kelley in indigenous stories; Goodman in Pentecostal ecstatic states) that developed into different yet related areas of inquiry involving archeological, anthropological, and experiential research. Where Dr. Kelley's experiential explorations consisted of her own memory work, Ms. Goodman extended her research into explorations with groups of people to validate her prior findings, and this led into territory beyond what is usually supported in academic circles. She nonetheless brought significant rigor to her experiential research, thereby greatly increasing the credibility of her account.

Goodman's thesis could possibly be seen as a subset of the research undertaken by Dr. Lynne Kelley. Goodman lays out detailed and well-documented anthropological evidence that many of the small paleolithic figurines unearthed by archeological excavations were not idols or burial effigies, but more likely utilitarian objects – memory devices – which preserved cultural knowledge of postures through which specific trance states could be accessed.

Striking facets of her thesis include the archeological evidence that figurines unearthed from paleolithic cultures on different parts of the planet, corresponding to modern Central Asia, Europe, and Central and North America, often exhibit strikingly similar postures. Goodman also worked with groups of people on several continents to try to verify the linkage between postures and specific trance states or experiences. Over a period of ten years, she conducted 80 workshops with over 650 unique participants in which they assumed numerous postures depicted in the figurines, in order to discern whether any consistent trance states were accessed through particular postures. Her book gives detailed accounts of their methodology and what they discovered through these explorations.

Felicitas Goodman's thesis that postures were encoded in small figurines as aids to how to access specific trance states is entirely compatible with Kelley's thesis of paleolithic circular henge monuments as memory palaces. Just as the standing stones did, the

figurines preserved access to modes of memory and understanding that were intrinsic to survival. They did this by enhancing resilience through interconnectedness, both culturally and possibly through trance states which may be described as a connection to what modern people would call the collective unconscious. It is quite plausible that through such access to expanded modes of being-knowing, paleolithic peoples were able to function and even survive more effectively both as individuals and as groups.

So what may be the value of considering the question of why it may be important for modern people to discover, remember, or perhaps even to recover knowledge preservation technologies used by our distant ancestors? Iain McGilchrist's *The Master and His Emissary* brings fascinating insight to the question of how we construct reality through different modes of thought, and to why it may be important to “remember how we used to remember.”

McGilchrist's book is a detailed overview of current brain research about the left and right hemispheres, how their interactions structure reality, and how their relationship – and thus humanity's essential worldview – has changed through the course of history.

Though McGilchrist essentially rejects various earlier theories that the two sides of the brain have different functions, or that certain tasks reside primarily in one or the other hemisphere, he nonetheless makes a convincing case that left and right hemispheres employ different modes of attention, which result in different worldviews and correspondingly differing constructions of what constitutes reality. He supports his thesis extensively through current neurological research, notably about how the left hemisphere prefers to employ focused attention, abstraction, breaking things into parts to understand, as well as how it is sequential and language-oriented. In contrast, he lays out how the essential mode of the right hemisphere is much more grounded in encompassing attention, a holistic or multifaceted worldview that is fundamentally based in the physical world. The right hemisphere apprehends directly and all-at-once, and is primarily image-oriented.

McGilchrist posits that the hemispheres work together to form a complete picture of reality, but their roles are not equal. The right hemisphere is where knowledge begins or is first directly apprehended, then the left hemisphere's processes re-present and enrich this knowledge, which is ideally then returned to the right hemisphere for further integration into a picture that is both whole/unified and detailed. The right hemisphere functions ideally as “the master” and the left as “the servant.”

The hemispheres are connected through the corpus callosum, which recent research shows to function more as a pathway of mutual inhibition than one of information exchange. Without going into too much detail here, McGilchrist shows how the workings this inhibition set up a pattern in which the left hemisphere has more influence in inhibiting the perspective of the right than vice versa. Thus, there is an inbuilt tendency for the “servant” to try to “usurp” the “master.”

McGilchrist further posits that over the course of human history, this unequal inhibition has resulted in a pattern of back and forth in which the two hemispheres alternatively have stronger and weaker influences in the development of human thought and thus of human culture and philosophy. He believes we are now in a time of planetary dominance of the left-hemisphere worldview, to our great peril, and that an active recovery of right-hemispheric modes of attention could restore needed balance to the world situation.

The modes of perception, memory, and worldview of paleolithic oral cultures, as described by Kelley and Goodman, are entirely correspondent to McGilchrist's picture of right-hemispheric modes of being-knowing and the kind of world they create: one which is rooted in physicality, interconnectedness, and non-compartmental ways of structuring knowledge. Is the restoration and usage of these modes of knowing and remembering still essential to the survival of humanity? Wherever this inquiry may continue to lead, reading these three books together has been a fascinating and energizing undertaking that I can highly recommend.

REFLECTIONS ON *GURDJIEFF RECONSIDERED* by Roger Lipsey

Anthony Blake

Lipsey comments that now, some 60 years after the death of Gurdjieff, he has become largely marginalised and even expurgated from mainstream culture. The groups and individuals following his ideas are ageing. One speaks of 'Gurdjieff's ideas' because his methods were so strongly linked with his unique persona. As Lipsey says, it became widely accepted that Gurdjieff provided the model, at least in the West, of the guru. His personal impact on people was intense and profound and many people have reported their experience of awe in his presence. It was inevitable with the story of Gurdjieff's ideas – also known as the fourth way or simply the work – should, after his death, strongly divide from the period before.

One of the most valuable aspects of Lipsey's book 'Gurdjieff Reconsidered' is his attempt to tell the story from its discernible beginnings in Russia at the turn of the century to the present day. His approach is exemplary in its impartiality and measured evaluations. It seems that he was and is deeply disturbed by the fact that many leading figures, including his long-term friend Coomaraswamy, who he still much admires, would condemn, dismiss and even defame Gurdjieff and his works. Lipsey's position, with regard to his involvement with other teachers, has been echoed widely in various Gurdjieffian circles. As he remarks, many Gurdjieffians willingly study the writings of traditionalists such as Guenon even though they are renowned for rejection of Gurdjieff and his ideas. From my time of study with John Bennett I know very well how many were respectful of Krishnamurti and attended his lectures in spite of the many differences between his approach and the fourth way.

Although Lipsey does not mention this, one of the key figures in his narrative, Jeanne de Salzmann, who became the leader of the main Gurdjieff movement after his death, spent time in Japan and was influenced, it seems, by Zen meditation or sittings. The importation and assimilation of eastern practices has gone on for some time; it may have been exemplified even by the Desert

Fathers who took on methods of eastern monasticism. By the onset of the 20th century there had come into play quite widespread traffic of Eastern ideas – hatha yoga, Sufi dance, Buddhist meditation for example – and the romantic ideal of journeys to the East became well-established. We should not forget some of this traffic from East to West was due to spiritual traditions in the East seeking sanctuary from persecution in the East, as in the well-known case of the exile of Tibetan Buddhism to India and the west, especially North America. And it is important to note that the number of people experienced in the work moved on to various spiritual teachers such as Ramana Maharshi and systems such as at Advaita Vedanta, finding in them the essence of the search for ‘I’ that Gurdjieff had made so real.

One can say that Gurdjieff enabled people to advance on their own spiritual quest making, for example, religion a practical affair. As a pioneer of the 20th century, Gurdjieff exemplified a perspective that was not parochial in its beliefs. While recognising that there could never be just one religion on earth, he laid out a path that was beyond their divisions. One can well believe that his compassion was born in experience of violence, ethnic cleansing and mass psychosis which was prevalent in the world of his formative years. How strange it is, then, that the Gurdjieff work has remained almost entirely a Western phenomenon, as Lipsey more than once makes reference to. For myself, I remain puzzled that almost no people of colour are to be found in Gurdjieff circles. And, although Gurdjieff showed great awareness and compassion for poor, disenfranchised and ordinary people, his pupils were almost entirely highly educated Western professionals. Mme Ouspensky clearly stated that it was better to be well educated than not to be of use in the work.

Nevertheless, with various changes in education technology and society, the Gurdjieff work has been made available to all and sundry and this has resulted in many new followers exhibiting common new age ideals based on emotion rather than reason. When Lipsey discusses the separation and conflict between Mme de Saltzman and John Bennett, from the 50s, he fails to make clear that this was in large part an opposition of outlooks on the work; de Salzmänn aligned with an elitist and exclusive approach and Bennett with a more open to all vision. I must add that there were other factors in the split, including Bennett’s distress over Mme de Salzmänn’s aim, realised in the 80s, to replace the original 1951 English version of Beelzebub’s tales with a supposedly new, improved one. Bennett wrote to her begging her not to do this.

Gurdjieff recommended that we take the wisdom of the East and the knowledge of the West and then search. This is a marvellous practical Triad. It allows for evolution and emergence. It repudiates the Traditionalists’ view that the truth is a perennial philosophy, essentially unchanging. *Beelzebub’s Tales* is full of stories of discovery and innovation, including the wonderful account of the invention of new kinds of spaceship – which signify ways or paths of transformation – echoing a meaning we might have found in the Greek source of the word ‘method’, which is *meta-hodos* or ‘beyond the path’. In Gurdjieff’s story as it is relayed through the character of Beelzebub, there are hints that even God has to learn a thing or two! Speaking of Beelzebub, it is patently obvious that its explanations of forms and teachings are designed to defuse any belief that one can pin down what the work is. The book is designed to invite creative intelligence and soul searching, not to indoctrinate. This sends a strong clear message that there is no blueprint in the sky of God’s plan nor of the destiny of mankind. Gurdjieff seems at pains to speak of the higher powers as having to adjust to the hazards and uncertainties of life on Earth, a theme that Bennett took up in his theory of demiurgic intelligence.

Gurdjieff's main thrust of teaching seems to have been designed, right from the beginning, to provoke and confront; and it brings into question who the work is for. The idea that I believe is both central and explosive in its implications is that, for the most part, we are not truly conscious; that the true consciousness is in what we call the subconscious. Similar ideas arose in psychoanalysis which, of course, Gurdjieff derided. But psychoanalysis and the work seem to form a complementarity and some have suggested that both are needed to understand our situation. The idea that we are not truly conscious, in the way that Gurdjieff outlines, was and still is largely rejected by intelligent and educated people; or, we will fall into scientism and view the self and consciousness as illusion. According to Gurdjieff, these *are* illusions until we wake up and *make them real*.

As I have grown older, this basic idea has worked in me more and more. I take it as Gurdjieff's gift to us, of a doorway to God. I believe he truly had a mission to address what is in Christianity called the *fall of man*, and that this is something that we can engage with at any moment. Of course, parallels can be made – for example with the Ch'an method of *satori* or meditation on the question Who am I? – but Gurdjieff has the appeal of making it a down to earth, viable in life, possibly 24 hours a day action, *in whatever state we are*.

It challenges the whole idea of teaching. Is it even possible to think of teaching people to wake up? Such would be an oxymoron. We should remember Gurdjieff's character Ashiata Sheimash who, after intense meditation, hit upon the idea of convincing people of the reality of conscience in them. It was a way that seemed to rely just on ideas, with no force behind it (though, of course, the exemplary behaviour of Ashiata and his disciples was a big factor, which Gurdjieff dwells on later in his book). From one point of view, Gurdjieff's teaching is not actually based on any authority; yet so much stems from the force, as we might say, of Gurdjieff's personal power. This has created an intrinsic ambiguity in the fourth way teaching. Initially, Gurdjieff's pupils assumed the mantle of secondary authority – in his name, so to say. This separated the teaching away from being at all like science where, though it has authorities that are often closed-minded and didactic, essentially goes for ongoing investigation that develops from experimental facts, reasoning and ideas. Though Gurdjieff speaks extensively of research and development his Beelzebub stories, there is no evidence that such practices were inculcated into his followers.

Using the terminology of the Triad or law of three: the substance of the teaching is not carried by taking the role of the affirmative force, but by taking the role of the reconciling force. We may recall Gurdjieff's saying while at the Priure: here we can only *create conditions* for work. John Bennett believed he had to learn from experience how to treat people, especially westerners. In his commentaries on Beelzebub's tales, Bennett had dwelt on the fate of Gornahar Harharkh a scientist on Saturn who had not understood the dangers of 'artificial djartklom'. He claimed that Gurdjieff initially did not understand the Western psyche and its difference from the Eastern and led his pupils to excessive use of effort by making demands on them. In conversations with me he also told of his distress that many Gurdjieff followers had adopted the shameful practice of giving shocks to their pupils – that is what artificial djartklom amounts to. He regarded this practice as a form of abuse which could interfere with or damage their inner potential.

There is much evidence, as Lipsey touches upon, that Gurdjieff learnt his craft so to say by experiment and adaptation. The Third Series of Writings, an unfinished book of 'confessions', is a testimony to his ongoing path of discovery. He made a radical change of presentation from his

Russian days to his writings, moving from a pseudoscientific, Theosophical like formulation to a far more colourful and mythological style in Beelzebub; and the stories of the last decade of his life's speak of his spontaneous expositions, sensual and evocative expressed in conversation. The Third Series is even more remarkable in that he questions the efficacy of his own avowed method of 'conscious labour and intentional suffering'.

It is quite usual for the pioneer of a transformational path to be represented, after his death, largely by people who fixate his methods and suppress innovation. The creator of a path and the follower of this path can be worlds apart. It is rather nicely illustrated by an aphorism of Gurdjieff's father: if you want to lose your faith, go to a priest. The issue lies deep in the meaning of authority, which is integrally linked to where, as in this case, a teaching comes from. A standard approach is to look for a tradition, or traditions, upon which a teaching turns. Many people have tried to unearth the sources of Gurdjieff's way in various traditions amongst, for example, Sufism or esoteric Christianity. Others suppose that elements of his teaching can be found in a variety of traditions, ways, cultures, et cetera, a view which supports the idea that Gurdjieff was unique in his synthesis.

Did Gurdjieff act alone? We have the story evoked by his phrase 'conscious stealing' and the portrayal of him leaving an advanced sacred monastery under a cloud which depicts him as a renegade in relation to some real, though deeply hidden body of people and knowledge. Echoes of this are to be found in the character of Beelzebub. There is even a strong sense that the beings on the planet Purgatory, including very advanced humans, were somehow stuck in their transformation. Beelzebub – whom we see as Gurdjieff – gets sent to a spiritual backwater – the Earth or to be more particular, the West – and gets on with making discoveries that are quite new to the beings on their special planet. It is also very striking that, in his toast of the idiots, Gurdjieff speaks of those who reach the stage of 'Enlightened Idiot' as needing help and that the only way is to 'consciencely' *descend back to ordinary idiot*. This can even be taken as a statement of the need to begin again, to dissolve the frameworks and assumptions of past traditions

Gurdjieff, from time to time, spoke of wise people in the East as if he were in contact with them and even, at one time, he spoke of sending advanced pupils he had to them. Here there are echoes of western esotericism and the narrative in which the West lost its connection with the 'source' around the time of the Renaissance. There is also the question of his companions as depicted in *Meetings with Remarkable Men*. Besides his father and Father Borsch, his tutor, there is hardly a scrap of evidence of their real existence. Beelzebub's story suggests Gurdjieff did come close to some very high centre somewhere but was unsatisfied with its approach. He got banished to the West, initially to Russia then, through the impact of events, was driven into Western Europe. He could have been directed to take some teaching to the West and find ways of transmitting it, of enabling it to be assimilated there. This is not an uncommon modality. The story or myth of Idries Shah supposes he was sent to England with very limited resources to form a link with the Sufi way he represented. In both cases Shah and Gurdjieff's methods and materials which are not obviously recognisable as spiritual in traditional ways.

In both cases, we have to consider what their purposes were; and whether were they sent or decided for themselves. At the back of this question is our vision of the teaching or whatever we suppose the source and rationale of the enterprise to be. In particular, whether we regard it as monolithic or radically diverse, perennial or innovative. It is of course a common thing to speak of an ancient teaching that has to be re-expressed in succeeding ages. Shah points out that much so-

called spiritual material should be regarded as fossil remnants of something one time efficacious in enabling transformation but long since ineffective.

Amongst the various strands of reflections that Roger Lipsey's important book have occasioned in me is the idea of *enablement* and energy. Energy is a concept that I believe is integral to understanding the work, not least because energy is to be understood in physics as 'capacity to do work'. We need to add, however, that there are many levels of energy. In Gurdjieff's early teaching he called these various densities of 'hydrogen'. Bennett took up the idea from his scientific background and fleshed it out with elements from Eastern theology and biology as well as thermodynamics. In brief, Gurdjieff's practical transformative psychology entailed the realistic view that one cannot attain, create, change, except anything unless one is *able* to do so. Ableness is the key and this has kinship with energy. In Sufism, they speak of *baraka*, in Hinduism of *shaktipat* and, in true Christianity, of *blessing*. Gurdjieff was essentially a master of energy transformations.

The conundrum is that the distillation of finer energies cannot be done mechanically, or by following a procedure. There is a theory that it has to be understood and, as Gurdjieff carefully pointed out time and again, understanding is not the same as knowledge. Gurdjieff put his theory into the principles or laws according to numbers three and seven. His use of number archetypes can be seen as a way of claiming authority without dependency on any tradition (and also gives a certain 'scientific' gloss). It is also pertinent to point out his use of the sayings (his own of course) of Mullah Nasser Eddin, the crazy Sage of Islamic Sufism which is by no means entirely whimsical because he is making fun of his own 'laws'.

But we have been skating around the issue of the source of Gurdjieff's teaching. We can imagine some central source from which capable men and women were sent to various regions of the globe but there is no real evidence for this. Gurdjieff suggest that sort of thing in both *Beelzebub's Tales* and *Meetings with Remarkable Men*. But the very idea of the centre is now somewhat questionable just as, to make a parallel, we cannot ascribe human evolution to one single line of succession, a vista which is only just recently become manifest. One of the striking features of modern thought is the abdication of the idea of central control and its replacement by the elusive concept of *emergence*. In a simplistic but not totally misleading way, we can say that the 'teaching' is in fact manifold and does not come from anywhere or anyone but from within: as Jesus says in the gospel, The Kingdom of Heaven is within you. This is the 'third world' that Gurdjieff hints in the Third Series – the true inner world.

As could have been predictable, the followers of Gurdjieff's ideas became somewhat divided between those who aimed to preserve the pure teaching and those who were willing to embrace other influences and methods. Such a conflict between the Orthodox and the heretical is systemic throughout history. I would suggest that the basic elements that had been perpetuated are the movements, readings from Gurdjieff's books, physical work, the sharing of observations and the idea of service. The inner exercises practised by different groups are diverse. The only generally available information on Gurdjieff's own exercises is given in the *Third Series*. There, there are priceless records of what he himself taught (there are also valuable transcriptions of talks with students during the war). Students of Gurdjieff such as Adie or Bennett acquired other information and experience and went on to develop their own corpus of exercises. It is obscure to me when the practice became identified as 'morning exercise' or 'sitting'.

It is well-known that, while Gurdjieff himself seems never to have practised or advocated anything like what is called 'meditation' these days, that this has become widely employed in many so-called Gurdjieff groups. Scientific studies of brain activity have established that different systems of 'inner awareness' practice differ in their effects; but it is still rarely understood that the effects of the practice depends much on the intention of the practitioner. Another element frequently mixed in with the Gurdjieff work is the Sufi zikr. This has arisen largely because of the spread of the idea that Gurdjieff's approach can be most closely linked to Sufism. Use of Orthodox Christianity such as the prayer of the heart and the Jesus prayer is rarer, possibly because there is always the attraction of the exotic. But the absence of such things from Gurdjieff's own teaching is highly significant. His is the *way of understanding* in which his famous 'self-remembering' plays a crucial role and cannot be realised in adopting any 'practice' such as those we have mentioned. Practices tend to change *states* while understanding evokes the *will*.

The movements, or 'sacred dances', continue to be practised. There always was some uncertainty about their interpretation and purpose. To a very large extent they are taught without interpretation or reflection, hoping that experience will teach. Speaking of work based on the body it is difficult to assess the influence of yoga practices. It seems that Gurdjieff practiced such things while young – as he also used 'Swedish gymnastics' – but later abandoned them. He is renowned for claiming that he taught *haida* yoga or 'get a move on' yoga one might translate. It is astonishing to see, in some of his movements, mudras or postures adopted for less than a second, making it impossible for any traditional effect to emerge.

The sharing of experiences is most important. It is a delicate art, often badly conducted because most group leaders have little understanding of social psychology and inherits somewhat of authoritarian nature (less so, these days). Bennett practiced what may be called an exacting *phenomenological* approach through a method of 'themes'. I myself, becoming aware of the widespread ignorance of how groups actually work – instead of how they were supposed to work – took up the discipline of *dialogue* and endeavoured, with limited success, to introduce it into the few groups and associations I knew. This was in part a response to what I saw as both the actual and necessary decline of 'inherited authority' in the work. I believed, and still do, that we have to 'learn how to learn' *from each other* and that this requires an exacting discipline and not pious sentiment.

A different area is that of service. It can be said that this belongs to the element of *conscious Labour* as in Gurdjieff's famous phrase. According to Bennett, it is challenge that evokes consciousness and he understood that conscious labour is not just 'donkey work'. He pursued the goal of service throughout his life but could never overcome the quandary of whether we could ever know that our work 'for the future' was in fact objective, and not just a matter of personal inclination or theoretical idealism. He himself pointed out the need for a guide, citing Rumi, who can act as a 'lodestone – to point in the right direction. He said of his school in Sherborne, Gloucestershire, that such things were needed 'to prepare for a time of troubles'. We do not know if this is true – we are always in a time of troubles - and it is unclear whether such 'schools' actually make any difference. Bennett himself made strong claims that the inner work of just a very small number of people could make a significance difference to the welfare of humanity. In this, he was possibly thinking of Gurdjieff's proclamation that just 200 conscious men and women could stop wars!

History provides us with important examples of how spiritual groups have influenced civilisation. Not least among these, in the West, is the radical importance of the monasteries in 'saving civilisation'. Many people besides Bennett felt that people of the work could act as an 'Ark' in destructive times and preserve higher values to transmit them in the future for regeneration. This was deeply felt after the trauma of the Second World War. Bennett hoped that fourth way communities could be set up though this has not been realised.

The idea of 'serving the future' is crucial. Gurdjieff articulated how true Fourth Way Schools arise in response to a need which they were designed to meet and then, job done, dissolve. On these grounds, the perpetuation of institutionalised Gurdjieff work is a big mistake. The death of organised groups can be seen as essential. This in its turn raises the question we have raised more than once of *where does the work come from?*

In Islamic Sufism, the enigmatic figure of *Khidr*, the 'Green man', symbolises the role of creative innovation independent of traditional practice, which is given more abstract form in Ch'an Buddhism, as in the idea of 'transmission outside the scriptures and especially 'transmission outside the mind'. It is tempting to see Gurdjieff/Beelzebub as an avatar of Khidr. In *Beelzebub's Tales* he speaks of creative individuals – liberated, three brained beings – as essential in adjusting the workings of the universe to *maintain possibilities* which is to overcome the merciless Heropass.

His Endlessness can be seen as the ultimate source of what Plato would have called the Good. It is fairly clear that this can seem to enter human life as something eternal to be preserved. Gurdjieff, as Bennett pointed out, created a new vision of God or the Good, in which it was subject to *hazard* requiring a creative response. It led to Bennett postulating the emergence of a *synergic* epoch, based on cooperation and not authority. It is possibly this that upsets the Traditionalist school which has identified itself with the principles of unchanging authority and does not take kindly to the idea that the universe might be improvised!

To return to Lipsey's comments on the immediate pupils of Gurdjieff I think it fair to say that they surely would have aimed for *realising their own connection* with the 'higher powers' (who would have been the sources of Gurdjieff's teaching). In this quest, Gurdjieff would have become not so much a source but play a role akin in principle to the 'confessor' known in Christian mysticism. One ventures into the unknown but with an exacting companion. The mystic looks to God and not any man but needs to 'check things out' with a guide who, at times could be a critic. It was striking to me, in my time with Bennett right through to his death how, after years of submitting himself to various masters, he found his own 'direct line' as it were. He spoke to people including myself about how he was directed by higher intelligence and his mission. Interestingly, he told me that his most important teacher became Ubaidallah Ahrar who died in the 17th century and that he had direct contact with him. Most Gurdjieff followers would probably shun talking about such things.

Behind these comments of mine on Gurdjieff's pupils is the question of whether Gurdjieff was genuinely concerned with fostering *their* independence and *their* realisations. At times it seemed that he had given up on them. I find it significant, though, that Lipsey highlights both Madame de Salzman and John Bennett and conveys the sense that they became *their own* guides: that is to say, they took instruction from within.

Finally, we might, as Lipsey does in the coda to his book, compare Gurdjieff with Monkey, the hero of Waley's story based on Wu Cheng-en's *Journey to the West* (intriguingly the complementary

counterpart of our familiar journey to the East!). In this ending piece, he invokes the universal sense of the humane and is content to consider Gurdjieff as a member of a wide and diverse class of people throughout history. I think this weakens the Gurdjieff story, just as – possibly to overstate the case – it is inadequate to consider Jesus as just a moral leader. Something else is at stake. Gurdjieff's appeal to such ideas as 'objective reason' has a reason. He seems to call for a change in *how we understand* and it must be remembered that he situated the personal transformation of individuals in a context of the evolution of humanity. We are in an uncertain time when it is becoming possible to change human nature by technological means; and there is a growing awareness that the kind of mind that has evolved in us has many flaws and sustains conflict and misunderstanding. I am reminded of Gurdjieff's words when he spoke with Denis Saurat:

I want to add the mystical spirit of the East to the scientific spirit of the West. The Oriental spirit is right but only in its trends and general ideas. The Western spirit is right in its methods and techniques . . . I want to create a type of sage who will unite the spirit of the East with Western techniques.

The question is whether he succeeded at all in this. He himself showed little grasp of Western science and mathematics and it is distressing how people in both West and East are largely ignorant of the disciplined methods of thinking that are required for us to transcend the dysfunctional habits of mind inculcated in our early evolution. As I see it, we are faced with what has been called, after the British scientist Alan Turing, the 'Enigma of intelligence'. Gurdjieff made an often-interesting contribution to this Enigma and it is right, therefore, to look for his companions then and now as Lipsey seems to have done. What remains clear that he did not resolve the differences between modern science and traditional wisdom. It is far better to think of a work in progress than to think in terms of anyone succeeding. Because I spent 14 years with John Bennett I am bound to be prejudiced towards his work. But I admire his response to Gurdjieff's *All and Everything*, his own book *The Dramatic Universe*, and his own attempts to find teachings that came from a holistic vision of history and humanity. Gurdjieff was a man to emulate not to imitate.

Saurat: You do not belong to any school?

Gurdjieff: No, we are a group of friends. About 30 years ago a dozen of us spent several years in central Asia, and we reconstructed the doctrine from the remains of oral traditions, from the study of ancient customs, folk songs and even from certain books. The doctrine has always existed, but the tradition has often been interrupted. In ancient times certain groups and castes knew it, but it was incomplete. The ancients went in too much for metaphysics. The doctrine was too abstract.

Saurat: Are you still in touch with friends who have reconstituted the doctrine?

Gurdjieff: I see three or four of them still.

Saurat: What are they doing?

Gurdjieff: They are practicing different ordinary professions.

Saurat: Are they teaching?

Gurdjieff: No. I am the only one who teaches: that is my profession.

'A Visit to Gourdyev' by Denis Saurat in *The Living Age*, New York, January 1934, Vol. CCCXLV (4408), pp. 427-433

EVENTS.....

The Claymont Series on Movements

Anthony Blake

I was introduced to the Gurdjieff movements in the early 60s. I was very fortunate. Mr Bennett, with the aid of his secretary Joan Edwards, stood in front of us remembering and recreating the 'sacred dances'. For four years, the movements and other Gurdjieffian practices had been suspended at Combe Springs, Mr Bennett's Institute, letting the followers of Subud take major control.

A major feature of the reconstruction and teaching of the movements by Mr Bennett and Joan was in the unique power of their combination. Mr Bennett, supremely articulate and perceptive could evoke the meaning of a movement, while Joan's moving centre was the fountainhead of memories of how it should be done. Later, Dushka Howarth, daughter of Gurdjieff and Jessima Howarth, would say: in the work, the men tended to *explain* things while the women tended to *do* things.

Over the years, some of us then young people had been able to instruct others in some of the movements. I verify for myself the old saying: he who teaches, learns. There were then no books about the movements. We learned in bits and pieces that there were several groups of movements, including the *Obligatories* and the *39 series* as well as many others; but we had no coherent history of their development. I was also slow to catch on to the significance of Thomas De Hartman, Russian composer and pupil of Gurdjieff, who collaborated with him on music for the dances (as well as remarkable series of piano music such as the *Hymns from a Truly Sacred Temple*) even after Gurdjieff's death.

It was only after Mr Bennett's death and I met up with Wim van Dullemen who had been a pianist in the classes of Solange, one of Gurdjieff's pupils who was steeped in the movements- later himself becoming an exponent of the movements (as Mr Bennett urged him to do) with his wife Christiane – that I began to learn some of the history. Eventually, he wrote about the movements in a reliable and penetrating account *The Gurdjieff Movements – a communication of ancient wisdom*. But even this did little to explain the long-standing belief amongst Gurdjieff's followers of the movements that they contained specific esoteric information. Importantly, Wim was very open to the possible relevance of innovation in Western dance during the early 20th century.

Concerning the movements, in brief, there are two or three ideas which are often brought forward.

First of all, that there is a language of gesture, a mode of communication that is non-verbal but specific.

Secondly, the movements articulate and express cosmic laws.

Thirdly, they are derived from dances and rituals Gurdjieff observed in the near and far east.

The idea of the language of gesture can be taken in many ways. One is that it is like a sign language such as deaf people employ; that is, it is a language can be translated into our ordinary

verbal communications. At another extreme, it is a language that *cannot* be translated into words or even symbols. In his major work *The Dramatic Universe*, Bennett asserts that it can be called the *language of will*.

Although understanding is wrongly attributed to many human situations, it can nevertheless be found in a germinal form wherever there is an authentic relationship of will. Since the relationship of will is doing, we shall employ the term **gesture** to denote the mode of expression by which the language of will is created.

The communication of understanding is not achieved either by sign or by symbol. If being is apprehended by intuition, will can be understood only through participation. The language of will, going beyond the communication of meanings, reaches a common affirmation—an act of will in which the participants share.

Every gesture is unique. Bearing its own meaning, it requires neither interpretation nor intuition. Different gestures may be similar and similar gestures may be repeated, but the uniqueness of the gesture remains its dominant characteristic. The gesture is not taken out of the context, but made in the context.

The uniqueness of gestures corresponds to the uniqueness of understanding. The understanding of one situation cannot be transferred to another. Understanding is always new because it is always an act of will, and the language of understanding must itself be an act of understanding. In the language of gesture, no word, no act, ever means the same thing twice. It is the language of the whole man, and it can be used only by a man who is himself a fully structural whole.

Interestingly enough Steiner, who paralleled Gurdjieff in creating a new genre of movement and dance, spoke of three powers: thinking, feeling and *willing*; whereas Gurdjieff spoke of thinking, feeling and *moving*. This suggests some close correlation between willing and moving. There is a lot of talk about ‘three brains’ these days but they do not really correspond to Gurdjieff’s system. A common one talks of head, heart and gut. Gurdjieff would link the gut to the *instinctive* centre. His *moving* centre is located in the spine. Why contemporary people ignore this is a puzzle.

Bennett added that an example of the language of gesture and will was mathematics. This may be hard to grasp unless one realises that many of Gurdjieff’s movements tend towards abstract patterns, particularly towards the end of his life. They do not have to be ‘about’ anything at all; they are like what is called pure or ‘absolute’ music.

The idea that Gurdjieff’s dances were derived from his observations of dances in the near far east has had no rigorous substantiation. Certainly, dances arise from previous forms of dance movement. In the first seminar held at Claymont, we focused on movements which clearly derived from things we were doing in life or secular activities. It seems to be a common feature of esoteric work, like a special form of art, that it takes ordinary things of life and transforms them in special ways. This conveys the essential idea of consciousness: how the awareness of what one is doing can enhance what one does, as reflected in the widespread attitude that doing anything for the love of God transforms it into spiritual work. It is not what one does but how it is done.

We worked on such movements as *Rhythms* or ‘Getting up and down’ (number 31 in the 39 series); *Gymnastique Medicale*, *Spinning*, *Canon of Seven*, etc.

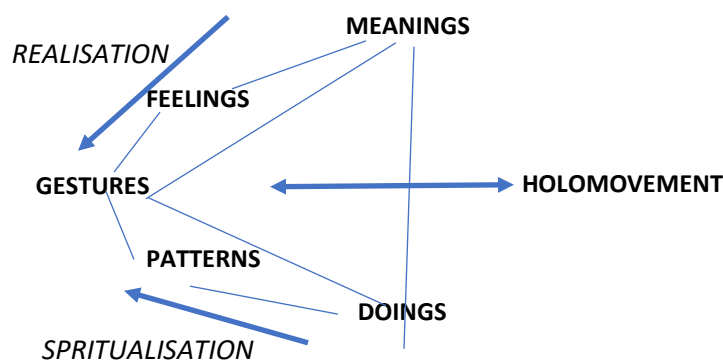
In the second Claymont seminar, we highlighted the theme of sacred images: that supposedly informed and were somehow embedded in Gurdjieff's sacred dances. We were not able to thoroughly go into the essential content of such images, only to entertain their basis as a vision of how the higher can enter into or appear in what is lower. This was more elusive to bring out but we chose movements to illustrate or invoke the indwelling of spiritual content such as *Litany in 5 Prayers* and the *Four Prophets*.

We might consider, for convenience, the idea that our first seminar looked at movement in the Gurdjieff dances as the enhancement or spiritualisation of existing forms while in the second we focused on bringing into gesture essential or spiritual qualities. The idea was spelled-out by Mr Bennett in the second volume of his monumental work the dramatic universe when he spoke of the essence classes, his radical reworking of the old idea of a chain of being based on Gurdjieff's idea of eating and being eaten. In his chapter on the essence classes he speaks of the *spiritualisation of existence* and the *realisation of essence*. In his discourses on the Gurdjieff movements, Bennett seemed to say that the action of the movements is creative coalescence of physical action and essential quality. They both need each other. In *Way to Be Free*, the section on the movements, he refers to Stevenson's fable *The Poor Thing* in which a spirit has to find a body.

In respect of the Gurdjieff movements it is often claimed that every gesture corresponds to an inner state. Similar ideas can be found in the 19th century scientist and mystic Gustav Fechner's theory of psycho-physical parallelism. Strong support is to be found in the work of Felicitas Goodman on the 'spirit journeys' enfolded in gestures identified in statues and images of the past. Another parallel idea from ancient Greece and other traditional societies is that different kinds of music - e.g. 'modes' - evoke different moral qualities.

The concept of a *correspondence* between the outer and the inner raises the question of whether there might be a *language* which can embrace both. We can experiment with two phenomena. Firstly, taking gestures and trying to observe corresponding inner states. Secondly, adopting inner states and seeing if they give rise - consistently- to physical gestures. We should remember that we do not have any exact language for inner states, and they cannot be verified as can outer postures.

Continuing to refer to the theoretical work of Bennett, we can link these questions to his scheme of 'essence classes' (chapter 35 of *The Dramatic Universe Vol. 2*). He talks of a chain of such essence classes (his version of the Great Chain of Being known from ancient times) in a movement of eating and being eaten, an idea taken from Gurdjieff. This is what he calls the 'flux and reflux of the spirit' in which there is a 'spiritualisation of existence' and a 'realisation of essence'. If we take the outer to refer to existence and the inner to refer to essence, we might see how this illuminates the situation with the movements.



Spiritualisation would fit the first seminar and realisation the second. The third, holomovement (see below), may emerge in the third (2020).

A different interpretation of the two seminars is to say that the first was centred on the body, while the second was centred more on the feelings, suggesting that the third concern thought. Such an idea may seem strange, but it links with the sense that some people have reported that there is no need to do the movements physically. This relates to the *relativity* of materiality that features so strongly in Gurdjieff's work. One can *visualise* the movements.

Bennett has suggested that the movements could help us *think in different ways*. Scientists such as Einstein have insisted that they do not think in words or equations but more in images and something like a kinaesthetic sense. This may have led David Bohm to dwell on what he called the 'proprioception of thought'. He believed that something like the proprioception - which enables us to know where the parts of our bodies are in space - was possible for our thinking so that it might become *intelligent*.

The basic thing is to go beyond thinking as a linear process - as an algorithm - to a more 'three-dimensional' view and practice. Poetry and mathematics give us hints but it may be possible to engage physical movement in its rendition. Hence the idea of a higher moving centre, which is capable of creative thought. Shamanic schools have claimed we can access some kind of 'deeper knowledge' by contact virtually speaking with our DNA. But there have also been physicists who speculate that the new insights which appear in physics stem from our own physical dynamism. There is far more to our 'moving' than is accepted. According to Bohm, the basic reality of the universe is what he calls *holomovement*: "In this view, there is no ultimate set of separately existent entities, out of which all is supposed to be constituted. Rather, unbroken and undivided movement is taken as a primary notion". A dance could be a way of becoming conscious of this deeper reality and would change the nature of our thinking. Bohm also spoke of holomovement in terms of 'art' or a 'movement of fitting'.

Historically, there has been a shift from treating thought as the most superior function, and what is physical as the lowest, to its very opposite (we touched on the history of this in modern dance as part of the first Claymont seminar). In psychology, there has been an increasing use of images, as in Jung's active imagination. The prospect of a higher moving centre might take us deeper. It embraces the possibility that we make unconscious movements which express insights into our intrinsic nature and tasks 'beyond our minds'. To put it crudely, we will not understand ourselves through introspection but, rather, through movement!

Bennett repeatedly said that creativity and the will are beyond consciousness (which includes any kind of imagery). In *The Sevenfold Work* he emphasised *manifestation* as the core of 'the Work' he saw as the 'perfection of doing'. We might be revealing more through how we move than by any word or image. This is to turn everything 'upside down', which might not be a bad thing. One thing is sure - and implied in Gurdjieff's teaching - that we do not understand such important elements of our reality as consciousness and will and take them for granted. Things are not what they seem.

We might be able to experiment with the various ideas we have put forward here- and this brings us back to the Gurdjieff's movements. I believe he gave them to us as a means of research! They don't have fixed meanings. We have to contribute our thirst for understanding and, as Madame de Salzmann often put it, generate a force which can carry into our very lives.

The Higher Moving Centre will be at Claymont Court, West Virginia, March 7-10, 2020.

The Ark Lands at Nashville

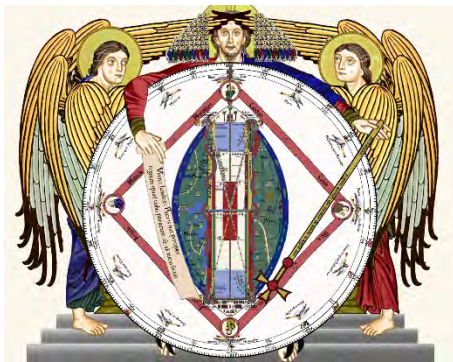
The idea, and imagery, of the Ark in biblical writings stretches from the time of Enoch to the new Testament, from the flood through to the new covenant with God and then the disappearance of the Ark, which had been kept in the Holy of Holies. In Medieval times there were four different levels of interpretation for allegories. One of the basic was relating events in the Old Testament to those in the new, as in this figure where Noah and his Ark is paralleled with Christ's baptism.



Maurice Nicoll gave a psychological interpretation to the myth and made it urgently relevant to his times (during the Second World War) and the Work. The myth is global and, probably because of this, has an astronomical interpretation. In Gurdjieff's teaching it is reflected in his recurrent theme of preserving the hard-won understanding of previous generations or cultures and passing them on to people in the future. There is a well-known Tibetan tradition of making treasures which will be discovered and used by future initiates. Father Giovanni, speaking to Skridlov and Gurdjieff in *Meetings with Remarkable Men* insists that understanding must involve 'true information on events in the past'. This applies not only to matters of history but also to ourselves: a critical and awakening question is, 'How did I get here?' We are actually designed to *forget* in order for us to learn new things. In a way, what is called 'self remembering' is against nature.

We should appreciate memory and how earlier people wrote and otherwise encoded their stories and knowledge to be remembered. There was more than writing, in particular music. If, as we might believe, what we need to understand cannot all be conveyed in words, what then?

In the Nashville seminar, **The Ark** (September 19-22) we will bring to bear a multidimensional process involving talks, contemplation, music, dance and theatre. Maybe, we will be *building* an Ark ourselves.



Mystic Ark of Hugh St. Victor



A modern Ark: Biosphere 2