

# DuVersity 50 – Spring 2020



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## **THE HYPARCHIC PRESENT**

With this, the publication of our 50<sup>th</sup> issue, we are prone to reflections on past and future. Our past is deeply influenced by the life and works of John Bennett and this continues to grow in depth and meaning. This is not simply as an effect upon us now, as if it were coming from the past, but in its own right. The idea is simple. As 'time goes on' or as we grow older, the span of time connecting us with the past increases. What the past means is revealed more and more, as it is expressed within an enlarging present moment.

We seem to be involved in a symmetry in which increase towards the past is matched by increase towards a future. In this particular kind of symmetry we discover ourselves at a point of crisis in the middle, a dramatic event. It is not surprising that Bennett found himself writing in his book *The Dramatic Universe* at the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century in the middle of a world war, of a *change of epoch*.

The suggestion of an extension of the present moment into the future may seem strange. Look at it this way. What we think of as knowledge is made from the past. But the realm of the future is the realm of will. As Kierkegaard put it, we understand our lives backwards but live them forwards. Between future and past arises the role of consciousness. It's a simplified picture but:

knowledge comes from the past; will is in the future and consciousness arises in the present. The Incas thought in terms of three kinds of time: past, present and future operating in parallel together – so did St. Augustine!

A simple picture may bring into focus that each of us and humanity as a whole on another scale is making a 'mark' in time, reading what we can of the present moment and acting as best we can for what is of value. We cannot know the future – the significant future, that is – but we can relate to it by understanding. Thus, Gurdjieff remarks, through the voice of Father Giovanni in *Meetings with Remarkable Men* that faith is a matter of understanding.

By the words 'mark in time' I meant to imply something that is written or committed and, at the same time, something that is read and obeyed. In this sense it is linguistic but in a language that is *truly us* and not just a tool. The American philosopher C. S. Peirce said, enigmatically, that 'man is a sign of himself'. Heidegger express something similar when he said that man is the 'question of being'. We might then say that he is the voice of being and the hearkening of being. In Bennett's terminology this criticality would be called *hyparchic*. The idea of it is to relinquish constraints and assumptions of linear time, but it is even more than a sense of eternity.

In ways we can only hint at here, Gurdjieff's cosmology as it is portrayed in *Beelzebub's Tale* -, envisioning the creation of the world in terms of 'trogoautoegocrat' (eating and being eaten) or 'reciprocal maintenance'- is being enacted in each one of us, in spirit. We can think of it as 'making time meaningful.' An expression of T. S. Eliot might help: 'only through time, time is conquered'.

In Christianity there is the extraordinary idea that time itself was created by and in Christ, so that it must extend 'before' as well as 'after' Him. This was written of by Denis Saurat in *Gods of the People*, reviewed by Antonio Benet in the last issue. Further, His birth and death are intrinsically united. He was born to die, to save us, *in hyparxis*. Hyparxis was a term Bennett used to signify such things as the 'war with time', resurrection and even 'the work' itself. There are words to signify a change in our understanding of reality. In the natural sciences the introduction of the term energy was a major event that transformed the world. It encapsulated a unity of understanding that changed how we think. In religion of course, we have the words God or Allah, which are not really names for some superior being but distill out the essence of all meaning.

Just as we strive to unify past and future, so we can feel the necessity of seeing together such apparently disparate endeavors of science and spirituality. This was a passion Bennett was born with in him. Recently, I have been looking over some of his early writings from the 40's and his life before. This is part of an ongoing project inspired by Joseph Azize for some of us to write a book on his life and work. As a very young man his attention seems to have been focused on the geometry of five dimensions. It was his experience with being wounded in the First World War plus his encounters with Gurdjieff that exploded his world. He gained the conviction that Gurdjieff's ideas of the fourth way held the key to saving the world from its destructive path but that these ideas needed to be reconciled with modern science and philosophy. His fifth dimension became eternity, taken to mean a concrete feature of the real physical world.

So many insights flowed out of this passion for a new unification of human knowledge and experience. The title of his magnum opus *The Dramatic Universe* brings us back to the ideas we began elaborating at the beginning of this essay. He was an admirer of Goethe and he often cited his words:

And to transform what was created,  
preventing its striving for permanence,  
is eternal action's vital task.  
What was not now seeks to be,  
becoming immaculate suns and dazzling earths.  
Under no circumstances may this action rest.  
It is intended to move, to create, and to act.  
First taking on form and then transforming.  
Only briefly does it seem to stand still.  
What is Eternal is constantly active in all things  
for everything must disintegrate into nothingness  
if it should seek to prolong existence.

A significant consequence of this attitude is that all methods or systems can only be valid for a limited time. They must surpass themselves, as is demonstrated in natural science, or that the pupil overcomes the master. However, the hold of the idea of eternal truths over us remains strong. Gurdjieff inspired many remarkable people such as Ouspensky, Orage and Bennett. Each created his own version of 'the work' – for example, there is an 'Oragean version' - because it had to be made afresh and not just copied. It is likely that Gurdjieff deliberately made his teaching incomplete and full of contradictions to necessitate continuing experimentation and discovery.

During his life, Bennett launched many projects or missions of understanding, such as researches into many kinds of time, the nature of higher intelligence and our relation with it, the making of group consciousness, education in being and will, human evolution and much more. As far as possible, we amongst others have taken up some of these threads, according to our capacities. In particular, the DuVersity was founded in the spirit of this legacy of enquiry. We have managed a range of conferences ranging in scope from 'All and Everything' to 'Methods of the Soul', we organized travels in Egypt, Peru, Amerindian regions of the south-west and the ancient megalithic culture of Europe. And we have run series of seminars in Baltimore, West Virginia and Nashville simply called 'Gatherings' in which we explored the diversity of human understanding as in globalization, design, music and so on.

The items in our special issue #50 largely reflect 'the past' but in a hyparchic sense. This means that they represent and embody work in progress. As a prime example we can mention the articles on systematics and structural communication. One of the articles dates back to 1944 – from the very first version of what became *The Dramatic Universe*. It is printed here as part of our present investigation into the genesis of Bennett's major ideas and in the spirit of attempting

what we used to imagine might be the *fifth* volume that Mr Bennett never got round to writing. It was something left to us! We take issue 50 as an opportunity to include Brian Hartshorne's insightful review of Volume 4 of the DU written in 1968. Peter Bassett contributes a review of Bennett's use of structural communication, recently published as *The Study of Man*. Structural communication is itself explained and discussed in an abridged reprint here of a paper on the subject.

But, perhaps, the major factor at the moment is the global crisis due to the coronavirus which has disrupted all patterns of life and thought. For that reason included in this issue is a brief overview of some examples of apocalyptic literature, music and film. In speaking of higher intelligence, Bennett frequently suggested that it (they) had bodies made of ideas and worked through ideas rather than physical forces. He had also written about the influence of geophysical events on human history but maybe now we witness *a communication from the biosphere*.

"Nature spurts forth her creatures out of nothing, and tells them not whence they come and whither they go. They have only to go their way; she knows the path."  
Aphorism attributed to Goethe

## **REALITY – John Bennett**

*Taken from 'Refining Systematics' UniS: The Journal for Discovering Universal Qualities, Vol. 2, #1, Fall 1988.*

This word "reality" is the word that I want to finish on in this lecture. Systematics is a search for the reality of the situation. The reality of the situation is not the facts. The facts can be converted into every sort of lie. You can interpret facts in any way that suits you according to other principles of interpretation, and, of course, the very same sheet of paper is black or white. There are various degrees of interpretation of facts that get away from this degree of subjectivity, but the search for it is, "What is the situation, really? What is really happening here? What does it portend for what we bring out of it, if we only set about it in the right way?"

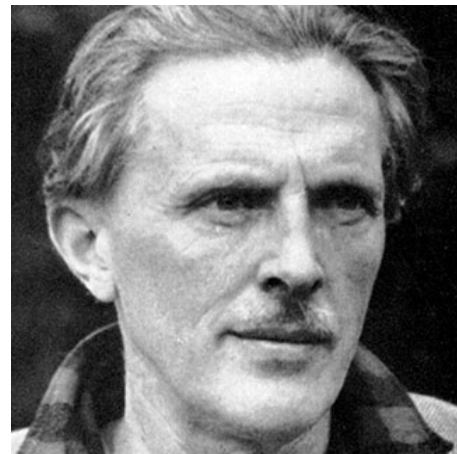
When I talk about a "state of affairs," for example, this is not just what is there but an appreciation of what is there. By that I mean the real state of affairs, or the truth about it all. This linguistically sounds as if I were talking all the time about cognition, as if the truth is something that we know and perceive and that reality is something "knowable." The peculiar thing about it is that it is not so. The reality of the situation is something we commit ourselves to through acts of decision and judgment. There is a certain acceptance involved in this, and even the outside investigator coming to look at the situation has got to make this kind of act of commitment. When he is evaluating the situation, at a certain point he has got to say to himself, "This is what I am going to take as the reality from which I am going to work." When he does that, he is making his act of judgment.

It is not that Systematics makes you think, which is very fine, but thinking is a very superficial process. What is required is to decide and to judge. This is the deep and committal thing, and unless at every stage you recognize that you have made a decision, you can take it that you

have not applied Systematics techniques to it. When you recognize that you have made a decision, then you will see that something has coalesced, something has happened.

## THE NEW EPOCH – J. G. Bennett

*From earliest version of The Dramatic Universe c. 1945*



I have already referred to the essential role that is played by the *group* in the process of self-development, It is the primary pneumatic society, and it will in the future be regarded as the most sacred of human institutions, for it is in the group that the force of Being can be concentrated which makes possible the liberation of man from the limitations of finite self-hood. Because the need for help will become increasingly apparent, as mankind experiences the pressure of the new epoch, those who follow the way of pneumatic development will be sought after and a new orientation of human life will begin. Those who realize that the whole significance of their existence depends upon self-development will desire to become worthy of participating in the work of pneumatic groups. It is in this way that the stream of evolution will begin to flow, and it will in its turn be able to transmit the force of Being which stands above the pattern of the epoch. This is the fundamental change in attitude which can transform the life of man. For us it is of supreme importance that the change has started, for it sets before us both the task and the goal of our striving. We can choose to serve the new epoch and in doing so find the means of paying the debt of our existence. It must be clear to us that we cannot do this unless our own being is transformed. For every man and woman there is a clear objective: to be able to live under the laws of World XXIV, which is the same thing as to live according to our own essence. It is impossible to reflect deeply upon our human nature and continue to believe that our personality can exist in any higher world. So long as we do not work on ourselves for our own self- development, we are condemned to remain the slaves of our own personality and to perish with it, having betrayed our cosmic destiny. This is the ultimate vital truth, the teaching of which is the foundation of all true education and the spreading of which is the first duty towards our neighbor.

So long as we live in personality alone, we are condemned to the terrible loneliness and fears of divided selfhood. When we accept the debt of service to the cosmic process, we share in the great work by which the future of man can be changed. In this chapter I have written as if the new epoch must bring a new surge of evolution in the spiritual and pneumatic life of man. This is not assured at all. We live in the midst of contingency, confronted not merely with the either-or of good and evil, but with the far more extraordinary realization that Reality has dimensions which give an infinite richness to our existence. It is our own fault if we continue to live where all these riches are inaccessible: that is, in the narrow and semi-determinate time of World XLVI-II.

We are called to play our part in the Universal Drama. It is a real drama, and our role need not be that of a puppet or even of an actor whose part is written in advance. If we acquit ourselves of our obligation we can enter the lists and share in the great process of development by which mankind and with it the Biosphere, and indeed the entire solar system, can serve the needs of the Great Whole to which we all belong.

From the other side. we can be assured that we are related to the Whole - which for us is the Galaxy not only as tiny insignificant atoms, but as bearers of the significant at the very heart of the. Drama. It is there that the Being that is Universal Love fulfills the task of Cosmic Reconciliation, and it is there that we shall find the final consummation of our destiny.

From the contemplation of the Ultimate Realities we must return to our present situation. The task before us must seem impossible. The tide of involution is flowing with apparently gathering momentum, threatening to sweep all human life into the barren desert of an automatic, one-centered existence. No human force can change the direction of the stream and no opposition can weaken it. Nor can we expect that there will be a miraculous intervention of the Higher Powers. Such an expectation is utterly incompatible with any sane interpretation of the laws by which the Will realizes its plan. Nevertheless, these very laws can operate to produce a. new Eternal Pattern in the life of man. I have set down my reasons for believing that this new pattern is already influencing the course of history, and I have shown how each one of us can serve in the work of creating a force of Being which will enable the pattern to transform human life. In accepting this task and this obligation, we have to renounce the impulses and satisfactions of our personality, but in fulfilling it we can find for ourselves the way of life. In doing so, we shall cease to be alone; but shall discover that in the deepest reality of our own nature we are united with the Cosmic Individual,

This is the truth which man has found and lost and found again from epoch to epoch but has never yet succeeded in making his own. If we can play our part at this time of birth and transformation, it may be that mankind will in the future be raised to a higher and nobler place in the Cosmic Scheme.

## DRAMATIC UNIVERSE - REPORT ON VOL.IV

**Brian Hartshorne**



*Note: This document is ascribed to Hartshorne without verification. Brian died at a very young age. The text has been scanned so some errors may exist. It is dated 13-15 May 1968.*

I have had a great deal of trouble trying to formulate just what I wanted to say about THE DRAMATIC UNIVERSE. I tried to systematize my reactions to it but couldn't do it until it occurred to me to classify my reactions into three of your categories, exoteric, mesoteric and esoteric.

teric. I found this to be somewhat helpful, but still troublesome, since though I felt I could express somewhat what I meant by esoteric and exoteric, I found the mesoteric level elusive.

Exoterically the book had a great deal of effect on me. Ever since San Francisco I had been trying to relate everything I experienced into a "general field theory", and so I was able to very largely accept your "general field theory", as it apparently contains much that I had tried to think out, truly united into a coherent framework. You have gone far beyond my furthest attempts, and I think I can agree with almost all of what you have written, especially thanks to your elucidation of Eternity, Hyparxis, Will, Synergy and the Intelligence behind History. My own attempts at formulations broke up because I could not conceive of things in such terms. I felt that man had to become more than man, but though I felt that it could not be done alone - I saw Nietzsche as evidence of the failure of separation - yet I could not conceive of trans-formation as being more than a personal effort, though guided and helped by others. I realized that I had always believed in God. I had felt He hated me, as I hated myself; and as I tried to learn to accept myself I tried to accept God's Love, yet it was always as an individual, never as part of a community united in will and in purpose. I felt that egoism was wrong, but felt that it was due to conditioning. Now I think that if it were not for egoism, liberation from conditioning would be less hard than it is. Though I am still far from being able to accept many of the elements of Christian faith, especially as presented in the Bible, I could for the first time feel the rightness of their claims and how they could indeed be true. (Interestingly, the author of a book about the "Son of Man" claims that that derives from a type of savior in Zoroastrian circles - which may be related to an earlier Vedic type of similar qualities and name - and that similar ideas of the Man, the Son of Man, the Primal Man, Adam, and even Melchisedec were fairly common in the Near East for the period around the birth of Christianity, especially in gnostic circles.) Sometimes I felt the evidence you gave was indeed rather slender - as how the Hidden Directorate broke with the Church, for example, yet I felt that on the major points you were correct. (Actually, some of the evidence which you didn't have space to include had come to my attention in other ways: a couple of months ago I happened to run across a copy of Systematics in our library and read the article about Crete, and I was already familiar with Velikovsky on the plagues of Egypt; a friend of mine working on a thesis about the birth of science and the Puritan Revolution and how they were influenced by the Book of Daniel and the Apocalypse told me that Napier, who invented logarithms apparently discovered them while working out a system of calculations to determine when the world would end; McLuhan, an unknowing synergic prophet - he ascribes it to the effects of media, which do seem to have had a synergic effect - noted that the telegraph was first used in 1844, and that within ten years or so it had brought about the birth of what is now the Associated Press Service. He also talks about how he feels that the seeking for overviews and patterns and structures is a result of a flood of information which can't be handled in the old piecemeal efforts of understanding things, citing computers as an example of this). I could even accept as fact that the world today is still being largely directed and that it is indeed time for a step forward in man's responsibility and unity.

The mesoteric level is the one I am really unsure of. I feel that there should be a mesoteric level, since I think I can see two other levels, and it should stand as a reconciling force for the two other levels of effect. I guessed, after a friend of mine said the book struck her as a "new



mythology", that it might indeed be a sort of "new mythology", part of the Great Tradition, explaining the Great Work and man's destiny in terms of the language of today, and at the same time, in a language of its own. Its very explicitness was disturbing, since that seems to blur the distinction between the exoteric and the mesoteric as I have tried to define it, yet it seems to me now, that this may be because we are in the Synergic Epoch, in which, hopefully man will come to responsibility in a union of will with God and other men - which thus makes the Synergic Epoch seem like a New Age in that he can consciously contribute to the Great Work, creatively contribute to the Great Work. When, and if, that happens the Great Work can come out in the open, but perhaps now that it is time for man to awaken the Great Tradition can be much more explicit than ever before. (Though still wrapped in an exoteric package - your terminology, diagrams and capitalized terms - which prevent people -including several friends I talked to - from reading and seeing how explicit it is).

The esoteric effect the book had on me is easier to describe, yet I am unsure how much of it was my reading into the book and how much was intentionally there. Early in the book you made several comparisons between the nascent earth and a newly conceived child, and later made some links between ontogeny and phylogeny (to which I tentatively added geogeny) (pp. 117, 124, 126-7, 134, 139, 170, 231, 241.) Because of these links I was continually trying to see if I could set up a relationship between what you were saying about the race at each point and about myself- at least on a level of verbal organization. I could not relate the idea of a Higher Intelligence directly to my life except as I felt an influence at work verbally in the book; indeed the thought has occurred to me that my life has been directed, yet I cannot in any way pin down such an influence or direction, and feel that to say, "Yes, I have been coming here all my life" would be, as we said in San Francisco, an "ego trip". Could it be a matter not of "I was coming here" but rather of "I was being brought"? Many times you spoke of the plan as the "overcoming of separateness" (p.130) and linked the ideas of transformation and creation with cooperation: "Transformation, as we said, requires cooperation and this, in turn requires consciousness set free from sensitivity." and "the creative operation must find a conscious response at the sixth level of transformation in order to penetrate into the visible history of human experience. This notion will prove of the utmost significance in our final attempt to assess the present situation of mankind." (pp. 78-79) All these things, together with the feeling that you were saying something real, and the stress you laid on the last chapter, led me to certain conclusions when I read the last chapter. I think that one key passage supplied me with part of what I want to say: "Our concern is not with those who would deny any reality to the notions of transformation and of a Hidden Directorate; but with those who at least accept the possibility of those things and seek to understand what is required.

"It is possible to offer something to those who seek in this way. First, it is necessary to grasp the notion of the Great Work and understand why it must act from within people and not from without. Second, it must be realized that all turns upon transmission. Only those minds that have acquired the ability to recognize the working of the cosmic energies and to receive 'signals', can respond directly to the guidance that comes from the Hidden Directorate. For others it is necessary to receive their guidance indirectly, This is the difference between the upper and lower parts of the Psychokinetic Group, and it may be expressed as the distinction between



mind-action and soul-action, but we must be careful not to confuse direct mind-action with verbal communication. The latter can operate on all levels, but it cannot serve for the creative act that must be done here and now at the moment of opportunity or opening. The sensitive mind receives its guidance directly: but it does so from another mind. The harmonized soul is guided by the pattern of destiny. It does what is required without an intervening stage of perception and decision.

“Returning to the need of the present moment, we can say people must be found and transformed both in mind and soul. This is happening in many ways. Some of these are explicitly directed towards the psychokinetic transformation and their role does not usually go beyond the stage of preparing Candidates, (note: The Candidate may be drawn to the psychokinetic society in many ways: religious, artistic, scientific, social, as well as by a feeling for the hidden and esoteric content of human experience.)” (pp. 418-419)

I felt that there was a hidden, esoteric message in this chapter calling me to become part of the great work; not direct mind action, but indirect action on a verbal level, that concepts and ideas were being ordered in me by the book, that because I am conditioned (though I ‘know’ this I don't understand it.) it was the book working on me and not I on the book, that I am "out of control" (p. 404) at least of my control, though my thought seems to be being given "a coherence upon levels that have hitherto been divided into many partial presents. ..." (p. 404) and. that since in this book, and probably in other ways I can't think of, "evidently Intelligence is directing the entire process of human development at the present time"(p. 415). What I feel I have seen I have been made to see, or made capable of seeing. Indeed, though I constantly find myself acting as if these ideas were my creations, as you say, greater order can only be brought into a system from an outside source, in this case the book. And if the order perceivable in the world, has 'been introduced by an ordering Intelligence, I felt that such an Intelligence was at work behind the scenes of your book. This is what I felt I have seen. You write, "At this point, we must seek to answer the question always put to those who affirm an unseen influence, in human history: why does the influence have to remain unseen and would it not be more effective if it came into the open?"

“The answer to this question is implicit in the distinction we have made between predetermination, predestination and preordainment. Only transformations of the material energies give results perceptible to the senses. In human terms, we can say that all that can be perceived is behavior. By recognizing the different levels, we can interpret behavior as results applying to one or several of the seven histories....What is' perceived as behavior remains in the zone of material energy transformations .....these transformations are never wholly predetermined.... As we approach the region of destiny, the uncertainties turn into opportunities and these acquire an increasingly free and creative character. Taking an opportunity is not a visible action: for the very nature of an opportunity is to offer something more than the predetermined future.

“There is only one way in which the course of history can be adjusted to the hazards of disorder and the threats of malevolent powers and that is by the unseen actions of those who take their opportunities in the right way.... changes on the material level can only increase disorder. The only effective intervention is that which touches the minds and not the material natures of men.

“There are at least two ways in which there can be an intervention. One is by the overt behavior of those who inwardly are awakened to the signals that reach them from higher levels. The second way is by direct action upon minds that are accidentally tuned in to the correct 'wave-length'. It is very probable that the higher powers intervene in both these ways and in others we do not know.....It is highly probable that there are more men and women in the world who are serving as channels for the transmission of influences, from the hyparchic future than either they themselves or the world is aware of.”

“Obviously, to demonstrate an action of this kind would be impossible, because it can apply only to that which has already entered into material transformations. Nevertheless, we have one indirect confirmation of an invisible action and this is the very great improbability that the situation of mankind, would be as favourable as it is today, if only the visible agents were operative.....If it cannot be accounted for in terms of visible factors, we are compelled to postulate some unseen influence. All that we have done in this volume is to show how such an unseen influence could have operated from the beginning of history and how it may be operating today.” (pp. 415-417) and I am made to feel that nothing I can say can prove what I feel, yet nevertheless, I feel that I have accidentally tuned in to the correct wave-length, to an extent and I feel that I would not be feeling this if there were no invisible influence in the book. After making a few predictions about how life will be changed as man achieves his destiny (and I was wondering if any of the predictions could be interpreted on an individual basis) you write: “These optimistic forecasts will founder on the rocks of human egoism unless there is a profound change in man's attitude towards his destiny the purpose of the Redemption was to make possible the conquest of. egoism, not to ensure it, Two things should be understood: first, that though man cannot redeem himself he can be redeemed through the Love of God; and, second, to be effective, man must accept the reality of redemption and that even this is beyond the power of most human minds.” (pp. 421-422) And I know that I am included in that statement. Then, in a seemingly more obviously esoteric passage: “Why is it that men in general have been unable to accept the gifts freely offered to them? It is evidently because the human mind cannot become aware of the Gift and its reality. Even in the ages of faith, there have been few who have seen the Truth for themselves. Second-hand faith, taught or affirmed by others, does not produce the required contact nor open the channel through which the Unitive Energy can flow. An additional help was necessary; but it could be given only when it became obvious that man could not be saved without it. There is abundant evidence that some new action is occurring in the world at the present time.

“The Unitive Energy gives the human soul the possibility of union with Christ. This is the perfecting of the Individuality. But it can do so only if the soul is free from egoism. Therefore, a purifying or purgative action is necessary. This comes about by a contact between the self-hood of man and the will of the Cosmic Individuality. This contact can be made in thousands of ways, because the Unitive Energy is everywhere and can adapt itself to any kind of response. Thousands of men and women throughout the world experience the contact and are transformed: but the completeness and purity of the transformation depends upon their own nature.

“So powerful and so varied an action requires regulation. In part, it may be responsible for the explosions described at the beginning of the chapter. The task of regulation and adjustment

falls to the Hidden Directorate and those who can communicate with it. There is thus a two-fold action....Destiny and Divine Providence have entered into an action that is changing the entire situation of mankind.

"This does not mean that the evolution of man is assured against all hazards. The problem of communication remains. There is always something that man must accomplish within the limitations of his self-hood. He must understand that what formerly was almost impossible because of the obstruction of egoism has now been made easy for those who can perceive the working. There are many who partly perceive, but do not understand. They can respond only imperfectly to the ' new working. A great obstacle is man's attachment to external forms of belief, of worship and of organization.... it is imperative that we should liberate ourselves 'from the geocentric and anthropomorphic language in which our religious beliefs are still expressed. A far more difficult and revolutionary requirement is that we should see that we are in the midst of the Parousia and realize that this is not the end of the world, but the beginning of a New Age. Hardest of all for modern man is to admit his own complete helplessness and dependence, upon all levels above that of his bodily organism. Only when he can make this admission can he become a channel for the transmission of the energies that will enable human evolution to make a step towards true responsibility and not imaginary dominion." (pp. 424-5).

It seemed to me that a number of things were being put forward here, and I think that I didn't get all of them. The additional help, the contact, the channel all seemed to be concerned with Subud. In the following paragraph it seemed that if it was indeed Subud, then Subud was Synergic in character. Whatever it is, I feel that you were saying that this working cannot be spread secondhand, which is why there is a problem in communication: the contact can be made, but not by me alone: Can verbal communication on a higher level be an evidence of the working? I felt such a level of communication yet was unsure of what it might mean, hence all this confusion. I am too entangled in conditioning and egoism to be able to turn to God by myself or through books, but through another person already awakened if I can see to find such a person. Yet, "The new Synergic Master Idea is misunderstood as signifying that human cooperation will enable man to dispense with providential guidance and help,...The resulting confusion does not stem from a breakdown in the religious experience of mankind; but from the new mode of will-action to which men are still quite unaccustomed." (p.426) Yet a certain amount of human cooperation is needed, it seems to me, before such an act of will can be made: being will-less how can I make an act of will unless I am enabled to do so - by contact of the will of the Cosmic Individuality? - yet verbal contact is not enough for the enabling act to be made. I don't know, I think I may be confusing two acts, the first, acceptance of my own helplessness and need for both guidance and purgation, and the second, an act of will to accept God's Will. You write: "Here and now, in the latter part of the twentieth century of the Christian Era, a supernatural action is taking place. It comes from beyond Nature and it does not enter wholly into Nature - that is into the world of earthly life. It is the Presence of the Cosmic Individuality, that is Christ, transforming the entire human situation. All people are called to the act of will that will enable the human soul-stuff to be impregnated with the Unitive Energy that is the Love of God, Not many are able within the present moment to be aware of the Destiny that leads mankind forward. Untransformed man lives within the small present moment of his subjective experience and can neither

understand what is occurring upon a far greater scale nor see what is required of him. This is not to say that psychostatic man has no place in the Great Work of human progress; but that he must depend upon those who can see to guide him. The psychokinetic order is open to all: but only some can reach the degrees of Counsellor or Initiate and so become aware, in their own experience, of the true nature of the event. They can serve the Great Work; consciously: but they, in their turn, depend upon the radically different insights that are accessible to psychoteleios men. They alone can be channels of communication between mankind and those regions of Experience that belong to the Hyparchic Future. They transmit not only knowledge, but the power of action without which the world would be held in the fetters of causality and chance." (p. 433)

I feel that I am being led, guided, to see that at least on a verbal level the working, the Presence of the Cosmic Individuality is taking place in the book, that I am being led to acknowledge my destiny as becoming a responsible creative being, as far as it is possible, whatever outward form or nature the rest of my life may entail. Yet, since this is a verbal, outward guidance, it can only be the beginning. You wrote, to go back a few pages, "The actions required range from educational procedures, social betterment and the preservation of peace, to the most hidden working within the Psychoteleios Group who constitute the Hidden Directorate. In the past, these actions have been conducted largely in isolation from one another, by persons and societies bearing quite different labels. Now, in the Synergic Epoch, this kind of separate working must give place to organized cooperation. This is the need of the present moment. But it is still not possible for the Hidden Directorate to 'come into the open' as people demand. Unless this is understood, nothing can be understood. Every kind of action depends upon conditions. Freedom and creativity are impossible in the conditions of material existence and predetermined changes. The transmission of the highest cosmic energies requires more than a sensitive mind: it needs souls strong enough to be the instruments of the Universal Will." (p. 419). Yet the organized cooperation is not necessarily of an external nature, any more than is that of the Hidden Directorate, as I see it. Common purpose and shared actions yet not necessarily similar outward manifestations. And I feel that the working in the book impels me to take part in this work, as far as I can.

Finally, you wrote, "It is in the character of the Synergic Epoch upon which we have now entered that much should be revealed that has hitherto been hidden. It is in this sense that we understand the Parousia or Manifestation of the Cosmic Individuality. As our last task, we must seek to express something of the nature of this Manifestation as it emerges from our long study...."

"We have the notion of the Millennium that has so plagued the imagination of the Christian world since apostolic times. ....There is, however, another and far more interesting way of looking at the Millennium as a change in the time scale of human experience. . . Men will begin to think in millennia and no longer regard their own lives as so important as they seem now. . . . The Millennium will no longer be regarded as a period of time to be experienced successively by generations of men and women; but as a Present Moment to be embraced and experienced as a whole. This in turn will call for powers of perception and memory that may now be latent in the genetic constitution of man, but will have to be released by selective breeding and developed by the methods and under the conditions of the Psychokinetic Group of Society.

"Then, and then only, can the Great Work come into the open and be manifested as the Word of God. That self-denial and undemanding service that Jesus showed in his earthly life will be seen as a necessity of the new Epoch. Self-effacement will be seen as evidence of merit; and ambition and the desire for popular acclaim as evidences of a defective mind.... This requires so profound a change in the attitudes and actions of mankind as to be impossible by any natural process of evolution or even by the devoted work of the nascent Psychokinetic Order of Society. It can be achieved only by an Intervention from beyond the natural order. This intervention, now in progress, takes innumerable forms and calls for our cooperation to the extent of our powers and understanding. This makes the present moment of history one of the most interesting and important since man was first endowed with Mind" (pp. 433-435)

It may be that I am mistaken, but it seems to me that whatever change has taken place in me with regard to my destiny and ray place has come about because of an intervention, at least by a higher Intelligence communicating verbally in your book. And if I have seen what I feel I have seen, the question becomes, what can I do?

## THE NEW DESIGN

### Anthony Blake



*An addition to Beelzebub's Tales composed for the All and Everything Conference 2020 to conclude talk on 'The Psychokinetic Design of Spaceships'.*

"Dear grandfather! During my early morning contemplation of the associations of my mentation there appeared again the conversation we had with our most worthy captain of the vessel Karnak proceeding, through my being self-confrontation, to arouse in me a burning question and I wish if it is corresponding and you agree to put this question to you. Forgive my impulsiveness but I must confess to having an urgent need to see beyond what has already come to pass and not be silent, since I may have inadvertently misunderstood the significance of the step of innovation that led to our present ease of travel through the Megalocosmos. Remorse arose in me when I realized how much I had taken for granted all the devices and conveniences which now exist and to have never before questioned how such wonderful things came to be. But now I see looming before me a new and incredible thought that, by all same logic, following the explanations we heard from the captain, the system of Archangel Hariton may not be the end of innovation and that three brained beings also will inevitably continue to discover new possibilities and, in all probability, we can look forward to the design of a new form of transport even more extraordinary than our wonderful Karnak."

Beelzebub laughed and then, smiling at his grandson, said, "Ah the impetuosity of youth when the impulses of the organism far exceed the constraints of reason, which impetuosity plays such an essential role in the processes of world creation while sometimes leading to mis-

takes that only His Endlessness can forgive, as I can attest: listen to me carefully as I try to answer your question whose sincerity is evidence of you coming to have your own essential 'I' that is not an imitation of what you have heard or read.

"What you suggest is more than possible, not only in the fullness of time at some unspecified time and place, but in a way that is being uncovered even now from a science well known in the universe but reserved for those three beings who have proved capable of approaching near to His Endlessness. I have planned to tell you of this special place, a planet like no other, near to the holy Sun Absolute, the holy planet Purgatory wherein there dwell those advanced being bodies that are seeking perfection to be able to exist with His Endlessness on the Sun Absolute. In my exchanges with your uncle Toolian, who has become worthy to dwell on that sacred planet, it has come to me that as the higher beings there await the completion of their "everything to become all enough", great time is available for active being mentation on both fundamental and secondary laws since these laws must be adjusted to enable the harmonious development of the megalocosmos. Not only that, but they have their, just on that special planet, devices of an exceptional construction called 'egolionopties' that enable the beings there to move wherever they wish through the atmosphere of that peerless planet. During some conversations with your uncle Toolian I came to learn, much to my surprise, that the origin of these miraculous devices had been forgotten but, it is now suspected that they arose in the very first stages of the creation quite naturally, according to law, and were then adapted into use when Purgatory was formed."

Beelzebub paused and seem to be looking far off as if into the infinite space of the prime substance etherokrilno. Hassein poised expectantly waited for a few moments but then, being overcome by the revelations he was hearing, was forced to erupt again into speech.

"Dear grandfather! does this mean that there are beings there who even now, as we sit here in our spaceship conversing together, are creating from what is called their 'thought' a new device that will make obsolete the kind of vessel we travel in now? A clash of thoughts arises in me because you speak of an investigation into the principles of these devices called 'egolionopties' as if the new design might be already in them and would not require any other kind of manufacture, yet you imply that there is much conscious labour to be done."

"Ah!" said Beelzebub, "It will be only later that you will be able to truly understand the answer to your dilemma because, at this time, I can give you only an impression of what is being done on the holy planet by the extraordinary three brained beings there. Suffice it to say that as things are in general in universe, the egolionopties can operate only within the special conditions obtaining on the surface of Purgatory, owing to its proximity to the ultimate source of all."

"How then, dear grandfather, can the design being brought forth on Purgatory come to be in other places where conditions are less favoured, such as in particular the strange planet Earth you have begun to tell me of containing my favourite three brained beings?"

Beelzebub sighed. "It would gladden my essence if I could tell you exactly what is being done, but this concerns understanding, or real knowledge, which I cannot just give to you however much I would wish I could. Instead, you will have to rest content with just some abstract formulations that are not of themselves capable of giving you any practical means of building

such devices as we are contemplating now in this conversation. Nevertheless, if you do what you can with what I tell you it may be possible for you to discover in yourself a design that will help you for the future.

“The first thing to understand, and the most essential, is that on Purgatory there is no pushing or pulling in the movements they have but a motion that comes entirely from the sacred okidanokh, that cosmic active element, itself and, in particular, from the third part of this only cosmic actualizing of the law three which is known as the holy reconciling. When this holy force does not take its rightful part in the moving of anything there is only the inharmonious combination of the other two principles, active and passive, which engenders what your favourites call electricity and manifests mechanically on planets in what is called ‘thunder and lightning’. Incidentally, amongst your favourites, the appearance of thunder and lightning is known as they would say as ‘the wrath of God’ which happens to be a true representation since we can understand the action of okidanokh to mean the power or will of His Endlessness and when it is lacking in the third sacred force or part it can be truly understood in the words of your favourites as ‘God without mercy’.

“Well then, my boy, it is just this third part of okidanokh, usually neglected in the formation of what we consider artificial devices such as spaceships or means of conveyance and communication which is the essential ingredient in the realization of those extraordinary constructions which enable the higher beings of the planet Purgatory to move from place to place without effort or the expenditure of the other two forces.”

“Grandfather! Grandfather! Hassein interrupted, how would it be possible for beings like myself an ordinary three brained being, to obtain the third sacred element of the cosmic substance okidanokh without involvement of the other two? Is this not impossible and only the higher being bodies dwelling on the holy planet Purgatory can realize such an actualization of the law three because of their nearness to the Holy Sun Absolute?”

Beelzebub sighed. “As I explained, it is as yet not possible for me to tell you how this will be accomplished because as yet you have not the ableness to comprehend what is involved, and this ableness will depend on your full understanding of sacred cosmic laws, an understanding I hope you will crystallize in your essence by the end of our conversations which we are only just beginning. Also, as yet, the investigations and cogitations of the higher beings on the planet Purgatory, including by the way your uncle Toolian, who have retained their passion for discovery, have not yet completed their manipulations and verifications to allow for ordinary beings of the megalacosmos to utilize the third cosmic force for their moving. For the moment it will be enough for you to ponder on the availability of the mercy of God, to use the language of your favorites, and how you yourself might realize its’ ableness to transport yourself. Later I will expressly talk to you about one of the principles necessary in this case, which entails that you participate in what is called ‘non-desires’. Such a participation can bring a three brain being into a state corresponding to that of the third element of okidanokh as it moves everywhere in all places in the megalacosmos so that, in just this element, one can say there is all the movement of all the universe already taking place.



“But the movement that a three brained being can obtain from realization of and participation in the cosmic totality of all moving cannot stem from any egoistic or reactionary impulse in him, such impulses only serving to expend the okidanokh available to him to little result or even direct him along destructive paths. By the way, participation in the cosmic moving of everything is mostly to be achieved in that one of the centres of three brained beings which is of the nature of movement.

“Enough for now. I hope you will ponder deeply on what I have said and one day perhaps you yourself may communicate with the higher beings of the planet Purgatory to bring into the lives of all three brained beings such a wonderful creation as a device utilizing the essential nature of the merciful force of okidanokh. It is enough for you to look towards the future in the confidence for the coming welfare of all beings who will accept with joy all the necessary suffering and labour it will entail, this being the price which must be paid to take upon themselves the results of the inharmonious clashing of the other two forces. It is by way of accepting this price that they will become blessed with the new form of transport they can rightly be called in terms meaningful even to the beings who have taken your fancy, the Deliverance of the Holy Ghost. “



## THE RULE, A COSMOS

**Antonio Benet**

It was in the summer of 1990 when my wife rang to tell me that we were invited to lunch by the small hermit community living in a nearby monastery, on the Catalan side of the Pyrenees. I was sitting on the balcony of our flat in the medieval walled village of Sant Llorenç de Morunys (Spain) where we spend most summers. I was not over-excited at the prospect of such meeting, but remembering my wife's particular knack of getting me into challenging situations, I drove six kilometres to the bottom of a very steep path and climbed to the top of the rock, where I met my wife and young son who led me to the old Monastery.

There I encountered Pare Jordana, the main protagonist of the present article. His background was engaging. In 1950, at the age of 31, he was elected prior for life at the prestigious Monastery of Poblet (Spain). After three years he resigned from the order and chose to enter the strict silence of the Carthusian monks as a novice in 1953 and finding the enclosed life "too subtly noisy" he moved to the



abandoned Monastery of Our Lady of the Vall de Lord to live the life of a hermit. He was there till he died in 2015, at the age of 96, during which time a small community had formed around him..

Pare Jordana (hereafter P.J.) and I could hardly have had more contrasting backgrounds: he was born into a bourgeois Catalan family; he was fluent in seven languages (except English); had translated and commented on every chapter of the Bible; read the scriptural texts in their original Greek, Hebrew or Latin versions; and wondered how Christian Saints made any sense of scripture given the translations available to them in their time. By contrast my knowledge of Christian teaching was patchy, and I was at saturation point with the Fourth Way and Advaita narrative. But we acknowledged that we had something to offer each other.

Our conversations about God, Man and current world affairs turned gradually to the subject that occupies this article: **The Rule of St. Benedict**. P.J. was a staunch defender of the divine origin of the benedictine Rule which he believed was inspired by the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ as described by St Paul (Romans 12:4-8). He was also a determined defender of the indivisibility of the text. At the time we met, he was vigorously arguing his views with scholars of the order who he believed were trying to tamper with the structure of the Rule.

I must confess that the significance of P.J.'s vision of the nature of the Rule escaped me at the time. But since he had asked me to write an introduction to the Rule, I took the matter seriously and begun some research.

### **The VI Century**

Saint Benedict wrote the Rule in 516 AD.. The roman empire was divided into two blocks. In the East, Byzantium was defending desperately its frontiers, besieged by the barbarian hordes of the north, while in the west, it was accepting the loss of all its territories. The Roman civilization was drawing to a close; political unity lost; proliferation of separate states, often fighting each other; no religious unity. The great cities had been reduced to villages; and Boethius, the last of the great intellectual platonic thinkers, died in 527, followed two years later by the closing of the last platonic school in Athens by the Byzantine emperor Justinian. End of an era, followed by self-destruction.

### **The Rule: a divine intervention?**

P.J. believed that the Rule had been inspired by the Spirit, to meet the deeper needs of the time with a view to the future.

In the Dramatic Universe J.G.B accords with this view: *"St. Benedict's life and teaching show that he was directly conscious of the Hyparchic Future (needs of the future) and aware of the immediate Presence of God. In the next generation, the necessity for spiritual techniques was again brought home to the Church by one of his monks, St Gregory the Great (A.D. 540-604)"*

### **Ora et Labora (Prayer and Work)**

The need for spiritual techniques to raise the level of "God-awareness" and the "know how to Love" gave rise to the monastic order founded by St. Benedict of Nursia. P.J. saw and tried to demonstrate that the 72 articles of the Rule contained the spiritual techniques necessary for

developing awareness of "God's continuous presence".

The Rule consists of different but mutually necessary parts for the work of transformative union in Christ. The monks as members of the Mystical Body are participating in the transformative process. P.J. often asked himself, where is man in all this? Christ seems implicitly to be the sole protagonist in the narrative of the Rule, operating through all its elements: Christ prays in the monk, Christ receives himself on opening the door to the stranger.

*"For as one body we have many parts, and all parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy... if ministry...; if one is a teacher...; if one exhorts...; if one contributes...; if one is over others...; if one does acts of mercy..."* (Romans 12: 4-8, emphasis mine)

Rodney Collin describes the structure of an organism in different words: *"A cosmos is a complete creature, made on a universal pattern, and containing within itself all possibilities, including those of self-consciousness and self-transformation. It consists of three parts, each of which receives different kind of food or sustenance from without; and six main functions which digest, transform, utilise and combine these three foods, creating from them all the energy, matter and understanding of which the cosmos is capable.*

Ora et labora in community provides the means for self-sufficiency, self-sustenance, self-consciousness, and self-transformation in Christ.

### **Obedience:**

Obedience is the cornerstone of the entire structure of the Monastic Mystical Body. Saint Benedict's simple aim was: to make monks perfect, by means of obedience, in imitating Christ. Obedience both in Latin as well in Greek and Hebrew means 'attentive and submissive hearing', submissive to the voice that commands.

Obedience in J.G. Bennett's words implies a decision. *"There is real decision and false decision (false decision should be called by some other name: intention)- "When there is a decision, there is no longer a struggle. A struggle may be needed in order to have the ability of a decision, but the struggle itself is not a decision. When there is a decision, there is command. There is a command that has to be obeyed because it comes from within. It comes from your 'I', your master."* Noticing.

### **Being and Doing**

Saint Benedict wrote The Rule for monks (beginners) consisting of a prologue and 73 chapters tracing the benedictine way of life, centred in prayer, intellectual and corporal work, and practice of hospitality (love).

During his three years of silence, without books, one pencil and hardly any writing paper P.J. developed the art of visualization to the degree that enabled him to see the whole structure of the Rule and reduce it to six sets of numbers. Each describing the needs and functions of the different parts of the *Mystical Body* in relation to a single command: *Love God and Neighbour as Yourself.*

## The Order of the Chapters

The Rule, divided into 6 parts, aims to show the **how** to: *Love God and Neighbour as Yourself*.

(1-7) Supernatural order; (7.20) Spiritual (rational) order; (21-30) Organic (sensitive) order; (31-40) Organic order (body); (41-52) Operating order(time); 53-72 Communicating order (space).

### In other words:

(1-7) establishes the supernatural order

(8-40) the three metaphysical degrees of the body of the monastic life (being):

(8-20) Spiritual;

(21-30) Sensitive;

(31-40) Organic.

(41-52) Operations inside the cloisters

(53-72) Operations outside the cloisters

(73) Closure

## Supernatural Order (1-7)

### Synthesis of the Chapters:

The mystical monastic body lives by **Obedience with Christ (i)**, through the **Spirit (ii)**, to the **Father (iii)**. Comprises he who commands, the commandment, the commanded, and the exemplary product:

Ch.1: The ideal placing for the obedience;

Ch.2: establishes he **who commands: God** commands through the Rule and the Prior;

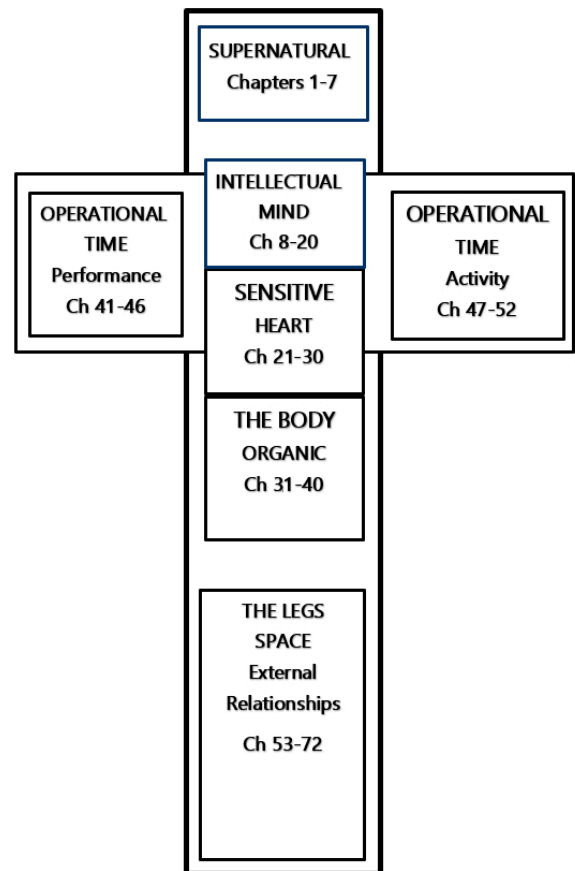
Ch.3: God also commands through 'occasional inspiration' by the **Spirit** to a member of the community;

Ch.4: establishes **the commandment: to love God above all things and your neighbour as yourself**;

Ch.5: establishes **the commanded: the subject's (the monk)** which brings the substance of his material condition;

Ch. 6. The indispensable condition: Silence

Ch. 7: Effects of obedience: Humility.



### **Monastic body: Spiritual (8-20)**

Chapters (8-20) considers the *life of the spirit and of the mind*, and their spiritual sustenance, "I will pray with the spirit and with the mind (or intelligence) and I will chant the psalms with the spirit but also with the mind" It cultivates the *love of God above all things*, "with all thy heart, with all thy soul; with all thy mind and all thy strength" It establishes the daily order of the Divine Office, commencing with prayer after midnight, providing the elements for sharpening the attention and enhancing receptivity:

- (8-11) Prayer at night;
- (12-15) Prayer at the beginning of the day (lauds);
- (16-18) the order for the day and evening;
- (19-20); exhortations on prayer.

### **Monastic body: Organic - sensitive life (21-30)**

Chapters 21-30 consider second part of the precept "*to love thy neighbour as thyself*". It traces the sensitive (organic) connections of the Body with the Head (God's representative, the Abbot):

- (21-22) Deans, organs of the Abbot, day and night;
- (23-30) Pain: disobedience treated as an ill member, remedy, treatment, or punishment.

### **Monastic body: "Living" (31-40)**

Chapters 31-40 considers the *love of oneself*. "Nobody rejects his own flesh" (Eph. 5.29); It considers the necessary food for the body sustenance and the monk's relationship with the material things. (P.J. saw the body as the seat of oneself):

- (31-42) Control of possessions;
- (33-34) Distribution of property;
- (35-38) Exceptions;
- (39-40) Proper measure in food.

### **Monastic Body. (Operative) (41-52)**

Punctuality, satisfaction, order, dignity and modesty. Neither too much work nor too little. Need of discipline:

- (41-42) Regulated acts;
- (43-46) Punctuality and satisfaction (penance);
- (47-52) Order and discipline - timetable.

### **Monastic body; communicative (53-73)**

Regulates movements inside the cloisters and outside the cloisters:

- (53-56) Attention commanded from the outside world;
- (57-65) Attention commanded from inside the Monastery; (66) Justified entry or exit;

(67-70) Extraordinary personal needs, rules for justifiable depart:  
(71-73) closing words.

**Final note:**

Saint Benedict never claimed for himself the origin of the Rule. Nor did he proclaim new political political or economical ideas. He simply wrote: "we have to establish a school at the service of the Lord" On the basis of such simple concept he set up the principles of medieval culture in Europe.

Pope Gregory, the first biographer of Saint Benedict quotes the words of the saint: *"the whole world, gathered as it were under a single ray of sun was presented to my eyes."* After 1500 the Benedictine order is still alive and readjusting to the conditions of the modern world not by way of dogma but by way of practice. It teaches how to go from here to there in spiritual practice, faithful to Christ's challenge: "if you would be perfect, follow me."

The key note in the transforming union in Christ is in the psalter. The continuous singing of the chants creates the atmosphere in which words arise without violating the silence. Listening is as important as the chanting because the liturgy is the school of silence. It trains the listening. And listening is the highest form of obedience: *To hear is to obey.*

While the concept of "ora and labora" enabled each monastery to be self sustained, while patiently collecting all knowledge of the past - copying greek and roman manuscripts. applying Byzantine symbology in their biblical illustrations, keeping the secrets of music and medicine, reducing everything to molecular scale and protecting all against the passing of time. Two centuries later one thousand monasteries had germinated in France alone. The light had survived the passing cloud of darkness.

*"I am not aware that St. Benedict, the father of European monasticism was ever in personal contact with a school of Wisdom: but he certainly penetrated more deeply into the significance of the Cristian message than the leaders of the Church. He recognized that poverty, humility and love are inseparable and established a rule that remained a valid way of life for hundreds of thousands of men and women throughout the world to this day."* The Masters of Wisdom. J. G. Bennett.

## **STRUCTURAL COMMUNICATION an introduction by Anthony Blake**

This method was developed by John Bennett in the late 60's and applied to secondary education and, eventually, to management training. In later years, it was simplified and modified to create a method of group discussion that was used in management circles. Arie de Geus mentions it in his influential book 'The Living Company' though its genesis is not recorded there.

Structural Communication has evolved into logovisual technology (a term invented by Anthony Blake in collaboration with the Centre for Management Creativity) and has turned out to have wide-ranging application far beyond the relatively narrow concern of the early days with teaching in schools. It has even evolved beyond the restricted management applications that were developed over the last twenty years. This is very much 'work in progress' and we can only indicate possible lines of future development.

"The data in any given system may be recognized by everyone as the being the same. What differs is assessment - 'the art of handling the same bundle of data as before but placing them in a new system of relations with one another, thus giving them a different framework' (to use the words of Butterfield). Nature herself builds up structures in this way. Aristotle points out that 'matter . . . can never exist without quality and without form'. P. Weiss observes: 'Take a gene out of an organism and it has no more meaning than a particular set of cards has outside . . . a game of poker or bridge. Both information value and function are context dependent.'" Emilios Bouratinos

### **THE METHOD**

#### **Understanding**

Structural communication began in research into learning that involved understanding rather than knowing. It is the kind of learning that includes the ability to interpret new situations in terms of principles, or to design solutions to complex problems. It is the kind of learning drawn into play when people enter into mastery of a subject. It is the synthesis of theory and practice, being able to see the wood for the trees and making complex judgements.

#### **Mental Energies**

In Bennett's own terminology of 'mental energies', this kind of learning involves 'consciousness' as opposed to the more basic reactionary awareness that he called the 'sensitivity'. Consciousness is able to 'see the whole' and not get lost in the parts. It is able to entertain alternative views of the same situation and consider them together. There are four 'mental energies', including the 'automatic' that operates below the threshold of our awareness and the 'creative' that operates above this threshold. The model provides a useful descriptive framework.

Sensitivity deals in parts, while consciousness deals in wholes. Creativity brings something new, while automatism repeats the old.

	Creative	
Sensitive		Conscious
	Automatic	



## Reading

Further to this concern Bennett and his co-workers made experiments in levels of consciousness involved in reading. It was found that we engage with a given text at various levels of mental energy, fluctuating from moment to moment. This meant that there were (according to Bennett's model) four distinct kinds of reading:

1. automatic level - reading without any awareness of what is read - the words are there but they are not 'meaning' anything
2. sensitive level - reading that registers the meaning of the words in terms of the network of associations the reader has - the reader can verify he is reading correctly
3. conscious level - the reader is able to separate his own set of meanings from that of the author and able to compare them - this is the level of understanding at which he can 'meet the author in dialogue'
4. creative level - the reader transforms what he reads into a deeper meaning than either he or the author had before

If we were able to sustain reading at the conscious level, structural communication would be superfluous. Gurdjieff pointed out to his pupil Ouspensky that he 'could not read' - even the books he had written himself. This meant that he was unable to read consciously. Needless to say, it is often the case that what is being read is not even at the sensitive level!

Bennett's position was that consciousness could be evoked by appropriate challenge. This meant that some task was created that could not be met by an automatic response, nor even a sensitive one (that is, a 'reaction'). The studies found that even well-educated people could not refrain from reacting to what they read, which tended to obscure the insight available from the text. Like and dislike were tyrants. Hence there appeared a need for some artifice by which readers could be challenged in such a way that their usual reactions were suspended, making them capable of learning at a conscious level.

## Paradigm of the Tutorial

This kind of learning was taken to be represented in the small group tutorial. In the tutorial, the students do not simply learn to recite information and practice techniques - the very way they think is challenged. As the tutor and student converse, the tutor does not simply ask questions and tell the students whether they are right or wrong; he involves them in a dialogue that broadens their grasp of the subject. Whatever the students come out with, they are challenged to go further.

Bennett's aim was to simulate the conditions of the small group tutorial in a way that could be programmed in advance and administered at a distance without the actual presence of the tutor.

## Common Language

His first breakthrough was in seeing that there needed to be a common language to interface between tutor-at-a-distance and student. In the small group tutorial, the students have to acquire a working language in order to enter into dialogue with the tutor. They must know what

is meant by technical terms - such as 'entropy' in physics - and also by references to events - such as 'Henry VIII's formation of a new church organization' in Tudor history. They must have 'read up' about such things. For any given topic there will be a 'universe of discourse' that tutor and student must share, even though the tutor's knowledge will be far more extensive.

Coupled with this insight was the realization that such a working language could be constituted out of a set of discrete elements, each of which represented a key piece of information relevant to the universe of discourse. For any given topic, about twenty or so such items were found sufficient to give an adequate working language. A useful way of thinking about these items is as 'molecules of meaning' - 'molecules' because they could be fitted together to make larger wholes supporting interpretations, designs, etc. Because the working language was to be composed of a set of MMs (molecules of meaning), they needed to be of much the same type, or on the same level of abstraction. To illustrate the point: the method came to be used in the analysis of case studies in management education, when the working language was composed of facts pertaining to the case.

In broad terms, any text can be reduced to a set of MMs that contain nearly all the information it contains. If we know what the MMs mean, then we know the text and what it is about. This is the first level of learning (at the 'sensitive' level).

### **Sub-sets**

The second breakthrough was to realize that we could ask questions capable of being 'answered' or responded to in terms of a selection of a sub-set of MMs from the total. A crude but useful analogy is with a court of law in which the same evidence is used by both sides of the dispute to argue different points of view. Prosecution and defense will select evidence to make their case in different ways. What is minimized or dismissed by one side can be emphasized and made significant by the other. Thus, the same MMs (supposedly 'facts') are given different values according to point of view.

In the simplest form of structural communication, the author-tutor would create questions such that he could program the system to detect understanding and misunderstanding by means of tests of inclusion and exclusion. He gave meaning to sub-sets of the MMs in terms of relevance to questions. Say he wanted his students to express the essence of the second law of thermodynamics. If they failed to mention entropy then they were sure to be missing something important out. On the other hand, if they included something like specific heat they were also missing the point, because it is basically irrelevant. So, for any question created by the author-tutor, he could divide the MMs into two or three sub-sets. One set would consist of those factors that should be included. A second would consist of those that should be excluded. There could be a third set of MMs that were indifferent either way.

### **Diagnostics**

But this can be made as complex as one likes. There will be some MMs that are more important than others, or absolutely essential. Others could be relevant but of lesser importance. Similarly, there could be MMs that would demonstrate serious misunderstanding and others that

would only indicate a small confusion. More than that, there could be MMs that had to be considered together as a whole.

For example, the second law of thermodynamics does not only indicate an increase of entropy in any change but also requires the understanding that this applies only in a closed system. The one without the other is inadequate. So, we could also seek to test for total inclusion of the essential items and allow for only partial inclusion of secondary ones.

The testing of inclusion and exclusion was conducted by a series of diagnostic tests. According to the result of the test on the student's response, so the author-tutor prepares a corresponding comment. This need not simply tell him whether he was 'right' or 'wrong'. It could give him or her further food for thought and a chance to try again. The student is left 'suspended' giving him or her opportunity to make another step.

In this way, the student would be taken through a series of 'moves', learning by doing.

### **Structure**

From about 1967 to 1970, the method was applied to teaching chemistry, physics, mathematics, history, leadership, case studies, etc. first in schools and then in management training. The educational application followed a set pattern:

INTENTION - stating the purpose of the work

PRESENTATION - giving descriptive information on the topic

ARRAY - A set of twenty or so MMs drawn from the presentation arranged without any obvious order

INVESTIGATION - usually four questions calling for interpretations that could be expressed by a subset of the array

DIAGNOSTICS - the logical tests of inclusion and exclusion

COMMENTS – the further statements relevant to the outcomes of the tests

OVERVIEW - a statement returning to the intention and articulating the basic principles of the topic

### **Flatness to Depth**

This seven-fold scheme proved an excellent vehicle for the method. It allowed the student to explore the inner structure of the topic and come to see how the MMs related to each other in deeper and more subtle meanings than those that appear on the surface. The 'flat' surface of the array acquired depth. In a qualified sense, the student gained his or her understanding by doing something with the information with which they were provided.

The disorder or randomness of the MMs in the array left it up to the student to discover the 'hidden order' that lay behind it. The step of understanding involved may be likened to how an 'auto-stereogram' first appears as a random set of dots and then reveals an image in three dimensions.

The work of the author-tutor was considerable. Take the creation of the questions. These had to be designed, as far as possible, such that every MM was involved in at least one of them as an

'essential'. This could be extended so that every MM played a different role in every question: strong inclusion, weak inclusion, strong exclusion and weak exclusion.

## **THE NEXT STEP**

### **Creativity**

The essential nature of the method hinged on having a 'flat' interface - the array - in which every MM appears on the same level as any other. The interactive process was designed to enable the student to share in the 'depth' of meaning behind this surface.

It became obvious that the process of constructing a piece of structural communication was far more demanding and rewarding than just interacting with it. This is because the construction required creative energy, postulated as above consciousness. The author-tutor had to act on the creative level, so that the participating student could act on a conscious level. The conscious level, in its turn, could serve to organize the knowledge acquired at the sensitive level.

If a first level learning takes place in sensitivity, then a second level learning takes place in consciousness and a third level in creativity.

Research began into how it might be possible for students to engage in the construction process and be 'creative'. This meant that they had to be involved in creating the array of MMs and also in the generation of questions as well as their interpretations. This work was led by Tony Hodgson, a student of John Bennett.

### **Magnetics**

A move in this direction was made possible by means of the device of magnetic hexagons that could be written on and affixed to a metal-backed white board. One such technology is called MagNotes. Such hexagons could be placed and removed, written on and erased. A group meeting in discussion could work together to build their own common language. According to circumstance, they could be as precise or vague in their terminology as they cared to be.

In relation to their array of MMs, the group could raise questions, such as: 'What are the factors that have a bearing on our mission?' or 'What represents the obstacles to change?' and so on. In response to such questions, the group could select and 'cluster' the hexagons. Hexagon shapes were used because they fit together well in clusters. If different people had different views, then they could discuss the issues involved by reference to their common language. This meant that they could be more objective in their exchanges. In a verbal conversation, even supported by flip-charts, there can be no common language, so confusion is likely. By having the exchange based on moving the hexagons about into different clusters, they could more easily see how each other was thinking. It also involved the participants in a physical activity of movement and manipulation that facilitated learning by engaging more of the person.

By this means, the essentials of structural communication were made available to the participant for him to work at as he or she pleased. The main application was to groups, because in this way a variety of interpretations was made available to all. The creation of the working language required consensus but the investigation brought differences to the surface.

## Facilitation

Needless to say, the working of this method very much depended - and depends - on the quality of facilitation brought to bear. It is more than useful to have present someone who is versatile in the techniques. Here we have a paradox: the same system that enables people to find out for themselves enables someone of understanding to better educate them. The method is a powerful tool in providing an interface between people identified with partial views and someone who is not. Below, we refer to Chris Argyris' statement of four kinds of mentality, which needs to be mentioned here because it supports the point we have made. In this scheme, the fourth mentality - 'structural' - is capable of navigating between a variety of subjective views because it is operating in more dimensions than they are individually.

It has, therefore, become a tool for consultants that is becoming more and more used. The master of facilitation can be said to work in 'unitive energy', which has been called by Patrick de Mare *koinonia* or impersonal fellowship (also see later). This fellowship is more than a feeling since it engages the capacity to see the 'sameness' in diverse views.

## Meditation

Meditation is mental concentration and this can be greatly facilitated by the technique applied by a single person to examine his or her own thoughts. We are used to relying on the 'screen of the mind' - the sensitive energy according to Bennett - to display to ourselves what we are thinking, assisted perhaps by writing things down. Structural communication provides a complex mode of display that enables us to see more of our thinking at any one time than is possible by either - internal or external - of these means. We could also say that structural communication goes some way towards displaying the holistic or right-brained view of things.

There are single-user forms of magnetic hexagons by which we can write down what we know and then examine the meaning of combinations and connections of what we know. Being able to do this in a two-dimensional way is a great advance.

## Logovisual Technology

The various ventures that have stemmed from the early days of structural communication have now converged into the realization of a diverse genus or method called logovisual technology.

The term 'logovisual' refers to 'meanings made visible'. Logovisual technology is anything that *puts meanings on display so that they can be handled*. The technology can be based on very simple means - such as the ubiquitous post-its - but it can extend into use of computer software. Such technologies are now being introduced as part of such methods as TRIZ, mind-mapping, problem-based learning, Metaplan, scenario planning, structural communication, and so on and involve artifacts such as post-its, MagNotes and Visual Concept software.

The essential features of logovisual technology are easy to define:

1. Thoughts are turned into tangible objects
2. These objects can be displayed and manipulated on surfaces

3. They can be combined, grouped, clustered, ordered or otherwise arranged to reveal or express patterns

We call 'thoughts turned into objects' molecules of meaning or MMs for short. The pronunciation of MM - as 'emem' - turns out to be the reverse of meme, which is the technical term for a unit of meaning as in meme theory. Turning a problem, a situation, a topic, an issue, or whatever into a set of MMs is the first crucial step. The set of 'molecules' can then be selected from to build into more complex wholes.

Imagine a board full of MagNotes – magnetic backed hexagons written on. This is like a 'knowledge soup' and can be drawn upon to make new kinds of knowledge. If a group has assembled the MMs, then it also constitutes their common language. Though they might continue to talk and associate ideas together, this is accompanied by and represented in the common language by moving, assembling and structuring MMs - making the thinking visible. The term 'knowledge soup' suggests the metaphor of amino acids that can be assembled into specific purpose proteins. It is highly significant that some recent trends in computing science are towards physical biological processes and away from software programming in the old sense.

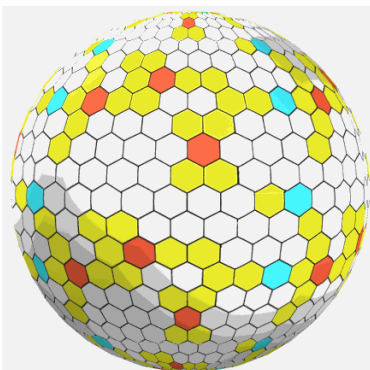
Having the MMs on display, so that they can be seen and handled, makes it easier to look for patterns. MMs fit together as 'opposite trends', 'relationships', 'machines', 'cycles', 'structures' and so on. Combinations of MMs can be used to capture new insights, diagnoses, designs, etc.

Logovisual technology optimally involves 'multiboarding' - the use of three or more distinct display surfaces. These fulfill the following roles:

1. Stores and displays the knowledge soup: the common language, the pieces of the game play, the molecules of meaning.
2. Brings selections from the knowledge soup into conjunction as systems of meaning, or more complex wholes, as the investigation, working process or game unfolds.
3. Displays and records the synthesis of systems, providing links with supporting documentation and illustration.

Board 2 can provide a 'game arena' allowing for the unfolding of a space of contention, with contrasting views. Board 3 then represents a higher space of synthesis, in which contention is resolved in co-operation.

The metaphor of a 'game' is used because the MMs are just like pieces in a board game. In a single-boarded version of logovisual technology, the MM pieces can be arranged around the periphery of a white board and 'brought into play' by different people making different selections and combinations to make their point in the centre region. The interesting thing is that we can move from the more usual competitive mode to a co-operative one.



**LOGOVISUAL LOGOSPHERE**

Logovisual technology may become more and more widely accepted as it enters into everyday working practice. It need not be tied to any one specific method because it is a tool or medium for people to use as they need just as pen and paper might be. However, it promises a step in mutual understanding, because the very 'shape' and construction of our ideas can begin to be made visible to each other.

The idea of logovisual technology is reflecting back into computer-based applications, where we are looking for ways of applying technology to allow for the coloring of MMs to simulate the physical operations experienced by handling the more tangible pieces such as MagNotes.

## **Mentalities**

Structural communication may be nothing new, only a creative revival of something that was widely prevalent amongst the learned centuries ago. In our present age, education has sunk to such low levels that it is rare to find any example of structural communication in it. In management circles, also in the 60's, Chris Argyris produced an important paper in the *Harvard Business Review* outlining his conception of four modes of thought:

1. Black and white mentality. There is only true and false, right and wrong.
2. Gradated mentality. There are greys of more or less true, more or less right.
3. Relative mentality. My view is mine and yours is yours and stem from our subjectivity.
4. Structural mentality. We can navigate from view point to view point through understanding.

In this scheme, mentalities 1 and 2 refer to the automatic and sensitive levels, while mentalities 3 and 4 refer to the conscious and creative levels. Needless to say, it is only the fourth kind of mentality that feels at home with structural communication! This raises the question of how it is possible to bring at least some of its wealth to people who seem to lack this fourth kind?

## **Art**

Even when we do not have clearly discrete units in the 'language' the same principles apply. Think, for example, of a good painting. Though this cannot be crudely divided into different parts, nevertheless there is a sense in which we feel every feature of it as relevant to every other. Thus the good painting forms a whole. The same applies to a good piece of music, or to a poem.

There is no reason to reject structure in art, though this has been obscured in the present commercial climate of the art world. If we go back to ancient and sacred texts, recent studies have shown that they are highly structured, usually composed of twelve to twenty 'verses' or parts, strongly cross-connected with each other, many scholars now call *Ring Composition*. Simon Weightman, another student of John Bennett, is currently showing that such a structure exists in the great poem of Rumi called the *Mathnawi*. The superficial audience will only register the text in a linear order. A more sophisticated one - 'in the know' - will also register the inner connectivities - that is, in depth.



## Thinking in Process

Once one is used to a logovisual medium, it can become a natural part of any discussion or investigation. In this mode, all that is entailed in the construction and execution of the original structural communication method is brought into play. What emerges is a complementary mode of thinking in which the discrete - MMs - is combined with the continuous - the flow of talking. In scientific circles, it is common to have both equations and free discourse combined together. The equations are like MMs - and it is apparent that such MMs are selected, brought into play, combined and altered as the conversation evolves. It can be all-important to be able to register the various stages in the conversation as insights are brought to expression and given form.

The dual-level nature of scientific conversation gives it its power. The conversation is anchored on definitive elements of meaning that are understood by all involved and give it a common base. It is now being understood that this dual-level structure is the key to creative collaboration.

Naturally enough, this 'thinking in process' – even though it can be conducted on table napkins! - is best served by having a number of boards that allow for different spaces of work. Whole rooms can be designed to allow for complex conversations, including having available PCs for the expedient recording of significant stages in the discussion.

Even without PCs (and appropriate software) the very nature of the display of MMs facilitates memory of significant ideas. It is being found that the bare memory of a significant combination can serve to remind the participants of what they were thinking in making it. This is much more effective than trying to remember what was said in the course of the conversation. We can therefore claim that logovisual technology is making a new contribution to the recording of ideas. It is useful to note that this facility resonates with the practice, centuries ago, of the art of memory.

## -----REVIEWS-----

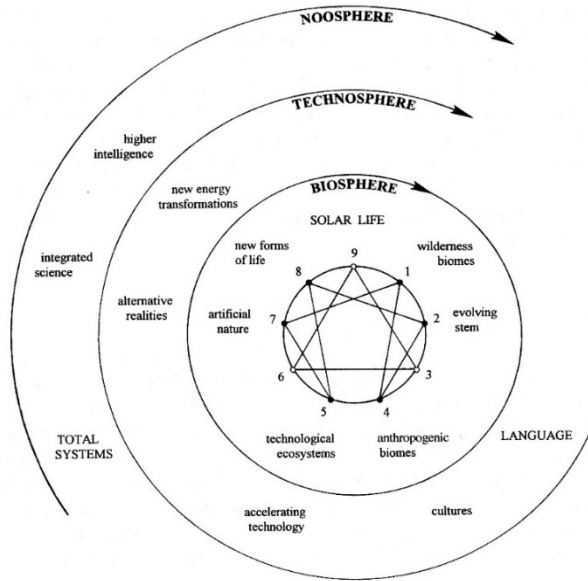
### **Critique of “An Enneagram of Crisis”, Chapter 12 of The Intelligent Enneagram by A.G.E. Blake**

**Michael White**

See [http://communiterra.info/Blake/New3\\_Crisis.pdf](http://communiterra.info/Blake/New3_Crisis.pdf) for the original chapter

*A new enlarged edition of 'The Intelligent Enneagram' is in preparation.*

In the midst of the current global pandemic this chapter, written twenty-five years ago, seems eerily prophetic. The pandemic is the worst global crisis in the past one hundred years. It is of such extreme proportions that it affects nearly every person on the globe. This chapter is an outline of the conditions that create crisis and the tools needed to survive. Survival requires seeing the situation from a larger perspective. There has never been any guarantee of progress for humanity, not even for survival. During the Twentieth Century the world was constantly at war, in this century governance has devolved away from democracy toward totalitarianism. Humanity



12.2. Nine points of evolution.

seems blind to the fact that the current economic and environmental reality is unsustainable and will lead to catastrophic crisis.

In the bigger picture the biosphere is the ground floor of human existence which then evolves the cognitive capability to create the noosphere, the ideas that humans use to define the world, and a technosphere, with the tools to adapt the world. The biosphere is mediated by the noosphere via the technosphere as humans shape the world based on their creative imagination. Technology has multiplied the effect of humanity on the biosphere without consideration for the harmonious reconciliation of humanity with the biosphere.

Our language skills facilitated the development of culture as we acquired the ability to accumulate and transmit information over generations. The capacity to mediate nature based on human intent led to art, architecture, math and science. Humans were no longer solely embedded in nature but were able to modify matter and energy. We moved from being hunter-gatherers in nomadic bands into settled villages dependent on agriculture and then into cities with hierarchical political and economic class structures. With this social evolution came the accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few and inevitable war. The irony of all this is that the world of culture, of economics, of religion is a dream world built on and fueled by human imagination. This noosphere is based entirely on an imaginary belief structure upheld by the faith of the people who believe in it. Until humanity learns to be objective and gains some degree of impartiality, we are unable to move toward a sustainable solution. Objective consciousness and impersonal wisdom are based on a global perspective that integrates science and technology with an ecologically holistic point of view. In this way the technosphere is modeled on the biosphere rather than imposed on it and uses the ecological principles of nature as the teacher where the waste products of one industry are the raw materials of another. This is intelligence of another order that requires new forms of information and communication.

Without this higher intelligence we are caught in a system that is moving toward crisis. The infrastructure of the biosphere can only sustain so much exploitation. We are seeing the results before our eyes; over four hundred million animals were burned to death last year in Australia, whole towns were destroyed in California and the streets of Miami are flooding with every high tide. We are in the midst of the Sixth Great Extinction and the only one deliberately created by human activity. We are already past the point where the rate of development cannot be increased without inevitable catastrophe. The Corona pandemic is only a part of a bigger picture of global retribution.

Without a new dimension of intelligence that is holistic we are headed into a period of unprecedented crisis. We need an ark to survive this flood. We need the implantation of new ideals, new memes, that spread through human consciousness, a pandemic of new ideas that spreads virus like from mind to mind with the creativity of higher intelligence and the recognition of the absurdity of our present lifestyle. The paradigm of Western religion, of the Judeo-Christian-Moslem worldview, has humans separated and distinct from nature and gives humans dominion over nature. The current economic paradigm of corporate capitalism is grounded in exploitation and greed that is entirely unsustainable. These economic and religious paradigms have played themselves out and the result is crisis and catastrophe on a global scale. In ages past the earth seems so large, the oceans so huge, the sky so vast we could not imagine that human activity could bring about its destruction. It is a bizarre tribute to human ingenuity that we have managed to pollute the oceans. Most still have no consciousness of the impact of human industry on the global ecology and only when the crisis is actually upon us will it become real. It is possible, even likely, that we are facing catastrophe on a scale that will make the current pandemic seem like a mild precursor of what is to come.

Without the recognition that short-term gain is not a viable strategy for the long-term health of the earth we are doomed to the coming catastrophe. As long as we are stuck with a sense of self that only responds to the immediate needs of maintaining an unsustainable lifestyle we exacerbate the conditions for crisis. The recognition of the debt we owe the future is crucial. We must learn to see beyond our own life and recognize that we owe something to the future.

Right now, along with the viral pandemic, we are facing a crisis of extinction and disintegration of the biosphere. To assure our future as a species we must gain a new vision that sees beyond this life, that takes account of the future. Lack of this vision leaves each person focused on their individual welfare with no regard for the rest of humanity or future generations. Animals have the five senses and perceive the world but have no higher consciousness; they are unconsciously alive. Humans have the potential for self-consciousness to recognize that when we die our children, our grandchildren, the future generations of humanity, will inherit this world. So far we have lacked the reflectivity that would use nature as a model rather than as a resource to be exploited. Cultivation of the objective awareness needed to have a holistic perspective comes from conscious work and intentional suffering. This higher intelligence is keyed by self-observation and non-identification. Without this the technosphere will destroy the biosphere. Objective consciousness can imagine a noosphere which intentionally uses technology in ways that are sustainable for the biosphere. We can certainly create sustainable scenarios, cultural memes based on reciprocal maintenance and sustainability. But to do this requires a higher intelligence that sees beyond death, beyond the concerns of the individual to take into account future generations and the future of our planet.

# Review of “The Great Human Problems-A course of Study” by JG Bennett

Peter Bassett

1. Participates consciously in transformation of energy.	2. Recognizes events as manifestations of will in various states of involvement.	3. Able to coordinate organic functions by concentration of conscious energy.	4. Has capacity for soul-formation latent but not realized.	5. There is a barrier between conditioned and unconditioned regions of being.	6. Effective will-action is obstructed by inadequacy of instrument.
7. Mental powers and functions are directed solely to the conditioned world.	8. Responsive to the eternal pattern of potentialities.	9. Creativity blossoms within a particular centre of experience.	10. The span of attention in space and time extends beyond immediate sensations.	11. Openness to unconditioned impulses; inner freedom.	12. Purposive action is directed towards a supra-personal aim in the future.
13. Able to recognize intuitively the distinction between conditioned and unconditioned.	14. Cannot escape from limitations imposed by genetic hereditary pattern.	15. Weak link between intelligence and external perceptions	16. Real but intermittent communication between 'I' and the selves.	17. Awareness of hyparchic breaks in the conditioned world.	18. Habitual or automatic behaviour patterns.
19. Communication between worlds consciously realized.	20. Activities directed by unconscious instinctive patterns	21. Ability to accept the necessity for hazard	22. Creativity operating in a group, species or genus but not in individuals.	23. Conditioned modes dominant; 'I' in abeyance.	24. Ability to picture past, future and remote events.
25. Awareness of the incompleteness of the conditioned world	26. Intelligence operating directly in the existing world	27. Dominance of sensation and automation; absence of 'I' - feeling.	28. Individuality as will-pattern communicated to the self-hood.	29. Ability to intuit patterns of intentionality in the unconditioned world.	30. Will operating out of the hyparchic future encounters hazard.

SCHEDULE 3: NOTIONS RELATING TO THE WILL.

## Example of schedule of notions or ‘response array’ used in the structural communication

I highly recommend this “study” for any students of the ideas of JG Bennett for a variety of reasons.

1. Firstly, to call it a book is not as accurate as calling it a “study” as it has been written intentionally along the principles of structural communication. “The word, “structural” is used to indicate that the message is both broken down into a series of statements or arguments and also treated as an indivisible whole. The process is one of Enquiry and Discussion. The method involves: (a) presentation of ideas; (b) specific exercises related to the presented ideas and (c) feedback on the chosen answers of the reader/participator. The chapters are each constructed in this manner and successively build on each other. I read this “study” at the suggestion of Anthony Blake but Anthony told me, “don’t just read it, do the exercises!”. This active study/working method produces a different “result” than typical reading. Due to the active engagement by the “reader” (by design) I have found the experience of working through this study to be very valuable for me personally in gaining a higher level of absorption of the core ideas and their “integrated wholeness”.

2. “The book is constructed on the principle of the enneagram; that is of three interlocking lines of development which are mutually adjusted in such a way that the deviations in each line are corrected by the other two”. He draws this out in an enneagram which contains three

“DO’s” interacting with each other: (1) The World; (2) Will and Individuality and; (3) Transformation. Within this framework, a central question that JGB is addressing is, “Have our lives any meaning beyond birth, copulation and death? The majority of people go on as before, not troubling to ask themselves how they can make any sense of their lives.” He writes, “I have tried to do all this in nearly 2000 pages in the “Dramatic Universe” and have still left the greater part unsaid. In the present book, I hope that I have succeeded including most of what is essential and in doing so in a way that anyone can follow who is prepared to take a little trouble”. I am finding that it is well worth the “little trouble” to work with this 200-page book. He reaches a clarity of synthesis of ideas that go deeper than I have ever experienced in prior works. For serious students of JG Bennett, this study is a must.

3. Of particular value for me personally, has been JGB’s “language of reality” where he brings together ideas that I have been vaguely able to grasp in the past such as, “hazard”, “the hyparchic future” and “synergy” and integrates them with new concepts and terms such as “interface/boundary layers.” It is in these boundary interfaces between worlds where “hazard” permits new potentiality to permeate into existence from the higher unconditioned world. As well, he further explains the mechanism whereby through the hyparchic future, new potentiality can be generated/created. “The Higher Intelligence that works through the Individuality has perceptions very different from those of the body and mind of man. It can penetrate into different levels of eternity and see how they can be brought into a pattern or structure of new potentialities.” Man can stand in a world between the conditioned and the unconditioned and participate in a synthesis between the two through “transformation” and thereby be involved in a new “World of Realization.” “As a process in time, it is the penetration, step by step, of the Individual Will into the human self-hood, until a moment comes when the conditioned state gives way and the transformed human person enters into the Beatific Vision of the Unconditioned Lord”.

4. He further goes on to provide context for this “transformation” process as being not about us having cool spiritual experiences, but about waking up to our role on this planet and in invisible reality. “Man is not independent of life. All life on the earth is one organic whole, in which mankind should be the seat of consciousness and creativity and the instrument of the Will. However high and indeed unique man’s present status may be, he cannot repudiate the life from which he sprang without losing the purpose of his own existence. The Demiurgic responsibilities are being transferred to man and it will be very hard for people, concerned as they are with their own human welfare, to realize that they must serve life and not seek to enslave it. Man has an individual will which has been placed in him for a very high purpose, the realization of which requires that he should unite in harmonious action with other men. Eventually, this separate will must unite with the Source from which it came. The nature and operations of the Will are such that intervention can be effective only with the co-operation of the recipient. Synergy is the key to the fulfillment of our destiny. Co-operation with the higher Will is both immediate in our intention and mediated in our actions. Our intention must be directed only towards the Supreme Will, but our actions need to be guided and helped by those with whom we can communicate. These include the saints and the Demiurgic Intelligences; but all stem

from the Perfect Man, Insan-I-Kamil incarnated as Jesus Christ. The concept of synergy comprises all these operations.

For those of you who have found in J. G. Bennett's ideas, a taste of something real and an integration of comprehensive concepts into a higher image of reality, I strongly recommend that you "work" with this study to extract your own value.

## REVELATIONS OF DISASTER

Anthony Blake

**A review discussion based on:**

***Barefoot in the Head*, novel by Brian Aldiss (1969)**

***Aniara*, poem by Harry Martinson (1956), opera by Karl-Birger Blomdahl (1959) , movie written and directed by Pella Kågerman and Hugo Lilja (2019)**

***Spaceship Earth*, movie directed by Kevin McMahon (2020)**

**with some additional material**

This review can only hint at the richness of the material it embraces. Two of the examples cited here would be classified as science fiction but this has to be taken in its broadest sense. Certainly, they are imaginations of the future, especially concerned with some overwhelming event that has affected all humanity or a significant part of it. There seems a resonance with the current pandemic.

A classic in this genre is Shiel's *Purple Cloud*, first published in 1901 and highly praised by H. G. Wells, it is the story of an anti-hero who cheats his way onto a polar expedition during which a purple cloud appears that kills humans and animals. Escaping the general fatality he embarks on traveling the world only to find desolation everywhere. He ends up destroying whole cities in a state of megalomania. In the end he is saved by an ignorant woman he finds naked in Turkey (an obvious symbolism of the innocence of the eternal feminine associated with such figures as Margaret in *Peer Gynt* and, of course, the Virgin Mary). Shiel's descriptions of deserted cities is masterful and overwhelming. It anticipated great numbers of science fiction novels depicting a world without humans or a much reduced population, as in John Wyndham's *Day of the Triffids* in which the hero wakes in a hospital where he was treated for blindness to find London abandoned. The Triffids were plants capable of autonomous movement cultivated for their oil that underwent a lethal mutation making them killers.

Global threats to mankind can come from nature, aliens, technology but, most significantly, *from ourselves*, from within. Images of divine retribution have been embedded in cultures through Christianity and other religions. There is usually a sense that mankind is suffering some kind of punishment for its heedless actions. An important thread that has emerged in modern times involves the idea that mankind is incapable of surviving the new *mental* demands that have arisen. It can no longer make sense of the world. This was the scene of Brian Aldiss's *Barefoot in the Head*. Aldiss was a widely ranging author affiliated in the 60s with what was called the New Wave of science fiction, cultivated by the prolific Michael Moorcock, that aimed

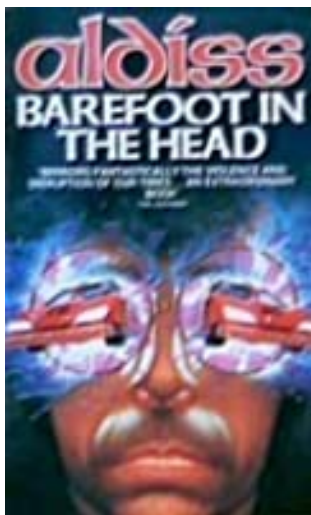
at the kind of science fiction that was not about rockets to Mars, but deeply psychological, politically radical and literary. James Joyce was a major influence.

JG Ballard, one of the central figures in the new wave wrote about extraordinary conditions of life in a contemporary setting, such as *Crash* in which its protagonists pursue orgasm through car crashes. Another of his major works was the *Atrocity Exhibition* much influenced by William Burroughs. Both were made into films.

Moorcock himself invented a character he called Jerry Cornelius who embodied entropy, that is, a breakdown of old orders. He allowed his fellow writers to use, if they so chose, Cornelius in their own writings. In *Barefoot in the Head*, Aldiss adopted a similar character: Colin Charteris, Charteris being in reality the author of many books about the suave detective Simon Templar, or the Saint. In the book, Charteris becomes a kind of saint

[Aldiss, a friend of Nobel prizewinner Doris Lessing, was widely read and abreast of technology and later penned a story about AI featuring a small boy who was 'artificial'. This became the basis of the Spielberg movie *AI* (a project that Stanley Kubrick handed over to him). It is reported that Aldiss went on his knees to beg Spielberg not to ruin his story, but to no avail.]

So, in this novel, what was the catastrophe that overcomes a significant part of humanity? Europe gets bombed by psychedelics dropped in an Arabic war with the Kuwaitis. No explanation is given. People are, so to say, out of their minds. Into this scenario, Aldiss throws the teachings of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky. He takes the doctrine of many I's quite literally: in the beginning of



the novel he describes his hero shocked at the sight of his 'true self' speeding away from him after he lands in Dover.

Charteris discovers his vocation as a new religious leader who advocates the cult of man-the-driver which might echo Gurdjieff's metaphor but probably took up the imagery of cars and crashes developed particularly by JG Ballard. Besides Gurdjieff and Ouspensky, Aldiss pays respect to the writings of Joyce, particularly *Finnegan's Wake*. So Joycean language and fourth way ideas are combined in the bizarre journey that unfolds in the book. Aldiss also cites Gurdjieff's contention that kundalini is an untrustworthy form of imagination. In his last chapter he depicts the chief of police of the autobahn in Germany engaged in manufacturing hydrogen 6, the pure sex energy or creativity implying the degradation of sacred impulses. Here is part of a poem expressing the uncertainties of identity (only the first part shown)



## THE MIRACULOUS IN SEARCH OF ME

It could all have turned out differently.  
Indeed, to other peeled-off I's  
The difference is an eternal recurrence:  
And the stone trees that erupt along My beaches, roots washed bone-clever  
By the tow and rinse of change –  
They shade one instance only of me,  
For circumstance is more than character.

At this bare fence I once turned left  
And became another person: laughed  
Where else I cried and now sit lingering  
Looking at Japanese prints;  
Or in a restaurant decked with pine  
Cones taste in company  
Silver carp and damson tart.

                    Along the walls  
Other I's went, strangers in word and deed,  
Alien photocopies, spooks  
Closer than blood-brothers, more alarming  
Than haggard face spectral in empty room,  
Lonelier than stone age campfires, doppelgangers.  
They are my possibilities. Their pasts were once  
My past, but in the surging wheels  
And cogs become distorted. So, this one –  
On a far-distant spoke! - danced  
All night and had splendid lovers,  
Wrote love letters still kept locked  
Treasured in a bureau-drawer, knew girls  
The world now knows by name and voice.

But this I chose to wander down  
My stony beach, my own rejection.  
My past is like a fable. Truly,  
Circumstance is more than character.  
Whatever other peel-offs saw –  
My I was on the stranded alien land .....



The second of our main examples comes from Sweden. In 1956 the Swedish poet Harry Martinson (who went on to be awarded a joint Nobel prize for literature) wrote a poem that became titled *Aniara*. He began writing the poem at the height of the build-up of nuclear weapons in Soviet Russia while also reading the science of Arthur Eddington. It is supposed that he made the word 'aniara' from the Greek *aniros* meaning 'despairing'. He first used it as word for 'the space in which atoms move'. The poem was soon made into an opera (it is actually the one and only 'space opera') by the Swedish composer Karl-Birger Blomdahl. It was later made into a film for television and in 2019 was a major production for the widescreen.

The original poem was a creative tour de force, having a cosmic setting on the spaceship sent off course as it journeyed towards Mars, leaving behind a corrupted and mortally damaged earth. This ship becomes lost in space and a metaphor for a lost humanity. We might call it an 'anti-Ark'. The people search helplessly for a destination that might save them. Another space ship docks with them but provides no relief. When the ship finally reaches a safe haven the humans on board it have been dead for thousands of years.

An artificial intelligence Mima provides a virtual reality of a beautiful Earth to maintain sanity amongst the passengers. But interaction with the passengers fills the device with their horrific memories of earth being sickened and destroyed and Mima commits suicide. Life on the spaceship degenerates leading to a small remnant sitting in listless torpor.

Martinson's poetry is revered for its originality of language dealing with cosmic and technological experiences. It is rare example of a marriage between science and poetry.

For the fierceness of space does not exceed mankind's.  
No, human cruelty stands up more than well.  
In the desolation of a death-camp cell  
space made of stone enclosed the souls of men,  
and the silence of the cold stones met the ear:  
Here mankind rules. Aniara's ship is here.



It was our final night in Mima's hall.

Self after self broke down and disappeared;  
but before the self had wholly ceased to be  
the soul's will rose more clearly into view,  
extricating time at last from space  
and lulling fast asleep the Doric race.

I had meant to make them an Edenic place,  
but since we left the one we had destroyed  
our only home became the night of space  
where no god heard us in the endless void.

The firmament's eternal mystery  
and wondrous physics of the constellations  
are law, but they are not the gospel truth.  
Compassion flourishes at life's foundations.

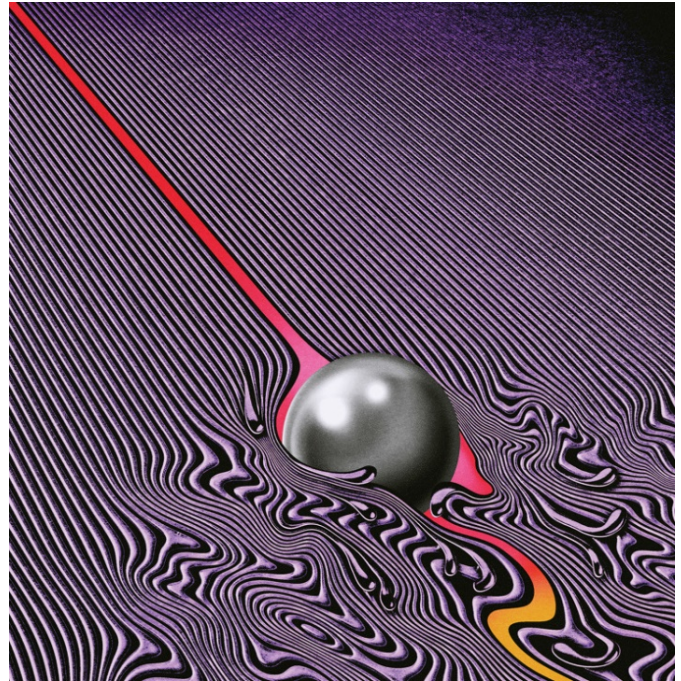
We crashed into the Law's precise command,  
and found our empty death in Mima's dens.  
The god whom we had hoped for to the end  
sat wounded and profaned in Doric glens.

I turn the lamp down and appeal for peace,  
Our tragedy is done. Occasionally  
I've used my envoy's warrant to release  
scenes of our fate through the galactic sea.

With undiminished speed to Lyre's figure  
for fifteen thousand years the spacecraft drove  
like a museum filled with things and bones  
and desiccated plants from Dorisgrove.

In our immense sarcophagus we lay  
as on into the empty seas we passed  
where cosmic night, forever cleft from day,  
around our grave a glass-clear silence cast.

The idea of mankind leaving the earth, which has become too damaged to support human life, to reach and colonize other planets has been seriously entertained by renowned people such as Stephen Hawking. The lyrical and dystopian vision of Aniara is like an inverted image of the project undertaken by the pioneers of biosphere 2, which was an attempt to capture the



essence of our biosphere in a hermetic vessel (situated in the Arizonian desert). The struggles and achievements of the biospherians have been encapsulated in a new film, drawing on archive footage, called *Spaceship Earth*. The idea of spaceship Earth was first promulgated by Buckminster Fuller who said we needed a manual to help us steer our world. Needless to say, the majority of people could not or would not embrace such an idea but there have been many efforts since attempting to wake people up to our biospheric responsibilities. Our collective mind is like a dream surface covering the earth largely unaware of the depths and heights of life on this planet and its intricate web of connections. It has been suggested that this web was known as the *wyrd* in Anglo-Saxon times and is the basis of the 'Force' depicted in *Star Wars*.

The term 'biosphere' was coined in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by Eduard Suess and was taken up in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the Russian scientist Vernadsky. It did not come into use in the west really until the 70s. Vernadsky's book *La Biosphere* written in the 20's came to be translated into English by members of a Gurdjieff group and read by John Bennett and used in his *Dramatic Universe* but, even more importantly, used for practical research by a group led by John Allen.

In the chapter *An Enneagram of Crisis* reviewed by Michael White in this issue I described how the biosphere actually embraced *three worlds*: the biosphere per se; the technosphere, and the noosphere (the sphere of mind). The 'human experiment' brought into existence in Arizona has been documented in the film 'Spaceship Earth' which has been described in the following words:

The true, stranger-than-fiction, adventure of eight visionaries who in 1991 spent two years quarantined inside of a self-engineered replica of Earth's ecosystem called Biosphere 2. The experiment was a worldwide phenomenon, chronicling daily existence in the face of life threatening ecological disaster and a growing criticism that it was nothing more than a cult. The bizarre story is both a cautionary tale and a hopeful lesson of how a small group of dreamers can potentially re-imagine a new world. (Taken from <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt11394188/>)

Perhaps the most significant aim of the project was to find an emergent *noosphere* capable of understanding how to be responsible *in cooperation with* the biosphere. Though using many re-



**Biospherians who were 'locked down' for two years**

sources and know-how in many fields, it was not widely known that the biospherians took on board many ideas stemming from Gurdjieff and Bennett. It is significant that our first example of 'revelation of disaster' *Barefoot in the Head* and our third *Spaceship Earth* should both contain the influence of fourth way ideas.

The Biosphere 2 project was taken over and even vandalized in a way reminiscent of the persecution of heretics in the Middle Ages. Which leads me to conclude this delicate web of connections with reference to apocalyptic thinking through the ages. If time 'be-

gan' in a creation it must end in 'last days', a day of reckoning. Before the ultimate end of everything humanity encounters terrible threats which have often been explained as 'the wages of sin'. The majority of humanity disobeys the will of God, that is, violates some aspect of the interconnectedness of all life.

Humanity faced major environmental challenges thousands of years ago – in the last ice age, for example. In more recent times, the threats have arisen through *our own actions* as in war, agriculture, global warming and what is called hyper-consumerism. The majority live in a world of small duration. Any larger present moment than our own represents a higher intelligence. Such intelligence may work with ideas as its currency, but it must be *felt and sensed*. I would argue this as the substance of Bennett's notion of a 'dramatic' universe.

A given disaster can always be seen as the death of the old order and the birth of the new. The *Ark of Noah* may be more than simply an archive of life and knowledge. It can be seen as the seed of a *brave new world*. Such were the titles of our last two events at Nashville perhaps prescient of events to come.

To end I throw in a remarkable book by a mathematical physicist *The Physics of Immortality Modern Cosmology, God and the Resurrection of the Dead*, 1994, Frank J. Tipler. Like Bennett, Tipler argued that theology must be a science and went even further perhaps in saying that it should be considered a part of physics. Needless to say, this has been attacked and derided. The basic idea is this: cosmology (of a certain kind) predicts that the expansion of the universe will cease and reverse, turning into what is called the 'big crunch'. This will make available vast amounts of energy particularly to life and intelligent life in particular. This will make it possible for future intelligence to create simulations or new realities that will, Tipler claims, include the making of the kingdom of heaven and the resurrection of the dead. He takes it as inevitable that once intelligent life has emerged it will in time spread throughout the universe and become a superconsciousness.

Life overcomes disasters. To quote the wondrous mystic Julien of Norwich: "And All shall be well, and All Manner of thing shall be well".



## Taking Appearance Seriously: Henri Bortoft's Phenomenology and Hermeneutics of Wholeness

Bortoft, Henri, 2012. *Taking Appearance Seriously: The Dynamic Way of Seeing in Goethe and European Thought*. Edinburgh: Floris Press.

### David Seamon

In the early 1960s, along with other young researchers like Anthony Blake, Anthony Hodgson, and Ken Pledge, Henri Bortoft worked with J.G. Bennett on the development of “systematics”—a method of encountering and understanding whereby one might explore the various aspects of a phenomenon through the concrete significance of number (Bennett, 1956–66; Bennett, 1993). While doing graduate research in physics in the 1980s, Bortoft worked with British physicist David Bohm to consider the relationship between quantum mechanics and an understanding of wholeness (Bortoft 1982; Bohm 1980). In later professional life, Bortoft was invited by biologist Brian Goodwin (Goodwin 1997) to teach in the innovative graduate program in holistic science at Schumacher College, in Totnes, England. There and elsewhere, many students were strongly influenced by Bortoft's singular instructional style whereby he introduced the phenomenological approach phenomenologically (Seamon 2012).



Bortoft's best known work is the influential *Wholeness of Nature*, published in 1996 (Bortoft 1996). His last book, released shortly before his death in 2012, is *Taking Appearance Seriously* (Bortoft 2012). In both works, Bortoft aimed to help readers see and understand the world and human experience in a more integrated, compelling way. Invoking the perspectives and methods of phenomenology and hermeneutics, he explored the confounding relationship between parts and whole: That to understand the whole, one must understand the parts, but to understand the parts, one must understand the whole (Bortoft 1971, 1985).

Drawing particularly on Goethean science as it evokes one mode of phenomenological seeing and understanding, Bortoft argued that the key to circumventing the parts-whole paradox is a shift in attention from what is experienced to the experience of what is experienced (Bortoft 1986, 1996, 2019-2020; Goethe 1970, 2009; Seamon and Zajonc 1998). He explained how we can “step back” from what is seen into the seeing of what is seen. In this way, the whole comes to presence within its parts, which are the place for the presencing of the whole. In other words, the parts show the way to the whole, which can be encountered nowhere else except through the parts. By teaching ourselves to become more sensitive to this dynamic reciprocity between parts and whole, we learn to recognize how parts “belong” to the whole. We “take appearances seriously.”

More specifically, in *Taking Appearance Seriously*, Bortoft focused on the central hermeneutic question of “What does it mean to understand?” (Davey 1999; Palmer 1969; Porter and Robinson 2011; van Manen 2014). Can one facilitate various conceptual and heuristic means whereby one might move toward a more comprehensive understanding of the particular things or situations that he or she wishes to know? In all his writings, but particularly in *Taking Appearance Se-*

*riously*, Bortoft suggested that one does not see or know if he or she cannot say what he or she sees or knows. He quoted hermeneutic philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, who claimed that “Being that can be understood is language” (Gadamer, 1989, p. 474). Following Gadamer and phenomenological philosopher Martin Heidegger (1969), Bortoft contended that:

Language is the medium in which things can appear as such, i.e., as what they are.... When things enter into language, they enter the world. What appears in saying are things themselves—language is the medium, not the message.... [I]t is language which gives the world in the first place—i.e., ... language is the condition for the possibility of there being ‘world’. The world ‘lights up’ in the dawning of language (Bortoft, 2012, pp. 145–46).

In any phenomenological or hermeneutic effort, however, there is always the difficult matter of descriptive accuracy and interpretive trustworthiness. How is one to evaluate the relative accuracy and validity of competing interpretations? As philosopher G.B. Madison phrased the question, “How is one to decide which of two or more conflicting interpretations is the better, and to do so impartially, non-arbitrarily, if there are no general, recognized criteria one can appeal to?” (Madison 1988, p. 27). Philosopher Brice R. Wachterhauser (1986, p. 234) broaches the same question when he asks how phenomenological and hermeneutic researchers might establish “a set of practical guidelines that guide the pursuit of truth in the human sciences.”

Perhaps the most innovative and valuable aspect of *Taking Appearance Seriously* is Bortoft’s offering a helpful conceptual structure for dealing with these questions. He identifies three progressively-intensive modes of understanding that he called appropriation, assimilation, and participatory understanding. In an assimilation mode of understanding, one encounters an unfamiliar text (e.g., a poem, article, or philosophical text) and interprets it in terms familiar to the interpreter. The text is understood only in terms of what we already assume it to be. There is little possibility for a fresh, unexpected, or unusual “sighting” of the text, which is more or less what we thought it was before we began our interpretive effort.

Completely opposite to assimilation is a more engaged mode of knowing that Bortoft called participatory understanding, whereby we accept that we may not know what the text is about but make an effort to be open and allow its potential meanings to work on us. We seek to be receptive to unsuspected sightings and recognitions. We no longer impose our meaning on the text; instead, it offers its meaning to us: “This is no longer a subject-centred experience, but one in which the subject is transformed by the encounter with meaning instead of using it for her own purposes” (Bortoft 2012, p. 106). For Bortoft, participatory understanding is the mode of hermeneutic (and phenomenological) encounter founding perceptive, trustworthy interpretation and evoking a lived interpretive reciprocity between text and interpreter.

Bortoft’s third mode of encountering the text is what he called appropriation, which refers to a way of interpreting whereby the interpreter recognizes the freshness or unusualness of the text but limits that uniqueness through a mode of understanding that only arises from and serves his or her own personal concerns. These concerns may or may not appropriately relate to the author’s original aims or to the potential meanings of the text. In appropriation, the interpreter “makes the meaning her own, without reducing it to what she already understands (which would be assimilation), but she does so only in a way that expands rather than trans-

forms her understanding” (Bortoft 2012, p. 106). In this sense, the interpreter controls how the text’s meaning is to be used and, thereby, “understanding is under the control of the subject” (Bortoft 2012, p. 106).

Ultimately, the aim of a phenomenological and hermeneutic research is finding ways whereby the phenomenon, experience, or text can be given space to be as fully present as possible. This mode of encountering and understanding is Bortoft’s participatory understanding, which requires an interpretive reversal in which, rather than our participating in and appropriating the phenomenon or text’s meaning, that meaning participates in and appropriates us. Making reference to both Gadamer and Heidegger, Bortoft called such moments of deepening textual encounter the “hermeneutic reversal” and writes:

Understanding that participates in meaning clearly goes beyond both assimilation and appropriation .... We do not understand in a vacuum. We always already understand, and it is this already-understanding that is “pulled up short” by the text and found to be inadequate .... In the event of understanding ... it is not so much we who appropriate the meaning, but we ourselves who are appropriated by the meaning of the work. So we are participated by the meaning that we participate in—this is the hermeneutic reversal (Bortoft 2012, pp. 106–07).

Bortoft emphasized that these three modes of encountering the phenomenon or text always presuppose a lived continuum—that none of the three are “pure” but, phenomenologically and hermeneutically, interpenetrate and shift as interpreters practice and hone their interpretive skills and sensibilities. In addition, different interpreters will discover different meanings that are “the work’s own possibilities of being that emerge as the work explicates itself, as it were, in the variety of its aspects” (Gadamer 1989 p. 118; quoted in Bortoft 2012, p. 109). In this sense, there is not one legitimate interpretation but many, though Bortoft emphasized this range of accurate understandings is most possible via moments of participatory understanding whereby something in the world at hand “offers itself” to the researcher, who in turn “takes hold” and understands in a new way afforded by the “offering.”

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## The Neglected Caucasian Music of Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov

John Dale



As a young teen-ager, I was enchanted by melodies by various composers that reminded me of the haunting Caucasian and Middle-Eastern music of George Ivanovich Gurdjieff. Among such composers was Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859 to 1935), whose *Caucasian Sketches* (two suites, Opus 10 and Opus 42) remains his most popular work.

Recently, however, I have done a little research into this composer, and I feel there might be many more gems lurking in the over 80 works of his that survive. Sadly, almost all of these, remain unrecorded. Something needs to be done.



Ippolitov-Ivanov finished his studies under Rimsky-Korsakov in 1882. According to Wikipedia's biography:

[His] first appointment was to the position of director of the music academy and conductor of the orchestra in Tbilisi (Tiflis), the principal city of Georgia, where he was to spend the next seven years. This period allowed him to develop an interest in the music of the region, a reflection of the general interest taken in the music of non-Slav minorities and more exotic neighbors that was current at the time, and that was to receive overt official encouragement for other reasons after the Revolution.

The Caucasian influence, so openly displayed in Gurdjieff's music, left deep marks on Ippolitov-Ivanov too. Perusal of the list of his works reveals, for example, numerous titles referring to children's songs and to Russian and other ethnic folk songs. His opus 23, for example, is titled *Three Moorish Melodies*. Opus 39 has the intriguing title *Pythagorean Hymn to the Rising Sun*. Gurdjieff has a similar piece. It would be interesting to compare them.

His other sacred music, deriving from Christian Orthodoxy, includes Opus 37, *Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, Opus 38 *Five Cherubic Hymns*, Opus 43, *Vespers*, and several others. His *Symphony No. 1*, Opus 46, contains folk melody allusions. Opus 48 is titled *Armenian Rhapsody on National Themes*. Opus 62 is titled *Turkish Fragments*. Opus 64 is *Village Evenings*. Opus 66a is *Two Bylinki* (folk epics). Opus 68 is *Four Poems by Rabindranath Tagore*. Opus 69 is *Musical Paintings from Uzbekistan*. Opus 71a is *An Evening in Georgia*. Finally, among the works without opus number is an early piece (1883) called *9 Caucasian Dances for Georgian folk instruments and Performers*.

I want to hear more of this man's music.

Of course, now, one can go online and listen directly to numerous albums of folk melodies of the Caucasus area. In addition, a number of other composers over the decades have been influenced by such scales and rhythms, including such early figures as Komitas Vartabed, Alexander Borodin, Albert Ketelbey, Aram Khachaturian, and Alan Hovhaness, and more recent ones such as Lévon Minassian (*Doudouk Beyond Borders*).

Nevertheless, the work of Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov needs to be added to this genre. The little we have on CD is beautiful. The rest is deeply neglected and is undoubtedly worthy of much greater attention. *John Dale 4/19/2020 enneafutures@yahoo.com*

## POEMS

### The Great Mystery - Michael White

let me sing to you now  
of empires that rise and fall  
of the world revolutionized  
                                  by invention  
  by war  
  by time  
  
yet the sun is warm on our backs  
the deer make trails through the forest  
the work of the world continues  
in the wilderness  
where a hidden self  
speaks the language of nature



we are made from the earth  
  
there is in each of us  
sameness with the whole  
oh great mystery  
to have contact with the trees  
                                  the wind  
  the water  
this is the common sense of being  
to collect yourself inside yourself  
so that just as the great sun lights our world  
there is a sun that shines inside  
that lights our way

## **The World and I – Anthony Blake**

Here is the world  
River, path, trees and sky  
Scents and sounds and airs  
to make me cry.  
Just for me – none other by.  
Gifted with such beginning  
That requires no memory or seeming  
but is entire.  
My brain cells have become dandelions  
whose seeds start to float away.  
My blood is the slowly moving river  
in which the heron waits.  
There is no problem of how flesh could  
speak or think  
because always it was so.

My blood and flesh and nerves  
seep through my senses into the earth  
and are carried in the breeze to rustle leaves.  
The flowers they murmur “brother”  
breathing companionship.  
Long have I known them yet they have known  
me longer.  
Every moment is marked  
by the will of a blade of grass  
that meets the warmth upon my face.  
The shell of myself gone with the collection of  
today’s castaways,  
leaving a world that smells so sweet and pure  
to mark my passing.

## **The DuVersity Online Experiment**

### **Jason Joslyn**

It is March 2020 and the news is foreboding. The global pandemic is grim and growing, and events of all kinds are being cancelled everywhere. The DuVersity board meets to discuss what to do about the scheduled May event, and it is quickly decided that there will be no choice but to cancel it. This is very disappointing, and yet there remains all the energy and ideas that have been readying for it. Everything is now on hold and we do not know for how long. The idea is floated of extending online activities as another way, but how exactly? Having recently been invited to join the DuVersity Board, and having a background in online technologies, I start considering and comparing notes with others about the various means that are available to us for this. What can be done that will be appropriate for capturing the unique mixture of elements that make up a DuVersity event in some way online? If a physical, in-person gathering is indefinitely postponed, what other forms of meeting are possible and practical for us?

There is a history of using the internet for DuVersity activities. I remember returning from “A Spiritual Reason” at Claymont in 1993, with Tony and John Wilkinson and a massive blizzard that snowed us all into the mansion together, and wanting to find a way to keep in contact and continue pursuing the ideas that had started for me. At the time I was working with early internet services and decided to create an email list service which I named “Zurvanet”. This slowly grew to include a handful of the people I had met through gatherings and proved that we could keep in touch using the internet between meeting together in person at events. After a

while this was replaced with K. Chennette's creation of a Yahoo group called "Deeper Dialogue" or "deeper\_d".

Alongside simple correspondence via email – sharing ideas, articles, poetry, conversations – we made some experiments in conducting exercises online. Based on Tony's development of "N-Logue", some of us would meet in real-time chat forums like Internet Relay Chat (IRC) to engage in Trialogue – taking on three roles in the conversation and alternating turns accordingly, while coordinating music to all be listening to simultaneously by mailing each other cassette tapes ahead of time.

By 1997 the DuVersity.org website had debuted, which alongside the Systematics.org and Deeper\_D forum sites had established places for a variety of loosely affiliated DuVersity participants to share information, communicate, and stay informed of upcoming events.

These were and continue to be valuable for keeping engagement alive at a certain level in a long-term ongoing way, but they stop short of actually creating a direct "virtual place" where a more full version of what we do at our gathering could take place. The idea of an "online seminar" or "online university" remained unfulfilled, hanging in the air as a potentiality that had not yet found its right time or form to manifest. For me personally, between making trips to gatherings or events, I lacked the contact and direct engagement that I wished for, and which motivated my early experiment with the Zurvanet email list.

There is a core idea in 4th way practical theory that one's own life circumstances provide ideal instructive situations for one's work. Retreats, gatherings, events are special circumstances that serve as "reminders" that "recharge" one's energies and motivations and enable the sharing of new insights among groups. Bennett's Sherborne experiment courses were deliberately designed to have a finite duration, with people returning to their lives afterwards to continue the process. The "second line of work" with one's peers remains alive and the relationships formed in these special circumstances continue to be vital and always need to be renewed. One of the key differences of the 4th way from the other 3 ways is that it is conducted in the midst of one's life and does not depend on monastic seclusion. And yet the group communication is also absolutely essential. This creates a set of requirements that are a challenge to achieve together – to be on our own in our own particular lives and yet still strongly in communication to work together to amplify our individual learning and efforts.

These considerations came together as the DuVersity was now faced with having to cancel and postpone 2020 events due to the global pandemic. The means available to us now to use the internet to create an "Online Dramatic Universe University" with international reach are stronger than ever, and nearly everyone can get access if they wish to. Video conferencing, although it creates its own unique challenges for sharing presence in a natural feeling way, is now a relatively reliable utility that we can take advantage of and adapt to our unique requirements. The pandemic has been forcing many schools and groups of all kinds to find a way to now substitute in-person activities for video conferencing and online courses.

The question became "How can some of what happens in a DuVersity Seminar be moved into an online format?". At an event there are a variety of experiential modalities one engages in – listening to musical performances, dances, artistic creations, theatrical activities, presentations,

inner exercises and Movements classes, as well as practical work outdoors. Obviously, this will be greatly constrained by meeting online in video conferences and then communicating through online written forums, but there is also a lot of room here for experimentation. People can take a given theme and work with it or conduct experiential experiments between meeting up again online, and then share their results together. Although this format of meeting together is different, it may have its own strengths that are yet to be fully discovered. Often it is through the pressure of great constraints that great creativity is unlocked.

Now the experiment has begun in earnest. The DuVersity Online has been initiated, and a combination of the open-source Moodle online learning management software (LMS) and Zoom video conferencing has been employed to build it so far. The best way to learn how to use a new system is by doing it, and the process of finding how to establish an appropriate format and tempo of meetings has been evolving rapidly. In some ways it has required a major adjustment due to the unfamiliarity of meeting in this way, and in other ways it has been immediately rewarding in bringing tangible connection, energy, and engagement on a regular basis into our lives, in contrast to meeting in person only a few times each year. I know that I have been very excited by the new possibilities unfolding with this, and see it as a realization of what I originally hoped for when returning from those trips to Claymont back in the early 90s and wanting to remain connected and involved even during my normal daily routines back at home.

This present situation reminds me of the scenario that sets up the initial conditions of the story of Beelzebub's Tales – "The Cause of the Delay in the Falling of the Ship Karnak". An external factor beyond their control interrupts their plans – a comet with a toxic and dangerous trail of "Zilnotrago" would do damage to them and their ship if they were to continue along their originally planned course. So a decision is wisely made to wait it out in safety, even if this may seem greatly inconvenient at first. Beelzebub decides that this provides a perfect opportunity to do something he has been wanting to do for a long time, which is take the time to focus on the education of his grandson Hasein. He quotes Mullah Nassr Eddin regarding this:

"In such a situation as has befallen us, he would probably say:

'You cannot jump over your knees and it is absurd to try to kiss your own elbow.'

"I now say the same to you, and I add: there is nothing to be done; when an event is impending which arises from forces immeasurably greater than our own, one must submit."

The lesson I take from this is that when confronted with unavoidable constraints, there is an intelligent way to respond that accepts the limitations and finds a new way to flip the circumstances to one's own, or in this case our mutual, benefit.

Hasein is overjoyed by this turn of events in anticipation that he will get to learn so much as a result and is even mocked as being a "growing egoist" by Ahoon for being happy about this. We may find ourselves in a similar situation as Hasein today as we face the indefinite postponement of our scheduled gatherings, and at the same time find ourselves engaging in a promising new experiment in an Online DuVersity. If there is nothing that can be done about the absence of in-person meetings for now, then it is the perfect time to finally realize what has

so long been merely a potential idea “hovering in the air” around the DuVersity – an actual “virtual school” that can bring us together across time zones and distances – and bring our work together right into our own lives and homes. I know that I am personally excited by this new opportunity, even if it may cast me as a “growing egoist” to see this “silver-lining” of an unfortunate turn of events as a new source of potentially great benefit.

## THE ART OF REALITY

**Anthony Blake**



The image of the herald on our first page signifies the Diversity’s current online offering we call ‘The Crier’. It is also an invocation of the first book Gurdjieff wrote which he titled *Herald of Coming Good*. In this book he outlined his vision for *The Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man* which inspired Bennett much later to conceive of his *Institute for the Comparative Study of History, Philosophy, and the Sciences*. Our own *DuVersity* (as outlined by Jason, above) is a modest echo of these.

We will in due course be making available a history of the DuVersity, appraising people of our multiple efforts over the last twenty years or more to celebrate and enhance dialogue, diversity, information research, synergic practice, systematics, and bringing the arts of music, poetry, dance, painting and theatre into the expression of the fourth way. We have done as best we can to avoid identification with any ideology to the exclusion of other world views and shutting ourselves off from new discoveries and ideas which might challenge our beliefs.

To further our conception of the role of art, we must first quote from William Blake, that inspired English Prophet, who wrote in his Engraving of the Laocoon:

A Poet, a Painter, a Musician, an Architect; the man or woman who is not one of these is not a Christian.

You must leave fathers and mothers and houses and lands if they stand in the way of Art.

The Eternal Body of Man is the Imagination; that is God Himself, the Divine Body, [Hebrew] Jesus; we are His Members.

It manifests itself in His Works of Art: In Eternity all is Vision!

The whole business of Man is the Arts, and all things, common.

No secrecy in Art.

Art is the Tree of Life.



The other reference we make is to Orage's report on conversations with Gurdjieff in which he spoke of his *Beelzebub's Tales* as written for future generations when it would *inspire artists*. This was certainly a great inspiration to me for, years ago, I was becoming aware of the intrinsic limitations of looking to *explain* Gurdjieff's ideas. It turned out that my first move was to undertake the *reading and recording* of all of Gurdjieff's writings. The meaning I found in the writings was in my voice! From then it became obvious that we had to find ways of *performing* Beelzebub! Thanks to the intervention of actor/director Jesai Jayhmes we have taken a few faltering steps into the thespian world of the *theatre* (defined by Gurdjieff as 'reflector of reality'). We have a performance of the dramatic last words of Beelzebub. I have sketched an 'additional chapter' to the magnum opus. One of the pleasures of our Nashville event in 2018 was to take up the theme of 'Brave New World' and enjoy snippets of *The Tempest*.

Gurdjieff was a consummate artist in words, music and dance as well as the art of life itself. This is not to deny the practical world of technology and invention. I often cite the words of Richard Feynman 'I only understand what I can create' to the puzzlement of many but it is absolutely fourth way stuff! And Soren Kierkegaard went one better when he said: "One understands only in proportion to becoming himself that which he understands".

Bennett himself invented a teaching machine based on his ideas of consciousness! And members of the DuVersity are now carrying on the research which this embodied.

It is to be hoped that we can learn from the current crisis due to the pandemic and develop communications that draw on the capacities of the internet. Of particular concern is the radical reduction in *physical presence* which we experience now. How can we realize the three-foldness of experience under these conditions? It will be a supreme art of the *Higher Moving Centre*.



We do not really think, we are barely conscious, until something goes wrong.

~ Charles Sanders Peirce