

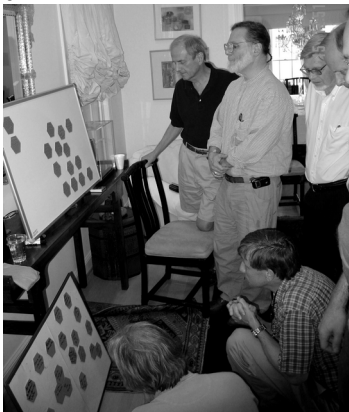
DuVersity Newsletter 12

We are pleased to announce that our proposed trip to *Enchanted Albion*, August 26th to September 11th, 2004 is definitely on. During the course of our journey, we hope to make contact with inspiring leaders in the field of astro-archaeology such as Peter Stewart (see his article *Architecture of the Spirit* in this newsletter). On the last page of this newsletter you will see a stunning image of Zeus that anticipates our proposed next 'logosafari' (term used by Ted Matchett to indicate a journey through meaning) projected to take place in the islands of the Eastern Mediterranean.

We are also on line for *Dreaming Peace* in Seattle, November 12-14, in which we will be assisted by the pioneer of the *social dreaming matrix*, Gordon Lawrence (see newsletter no. 11 for transcript of a video conversation with him).

However, we are sad to announce the death of Edith Wallace on May 29th (see Karen's essay in this newsletter). Edith has been a most important influence on the development of the DuVersity programme of *psyche integration* and she will be sadly missed, but we hope that Karen Stefano will be able to continue her work on the method of tissue paper collage.

Psyche integration is now the term we use for the 'working group method' and marks a deeper understanding of the way of realizing effective synergy between the conscious and unconscious aspects of our nature. This has influenced our work on developing the method of *systematics*, as was evidenced in the recent Gathering V, May 14-16 this year. This broke new ground in fusing unconscious with conscious material as illustrated here. The theme of such a fusion has become much more prominent since our last newsletter and played an important part in our work in China.



Gathering V - LVT

The successful event Karen and Anthony ran in Beijing, China, May 2-4, 2004 introduced psyche integration for the first time to an Asian audience (see *The DuVersity in China* in this newsletter). We had three full days to run the complete cycle through each day. This event marks a highly significant advance in realizing our aims of seeking a trans-cultural approach to human development.

Michael White is continuing his heroic labours on editing Anthony Blake's *Structures of Meaning* and we hope that a new edition with additional material reflecting the considerable work done since its first publication some years ago will soon be ready. Meanwhile, we have finally managed to publish a revised edition of *An Index to In Search of the Miraculous*.

Included in this newsletter are extracts from two highly original works on the Qabalah and Taoism that we have plans to re-publish. These represent important insights into the structure of meaning and resonate with Pete Stewart's creative understanding of ancient myth.



Gathering V - tissue paper collage

Edith thought of herself as a 'seeker of the truth'. She was on a life long quest for self-knowledge and transformation. She had a

EDITH WALLACE
March 6, 1909 – April 29, 2004

Dr. Edith Wallace was an extraordinary woman. She deeply touched the lives of many people throughout the world. For me, she was a mentor, teacher and a beloved friend.

She transformed great adversity into creativity, healing and light and so became a role model for many individuals.

Edith was born in Offenbach, Germany on March 6, 1909. As a Jewish refugee she fled the horrors of the holocaust to Pisa, Italy, where she earned a degree in philosophy and medicine. She left Mussolini's Italy for England where she lived and worked until the end of the war, eventually reuniting with her father and brother. While in London, she came upon the book *The Way of All Women* by Ester Harding, a Jungian analyst. This book introduced her to the ideas of C. G. Jung who was to become her first teacher. During this time she met C. G. Jung and did analytic work with Emma Jung. After the end of the Second World War, she settled in New York City. She became a Jungian analyst while in NYC and had a long career there and in Santa Fe. She practiced in Santa Fe up until the time of her death. She was one of the last of the first generation of Jungian analysts who were directly trained by Carl and Emma Jung.



deep love of god and beauty. She wrote two books and was in the process of completing a third: *The Queens Quest*, *How It All Began* and *How It Continued: No End*. Both of these books illustrated the remarkable method of work she developed for self-exploration and inner transformation using tissue paper collage as the medium of magic and integrating Jung's ideas on active imagination.

Her method represented a unique synthesis of psychology, spirituality and creat-

ivity.

She also studied with the spiritual teachers J. G. Bennett and Shaikh Bawa Muhayyaddeen. Edith developed the Tissue Paper Collage Method while studying with J. G. Bennett and working with students at Sherborne during a 9-month training course.

She has been a strong supported to the DuVersity and participated in many of the DuVersity seminar/dialogues, video dialogues, playshops and other projects. I have both organized and helped facilitate playshops with her for many years. In order to continue her life's work I will continue to facilitate these playshops.

Edith, our beloved friend and companion, will be missed by many.

We will hold a playshop this August 6-11 in Santa Fe, New Mexico in Celebration of Edith's life and work.

Karen Stefano, June 2004

THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE SPIRIT



Photo by Richard Heath

Creation myth and ancient astronomy: a search for the origins of meaning

By Peter Stewart

This essay gives an introduction to the book of the same title, which is as yet unpublished. The book documents a very early – perhaps as far back as 17,280 BC – realization of the ‘parting of time from eternity’ shown in the *precession of the equinoxes* and how this realization has reverberated since in human thought and gave rise to the *search for immortality*. Peter has a collegiate relationship with William Sullivan, who guided us on our trip to Peru and to Richard Heath, who will be our guide in ‘Enchanted Albion’. We hope that Peter will meet with us on our journey when we reach the Borders of Scotland and share with us some of his ideas. His work is a major contribution to our understanding of the themes first proposed in the seminal masterpiece *Hamlet's Mill* by the historians of

science Santillana and von Dechend. It is also of considerable importance for our understanding of the ‘web of meaning’, which has become a major theme of the researches of the DuVersity.

The Original Story

In the beginning of things there was a time when the sky was not very high up above the heads of men. It was no higher than the top of the tent in which men lived. Then it was easy for men to communicate with the celestial deities through the opening left in the top of the tent. But according to certain legends the gods were angered by the behaviour of men and sent a giant to lift the sky and raise it to its present height. From then on men found it necessary to have sorcerers to intercede between themselves and the celestial deities.

The story of how Heaven and Earth came to be divided, of how people were separated from their gods and set out on their journey through Time must be one of the most fundamental of all stories. This version is from the Samoyed Yuraks of the far north of Europe. In the West, we are perhaps likely to be more familiar with the version from classical Greece in which Chronos cuts apart his parents, Sky and Earth (Ouranos and Gaia), putting an end to their primordial embrace. But these are only two of the multitude of ways of telling a story which is known in some form or other almost everywhere in the world. Some times it has the air of a folk-tale, as in the version from Africa which tells how the women, pounding grain with their pestles, banged against the bellies of the sky-god, angering him and causing him to raise himself above the earth. At other times it is cloaked in all the awesome mystery of the most ancient scriptures, as in the Hindu hymn to Varuna, the creator and guardian of the sacred law, who is said to have ‘propped apart the two world-halves even though they are so vast. He has pushed away the dome of the sky to make it high and wide’.

To judge by both its variety and its universality, this is clearly a story that has had

profound importance for tellers and listeners alike. The ideas it expresses seem to have played a major role in determining human attitudes for thousands of years. In the region of Central America occupied by the Maya people, to this day an annual ceremony is re-enacted wherein the two priests and their wives, having set out the four foundation stones of the 'earth-sky', rise with great precision from their seats at the four corners; they are said to be 'lifting the sky'.

When we realize that the description of the events that took place in Eden, when Adam and Eve were driven from the company of their God in Paradise, is itself a version of this story, then we can see that this is truly the story of the beginning of human thought as we know it now. The variety of forms in which it is told may be vast, but the significance is unvarying. The events it describes form the heart of every attempt to perceive meaning in the human situation. Whatever sense has been made of human experience turns out to be built upon the ground plan this story establishes. To ask how it came to be told is to ask how the human mind came to be the way it is.

The essence of the story is this; there was once, in the beginning, a world of timeless accord, characterised by a unique and harmonious relationship between Heaven and Earth, when Gods and men communed. Adversity of any kind - whether war, sickness or death - was unknown. As the result of some misdemeanour on the part of the people, which involved them in some way overstepping their mark, this harmonious relationship was disrupted and the perfect world came to an end. At this point, Time began, with all its consequences. Not only the people but the world itself was destined for decay, death and disaster.

The basic human response to the situation described in this story varies a good deal in emphasis, depending on cultural conditions. Generally, however, it has been to look forward to a time when this perfect world can be re-attained, whether that be at the end of an individual life, or at the end of

the life of the world itself. There have even been those who, with varying motives, have envisaged this perfect world being established right here on earth.

All of these responses can be summed up in what Mircea Eliade called 'the myth of re-integration' found, he says, 'almost everywhere in the history of religion.... in an infinity of variations':

. . . fundamentally it is an expression of the thirst to abolish dualism, endless returnings and fragmentary existences. It existed at the most primitive stages, which indicates that man, from the time when he first realised his position in the universe, desired passionately, and tried to achieve concretely, a passing beyond his human status.

Stories do not tell themselves, however. There must have been a time, remote in human evolution as it might be, before which this story of separation and its consequences for human aspiration did not exist. It is told in so many differing ways, all leading to much the same result, that we can hardly accept it as literal history, even if we could accept as credible a literal occurrence of the events it describes. So we have to ask what kind of experience could have first caused man to 'realize his position in the universe' and to describe it in this way? The stories of Creation and separation have shaped the way we view the world and the sense we make of our experience of it. What kind of event can have been so shattering that its effects would echo through millennia, resulting in that universal thirst for reintegration which has been so powerful and enduring in its effect on the shaping of the human spirit?

In their book 'Maya Cosmology', Linda Schiel and David Freidel describe how, for present-day Maya:

. . . the very act of preparing a plot of land for growing food - the clearing and measuring out of rectilinear space - echoes Creation mythology thousands of years old.
. . . the farmer repeats the acts of Creation first enacted by First Father when he set up the first three stones of Creation to establish the cosmic centre. He marks the

corners and sides of his field, just as First Father lifted up the sky and built a house with four sides and four corners. Maya field and house are analogs of these cosmic structures....the basic work of making the world liveable- building houses, planting fields- is the everyday experience of all Maya and it is the same work that the gods undertook at the beginning of everything The famous Maya fascination with time is no more than a preoccupation with discerning and codifying the patterns that give time and space meaning.

The first tellers of these stories clearly read whatever formative events inspired them as messages concerning the meaning of the world around them. In telling these experiences as stories for the first time, the human imagination began to construct a ground plan upon which all its future speculations might stand. They began, in fact, to make sense.

In the normal course of events, we read meaning into a message or experience by identifying 'isomorphisms' which the message shares with all or some part of the rest of the world that we already know. That is to say, we regard it as containing elements which can be seen as encoding, in the form of metaphors, elements of some previously understood message. 'Understanding a thing is to arrive at a metaphor for that thing by substituting something more familiar to us. And the feeling of familiarity is the feeling of understanding', says Julian Jaynes.

In searching for the 'meaning' of a poem, for instance, we try to decode the metaphor into language we are already familiar with. In the process, however, new connections are established which enrich our vocabulary of meaning. The message that 'the curfew tolls the knell of parting day', once understood, will become one more element of meaning to reverberate with all the others in the idea of 'evening', even if no bell rings. Without this web of metaphor, evening would be no more than a localised consequence of the earth's rotation. Once we have established this web, and allow ourselves to be exposed to

its contents, then the idea of 'evening' is endlessly enrichable. It carries a meaning whose profundity is a consequence of the density of the web of metaphor which we bring to it.

In this way poets create for us a world of meaning. By poets, I mean all those whose work involves exploring and elaborating the web of metaphor; the Greek word *poesias* actually means 'creation'. They do not, of course, create metaphor from thin air, though. They do so by recognizing *similarities*, by making connections between things which had previously seemed unconnected. From such connections, organization emerges. Each new metaphor is thus an extension of the web which unites and orders experience.

When a new message, a new experience, lands on the web of metaphor, it will cause what we can call 'resonances' within the fabric's structure. These resonances are the material of meaning. The quality of the resonance will determine the value of the meaning. I take the web itself to be what we more usually describe as the Spirit.

Resonance is the result of the degree of accord that exists between an experience (the new message) and the underlying structure of the spirit. This accord we measure in degrees of 'profundity'. The greater the accord between an experience and the underlying architecture of the web of meaning, the more profoundly it will resonate within the spirit.

The web of metaphor which underlies our sense of meaning today can be shown to be fundamentally the same as that which was first expressed in the patterns of the myths of creation. Although it is infinitely enrichable, this web is woven on a primordial loom, whose warp and weft were laid down at the very beginning of the human quest for meaning. The ancient stories are a description of this process. The events which inspired them were the 'archetypal' signifiers, the first impressions made in the formless matter of understanding. These formative events became the original referents for all future 'similarities'. The stories which described them acted like a prism

through which significance could be discerned, a matrix whose architecture has informed all subsequent understanding. They are in fact, maps of the structure of meaning.

Culturally separated histories have coloured this foundation in a multitude of ways across the world, emphasising some aspects, diminishing others, so that today it is difficult to identify the similarities and easy to exaggerate the differences. In increasingly secularised societies it is even difficult to acknowledge the existence of these underlying patterns, so remote have we become from their mythical embodiments. Instead, we choose to see our concepts and institutions as being the creations of our developing 'civilization'. We regard each separate field of endeavour as having its own determining principles, rather than recognising the original unifying principle of relationships.

For the myth-making societies, it was the process of identifying, or rather, creating relationships which lay at the heart of their organization of the world around and within them. They appear to have gloried in the extension of simple relationships of all kinds, weaving ever more elaborate textures into the web of their understanding. All things and experiences which in some way manifested a particular characteristic were joined together in a relationship of shared imagery and potency. Between a hood and a hut, to take a small but significant instance, an interplay of imagery could occur which derived from their shared 'hollowness', but they also share a dome-like quality with rounded hills, or the body of a spider. All were equally intimately connected with the mantle of the world, the dome of the sky.

To help understand the processes whereby this kind of myth-guided world evolves, the anthropologist Levi-Strauss coined the term 'wild thought' (*la pensee sauvage*). It offers us a wonderful image of creative intelligence free to roam across domains untamed by the rigid concepts of our logic, which insist on the unassailable division between *either* and *or*. Wild thought embraces instead the notion of *both* and *and*. It then

goes seeking out inspiration on this premise. From what it gleans, startlingly different models of the perceived universe can be constructed. Levi-Strauss explains how:

. . . mythical thought surpasses itself and contemplates, beyond images still clinging to concrete experience, a world of concepts defined no longer by reference to an external reality, but according to their own mutual affinities.

In remote areas of the world societies organized around such apparently exotic world-views still exist, or at least existed until quite recently. They are described in some detail in the reports of nineteenth and twentieth century anthropologists. These societies still tell mythical stories of their origins, stories which they place at the foundation of their lives, and upon which they organize their whole social structure. In these societies not only the mental systems, - ethical, economic, theological, political etc.- but also the social institutions, human relations and even the built environment conform to the models laid down in the myths. Differentiation between the various activities, their disciplines of thought and their intellectual constructs, does not exist, but are all somehow encapsulated in the formulations of myth.

In Africa it seems as if the whole of human life is contained within the mythical framework, as if the difference between the sacred and the profane no longer existed. Mythology provides man with models on which he must base his conduct, from the gesture of sowing seeds to the act of love, from house building to the touch of the fingers on the musical skin of the drum....for the whole of Black Africa we can affirm the primordial importance of the myth both as...the basis of a theory of symbolic knowledge and as the basis of social, political, even economic structures, which are nothing more nor less than exemplifications of mythical patterns.

This concept of myth as a vast and complex determinate structure for both social and spiritual life is one that we may find difficult to comprehend.

We are used to visiting the world of myth in the same way we visit a museum; around us are excerpted exhibits, plundered from their own worlds and displayed for our amazement as solemn reminders of the incomprehensible products of the human mind in a state of innocent ignorance. We may wonder at the extravagance and fertility of the invention, marvel at the impressive achievements or smile at the uncouth nature of the more exotic tales, but the overriding impression is that here are the products of the childhood of understanding, things which we have put aside.

Even when we have been introduced to the works of the Jungians, with their attempts to describe myths as the 'manifestations of the unconscious', or to those various theorists who understand myths as expressions of 'ecological lifestyles', it comes as something of a shock to discover this world of mythical complexity and organization. Clearly this is a product of minds far removed from their infancy. Within this complexity whole societies find their inspiration for intricate and sophisticated models of social structure, models which have proved sufficiently sustainable to survive apparently little changed across thousands of years.

In Equatorial Colombia, for instance, Reichel Dohnatoff describes how the six corners of the tribal territory of the Desana Indians are marked 'by six waterfalls, each a place where the head of one of the six original giant anacondas meets another's tail. Each of these snakes stands for one of the six rivers that frame the traditional homelands'. This hexagon of landmarks is the earthly equivalent of a 'giant hexagon of stars, centred on the belt of Orion'. The terrestrial hexagon is centred on the 'intersection between the Pira-Parana River and the earth's equator. Here where the sky is said to cohabit with the earth, is the place where Sun Father erected his shadowless staff and fertilized the earth'. This spot is the whirlpool entrance to the womb of the earth, and from here the first people emerged at the beginning. Because of its

importance as an organizing principle of thought, the hexagon metaphor reappears in one aspect of Desana tradition after another. 'All hexagonal shapes in nature have significance for them... even the shell of a particular land tortoise.' Each cell in the shell's pattern of hexagons symbolizes a character in the creation myth or an organizational principle of society - the family, for example, or marriage into another family. Desana rules for marriage exchange are visualised in terms of a hexagon.

Here are sky, earth, nature and myth united into one model of the universe, a model still actively inhabited by a tribe of equatorial Indians, but built of images as ancient as any we know of. We would make a major step forward if we were to describe these earliest expressions of understanding as 'prime' thought, rather than 'primitive'. We would then have in one word the notion of 'first', together with that of 'quality' but also with the sense of 'an indivisible quantity'. In *Arandan Traditions: Songs of Central Australia*, T. Strehlow writes of:

The vision of a mental construction more marvellous and intricate than anything on earth, a construction to make man's material achievements seem like so much dross.

To term this 'prime thought' would at least mean we would be better prepared to face the full impact of myth, which beneath the picture-book surface of the populist imagery, is seething with an abundance of concepts so complex and obscure that it threatens to sweep us away on a tide of incomprehensibility.

Nor is this a characteristic only of those myths reported from remote and isolated contemporary societies. When we look more closely at the most ancient records, from Egypt, from Mesopotamia, from India and China, the myths of creation stand complete and almost incomprehensibly elaborate. All aspects of life seem to be embraced by their intricacy. Art, government, music, ritual, family relationships, architecture, even writing and the alphabet, appear as part of this completeness. Even a preliminary reconnaissance

of the material reveals that, whatever else they are, myths are much more than the product of minds in a benumbed sense of uncomprehending fear before the forces of nature. They represent the products of highly developed intellects, revealing an immensely complex and profound awareness of that most fundamental of human endeavours, the art of organizing experience.

The ancient Hindu scriptures of the Rig Veda, considered amongst the earliest of sacred writings, reveal this complexity both in their language and in their structure. In her introduction to her translation, Wendy O'Flaherty discusses the formidable difficulties of making sense of such dense and paradoxical writings. One such difficulty, which she describes as a 'form of deliberate confusion', is the use of:

. . . mutually illuminating metaphors. Certain concerns recur throughout the Rig Veda. . . the themes of harnessing and unharnessing, which shift in their positive or negative value (sometimes good, sometimes bad) . . . the closely related theme of finding open space and freedom in contrast to being hemmed in or trapped. (T)hese are linked to other constellations of images; conflict within the family; the precious-ness of animals; the wish for knowledge and immortality. The problem arises when one tries to determine which of these are in the foreground and which in the background of a particular hymn. Are the cows symbolic of the sun or is the sun a metaphor for cows? The careless or greedy exegete finds himself in danger of rampant Jungianism: everything is a symbol of everything else; each is a metaphor for all the others . . . when asked to pinpoint the central point of a verse, he will (answer) 'all of the above'.

In addition to its immense linguistic and semantic complexity, the Rig Veda also reveals structural characteristics which are far from accidental. It is composed of 10800 verses, each of 40 syllables, making a total of 432,000 syllables in all. This is no arbitrary number. The fire altar, assiduously dismantled and rebuilt each year for the agnicayana ritual, contains 10800 bricks, each one representing an individual part of the created universe.

There are 108 classical Upanishads, and the same number, together with its factors, reappears throughout Indo-European myth and temple architecture.

The Rig Veda is a concentrated expression of the immense web of relationships which the myth tellers created from their experience, from the messages they read in the world around them. It is this web of mutual affinities, this ever-increasing texture of organization, which generated the meaning upon which their society was constructed.

In weaving this web, the myth tellers were laying down the foundation for all the fundamental ideas about human spirituality and culture, from 'fertility cults' and ancestor worship to Plato's doctrine of essences and the unity of all existence, from original sin and salvation to the concept of law and order, from domestic architecture and family relationships to immortality and the eternal godhead.

Each of these ideas is linked to the others, not in any nebulous way but according to a fundamental set of principles, expressed in the myths of creation and organization. Our task is to reclaim these principles. However 'wild' the kind of thought which constructed them might appear, it was never undisciplined. The relationships it explored and celebrated all referred back to one primal model for their classification, and it was the architecture of this model that was laid out in the myths.

In searching for the origins of meaning, we are seeking this determining architecture, the founding set of relationships, which acts as the structure of the web of meaning. Certain definitive experiences must underlie this web, forming its originating referents. These have shaped the way we view the world and the sense we make of our experience of it. They form the 'warp and weft' of the fabric of meaning, and they must date from the earliest history of the human mind in its present form.

Secret of Being

Around 30 years ago the experts were agreed that the prehistory of human culture

had been fairly comprehensively mapped. There might be some controversies about dating to be resolved, but the basic plan had been firmly established. The rungs on the ladder of technological development were firmly in place up which humanity had slowly stepped. From those remote days of the early hominids in Africa, human consciousness had gradually emerged through the well-known levels of the 'Stone-Age', from the pre-glacial Palaeolithic to the Mesolithic and on towards the flowering of writing and history itself in the early Neolithic. It was only with this latest stage that any kind of thought process evolved that could take consciousness beyond the 'primitive' stage of awe-inspired reaction to the uncontrollable forces of nature. It seemed there was little more but detailed infill to learn.

And then something very remarkable began to happen. A few dissenting voices of scholarship began to point to totally inexplicable evidence. Was it possible, the suggestion went, that perhaps there were things about which we really knew very little? Was what we did know based almost entirely on misunderstanding, and sometimes simply ignoring, such evidence? The mainstream of scholarship in prehistory and archaeology was aghast and refused to consider these developments. To accept them might be to up end the whole structure that had been so laboriously constructed.

Put simply, the proposal which caused, and still causes, such controversy and indignation was that, from at least as far back as the end of the last ice age, one factor, hitherto almost totally ignored, had dominated the emergence of human culture. Above all else, we might say, our ancestors were obsessed with the study of the night sky.

Scholars of ancient history had long appreciated the formative role which 'astrology' had played in the flowering of Mesopotamian culture, but what was now being suggested went much further. Far from emerging out of the city states of Assyria and Babylon, this obsession with astronomical events was shown to be almost universal.

It was the emergence of the new discipline of archaeo-astronomy which first introduced this heresy, surveying and measuring the astronomical alignments identified as being built into megalithic sites. But few were prepared to say what motivated the immense labour that went into this obsessive observation? Why were these 'primitive' people so concerned to record the circlings of the stars?

An answer of a kind was actually beginning to emerge at around the same time in the form of a dramatic reinterpretation of the material of mythology. This material, both from ancient documents and from contemporary anthropology, began to be seen as adding a kind of 'text' to the ancient megalithic structures. These stories can be heard to talk insistently a stellar language. The story of the separation of Heaven and Earth is one such myth.

One of the first works to outline the grammar of this stellar language was a book called *Hamlet's Mill*, a ground-breaking work of scholarship first published in 1969.

Breaking the Code

*Hieroglyphs old
Which sages and keen eyed astrologers
Then living on earth, with labouring
thought
Won from the gaze of many centuries:
Now lost, save what we find on remnants
huge
Of stone, or marble swart, their
importance gone
Their wisdom long since fled*

(Keats; Hyperion Bk. 1, 274-283)

It was a state of bewilderment at the vast amount of unintelligible material facing her that first led the historian of science Hertha von Dechend to uncover its secret ('to call it being struck by lightning would be more correct' she says). She had been studying Polynesian myth in a search for understanding of the 'deus faber', the creator/craftsman god found in almost all cultures, but had come to the realisation that she really understood nothing of the thousands of pages of material

she had read. The annihilating recognition of our complete ignorance came down on me like a sledgehammer; there was no single sentence that could be understood'. And yet the Polynesians were capable of navigating their tiny craft across the world's greatest ocean; there seemed little reason not to take their intellect seriously. Von Dechend explains how, while studying the archaeological remains on the many small islands 'a clue was given to me which I duly followed up', (she had discovered that, of the two of these islands most densely covered with a particular kind of cult place or temple, one was located on the Tropic of Capricorn and the other on the Tropic of Cancer).

'Having come to the history of science through the study of ethnology', she says, 'there existed "in the beginning" only the firm decision never to become involved in astronomical matters, under any condition'. There had been attempts in the past to explain how this order might have been derived from the observation of events in the night sky. The suggestion, not uncommon in the nineteenth century was that at least some, if not all, of the myths in some way encoded astronomical understanding. Much evidence was produced purporting to reveal the existence of this understanding and of the importance attached to it, but no really consistent theory was ever proposed to make such an interpretation convincing. Attempts to establish a relationship between myth and astronomy fell into disrepute and total neglect; the interpretation of myth in terms of Jungian psychology took centre field.

Although Von Dechend had felt that Plato might be a better source of insight into the essence of myth than psychology, and had experienced a 'growing wrath' about the current interpretations, yet she had 'least of all', the intention to explore the astronomical nature of myth. Until, that is, the revelation of the significance of the locations of those Polynesian islands. 'And then there was no salvation any more; astronomy could not be escaped'.

The culmination of Hertha von Dechend's inspired insight was the publication, together with fellow historian of science, Giorgio de Santillana, of their extraordinary work *Hamlet's Mill*. Santillana describes this vast book as 'only an essay . . . a first reconnaissance of a realm well-nigh unexplored and uncharted'.

When I first read this 'essay' (in fact the book is nearly five hundred pages, each of which is filled with intense scholarship), it was as if a window had been opened up across a vista which had once seemed familiar, and which now could never look the same again. Where once had been what seemed like an endless stretch of badlands there now appeared an immense and wonderfully intricate walled-city. Once there had been stories which seemed to make no acceptable sense except as fanciful parables and yet they seemed to be built into some of the most profound religious thinking. Now, from the vantage point of this newly opened window, it was possible to see a realm where these stories not only made sense but formed the most solid foundation, upon which later thinking had been constructed; and it was this later thinking, the constructs of philosophy and religion, which began to take on the air of parable.

Although the realm of which *Hamlet's Mill* is a 'reconnaissance' is vast and often impenetrable, the view we are offered across it originates in one quite simple idea, and one which is not new. Even Freud was aware that:

. . . man's (sic) observations of the great astronomical periodicities not only furnished him with a model, but formed the ground plan of his first attempts to introduce order into his life.

We have grown so used to the vague reddish glow of our urban night skies that it is sometimes difficult to reconstruct the overpowering effect that a clear unpolluted starry heaven can have. At some early stage in the emergence of the idea of ordering experience (the beginnings of self-consciousness), when the night sky was everywhere unpolluted, one poet, or perhaps, many poets, saw the starry sky as an

inspiration concerning the form of that ordering. These 'exceptional men' as Santillana calls them, unerringly read the vault of heaven as a message in which were encoded the laws of creation. Watching the progress of the heavenly lights night by night, year by year, they must have believed they were observing the pattern according to which their lives and those of all others, animate and inanimate, were governed; that they were watching the broadcast of the most majestic model possible of the workings of the universe. Here was the reason why our ancestors fixed their gaze so fervently on the heavens. 'The secret of Being lay displayed before their eyes', says Santillana.

This secret turns out to be the ultimate source from which the entire fabric of meaning has been woven.

The idea, that from the very earliest times, the night sky was being read as a message concerning the laws of organization, becomes in Santillana and von Dechend's book the basis for a total reappraisal, not only of the meaning of myth but of the whole idea of pre-literate history. This was possible as a consequence of two realisations. The first was that the 'astronomical periodicities', so often taken as being the obvious ones of day and night, winter and summer, should be expanded to include all periodicities discernable from the earth, including the most vast and most elusive ones. This was perhaps the most radical aspect of their work. To accept it meant to rewrite all the prehistory of understanding, since it implied that this knowledge was of far greater antiquity than had been assumed.

The second realisation was more subtle and its consequences have barely begun to be grasped. It involved the identification of the fundamental clue to interpreting the material of myth. Essential to this was the recognition of the general tendency of myth to use everyday language to describe notions which are far from everyday. Whatever the original purpose of this kind of encodement, what Von Dechend and Santillana offered were the essential 'translations'. These everyday

terms became understandable in their cosmological meanings. Thus we have more or less precise cosmological definitions for familiar words such as 'earth' or 'heaven', 'fire' and 'water'. With the help of these insights, meaningless nonsense and fancy are transformed into profound statements about the order of the world.

It would be hard to overestimate the impact of these revelations on the task of understanding myth. Not only did it propose to revolutionize notions of pre-literate learning, but it gave us the necessary groundwork upon which to construct a complete reassessment of mythical material of all kinds. In essence, the ancient code by means of which knowledge of the processes of the heavens was metaphorically encrypted within myth has begun to be broken. We can start to translate our familiar tales from myth into the language of ancient astronomy.

What emerges is an insight into the process whereby the Secret of Being was spun out into the fabric of meaning.

Transcendental Patterns

In his book 'Consciousness Explained' Daniel C Dennett describes what he call 'the function of brains'; their purpose, he says, is:

to produce future... to find the laws of the universe, and if there are none, to find approximate laws.

The ancient observers, driven by this primal urge, read the starry cycles as the ultimate source of such laws. They diligently watched the patterns of creation evolve before them. In accordance with these patterns, spinning the thread of metaphor, they began to weave the extraordinary texture of meaning. In so doing they laid down the ground plan of that aspect of awareness which we now refer to as the Spirit.

The manner in which the Spirit discerns meaning might be compared to the way in which hearing discerns musical sound. Indeed, the Spirit could be described as the 'organ' of meaning. Just as hearing 'enjoys' music, so the spirit 'enjoys' meaning. For hearing, this enjoyment is a product of

harmony; for the spirit, enjoyment is the product of 'resonance'. As the language in which harmony is composed is mathematics, from which the human hearing experiences music, so it turns out that the language in which 'resonance' is written is astronomy, and it is this language which is experienced by the human spirit as meaning

More precisely, it is not so much astronomy but *the patterns which emerge* from astronomical phenomena, just as mathematics is an expression of the patterns discernable amongst numbers. The mathematical architecture which underlies the experience of harmony is that particular set of numerical patterns known as the 'harmonic series'. Creation Myth is a concise expression of what we might call the 'resonant series', the spiritual equivalent of music's harmonic series.

The degree of profundity of meaning which we attach to any experience is a measure of the accord between our experience and this 'resonant series'; the quality of resonance it produces within the spirit. When written in astronomical rather than mythological language, this resonant series is seen to be generated by that particular astronomical pattern known as *the precession of the equinoxes*.

The justification for this contention is the subject of the rest of this book. The pattern itself is an obscure one and generally remote from our everyday lives. Few people could give a description of it today, unless they happen to be astronomers of course, in which case it is an undistinguished and minor characteristic of planetary behaviour, and of very little interest in the cosmic scheme of things. I hope to show that there was a time, in the truly distant past, when this was not at all the case.

There was a road suspended in the sky. This pathway . . . was in the nature of a large rope. By way of this rope, food was sent to the ancient rulers. For some reason this rope vanished for ever. This first epoch was separated from the second by a flood (Mayan myth)

There was once a path which stretched from the earth to the heavens, allowing access to the world above. This path was ultimately destroyed by human wrong-doing. (Bantu tribes of the south and east of Africa)

There was once a great oak tree whose branches touched the sky. This tree grew so big that it trapped the sun and moon and stars in its branches. It was chopped down by a mysterious tiny creature and fell across the sky, obscuring a whole portion of it but freeing the stars to continue their circlings. (Finnish myth)

So profound was the effect of the recognition of this phenomenon that it formed the basis of the structure which ancient observers built out of their insights into the operations of the universe. Thanks to the pioneering work of Santillana and Von Dechend it is now possible to draw up a working plan of this structure. Within the measures of this plan we can recognise the origins of our own most cherished ideas about meaning.

To appreciate the profundity of such a structure is hardly likely to be simple. Our quest involves the exploration of the grandest cycles in the visible cosmos. It will require the attitude of the explorer, prepared to venture boldly into unknown realms. For the most part we shall be travelling in country 'well-nigh uncharted', and we shall have to write our own guide book. Even the few recognisable landmarks we shall encounter may turn out to point us in unfamiliar directions. As we travel further however, what seemed at the beginning to be the most obscure territory will become increasingly familiar.

There are in truth very few characters in the story, though they may come in many disguises and speak in uncouth tongues. Their initially bewildering appearance and behaviour and the strangeness of the environments they inhabit will gradually take on the shape of a plot. The denouement of this plot is nothing less than revolutionary for our ideas about meaning.

From the kind of material which we normally take to have little or no relevance, to the world we live in, we shall piece together layer by layer a most extraordinary structure.

This structure, which has formed the basic framework for the whole development of human understanding, truly deserves Levi-Strauss' description, 'The Architecture of the Spirit'.

See Pete's website www.mythofcreation.co.uk for a beautiful summary of the arguments in his book

THE DUVERSTY IN CHINA Continuing the conversation

In the year 2000, a small group of Chinese in Beijing gathered around Nicolas Lecerf, a Frenchman working there, first as social friends and then out of interest in the music and ideas of George Gurdjieff. Some of this small group had spent years in France and an attempt was made to link with the Gurdjieff Foundation in Paris but nothing came of this. Showing considerable enterprise, the group organized a concert and recording of some of Gurdjieff's music (see Newsletter No. x). A performance was held to support a Tibetan orphanage in a far flung autonomous republic and it is remarkable to imagine Gurdjieff's music being played to such an audience, that included Communist Party members, deep in Asia.



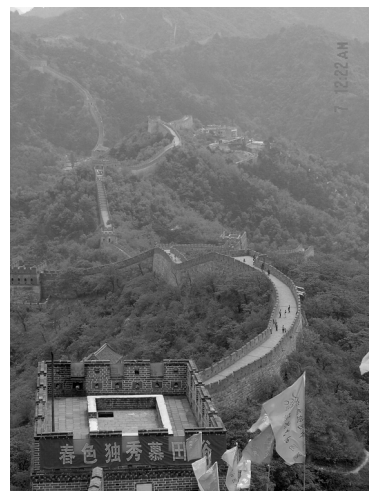
Modern Beijing

Nicolas wrote to numerous people asking for musical scores of Gurdjieff's music, but Anthony Blake was the only one to respond. This opened up a correspondence. Nicolas was always careful not to set himself up as a teacher and was in tune with the DuVersity approach in this regard. At the same time, he was keenly aware that the

group needed guidance. The old model based on a hierarchy of teachers did not apply. The group was unable to affiliate to any authoritative system and were unsure of their purpose and group identity. With incredible courage or foolishness, they undertook to translate Gurdjieff's linguistically challenging book *All and Everything* into Chinese. And they began to do what they could to practice some of Gurdjieff's 'movements'.

In 2001, Anthony was invited to Beijing to meet with the group and work with them on movements. During the course of this first short visit, he introduced some of Bennett's interpretations of Gurdjieff's ideas, which in a light-mannered fashion made an affiliation to this 'line' from Gurdjieff. Consulting with leaders of the Foundation in Paris, Nicolas was told that he should follow this affiliation. Meanwhile, a few new members of the group came from a branch of the Society of Friends in Beijing, which had not satisfied what they were looking for.

In 2002, Anthony went again, this time for nearly a month. He worked with the group, attempting to introduce some awareness of the significance of dialogue, and also in the French company Lafarge using logovisual technology. The latter gave him confidence that modern Chinese would experience no more problems with the open-ended methods used in the DuVersity than any other population. Efforts were made to



arrange another visit in 2003 but these were thwarted by the outbreak of SARS. At this stage, he had begun to suggest that the group consider

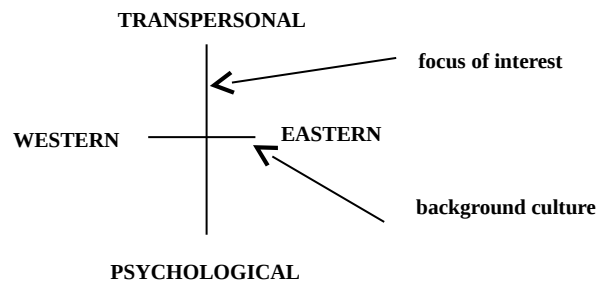
also inviting Karen Stefano so that we could introduce the then-called 'working group' methodology.

The Great Wall

By 2004, Nicolas has withdrawn much of his influence on the group because he saw that they had to make decisions for themselves. This precipitated a crisis, which we were largely unaware of. Arrangements went ahead for Karen and Anthony to visit in May of this year. Much to everyone's surprise, not only did the group rally itself but new members suddenly appeared, partly through email networking. In retrospect, developments in the DuVersity and in Beijing corresponded in remarkable synchronization. While we were consolidating the working group methodology under the concept of *psyche integration* (see below) the Beijing group was facing a crisis of identity through which came a new energy.

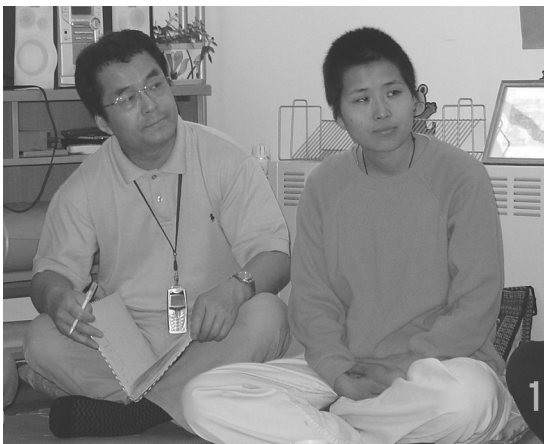
The 18 people (17 is Patrick de Mare's optimum number for a median group) who attended met for the first time as a group. Some of them had traveled more than a thousand miles. They faced many unknowns: not only the challenge of meeting new people but also exposure to 'psyche integration', which embodied approaches to learning and self-knowledge that would be totally unfamiliar to them. To better understand the situation we can postulate a

tetrad composed of two dualities: Eastern-Western and Transpersonal-Psychological.



The transpersonal source concerns transcendence, religion, mysticism and cosmology. The psychological concerns personal needs and experiences. To some approximation, the Gurdjieff work can be located in the transpersonal and the psychotherapeutic in the psychological. The psychological starts from where people are while the transpersonal supplies the 'bigger picture'. Both the Gurdjieff work and modern psychotherapy place emphasis on self observation and both ascribe value to the unconscious, but the former tends towards authoritative teaching and the latter towards mutual participation.

The duality of the eastern and western cultures is historical. The west has become synonymous with individuality and innovation, while the east is still identified with a culture of the masses and appears as imitative rather than inventive. Present day Chinese are divorced from their history, including the appalling episode of Maoist rule that continued on in Tiananmen square and they look to the West for their future. In a modern city such as Beijing there is a strange schizophrenia where information is more or less freely available and people can say what they like in private but not anything against the government *in public*. However we should not forget the recent suppression of dissent evidenced in the USA.



Patrick Li and 'Golden Bell'

Young Chinese have almost no chance of meeting with a living spiritual tradition. There are 'gurus' to be found in the outlying provinces but nothing like the easy availability of spiritual teachers in almost every major western city. The 'new religion' of Fulang Gong is persecuted by the authorities and this has encouraged everyone to avoid public exposure as a religious or spiritual group of any kind. Many of the people who came to our event emphasized that they were attracted to the Gurdjieff work because it was rational or scientific, not asking for belief and based on practice and observation. This fitted their concern with western rationality and efficiency. Many of them, working in business, had become aware of how vastly more effective western methods were than those that prevailed before in getting work done.



Deng Yan
working at
collage

The one aspect of traditional Chinese culture that retains some of its force is the influence of the family. The family was considered as fundamentally important in Confucianism from which ideas of social order mostly stem to this day. Family issues featured strongly in the personal concerns of the members of the group. But they had, of course, little opportunity before of speaking about these concerns. Psychotherapy is hardly known in China.

Karen's role very much centered on the psychological domain and it was obviously a treasured experience for members of the group to find someone with whom they could speak about their personal histories and anxieties. However, the method of psyche integration proved remarkably suited to enabling people to bring into expression their deeper thoughts in the confidence of being supported and listened to within the containment of the group. It is still not widely appreciated in the west that modern psychotherapy, particularly group psychotherapy, has nothing in it of telling people what to believe or of imposing interpretations on other people's experience. By the end of the three days, many members of the group were commenting that they had a different sense of 'self-observation' from the experience. We had sent a theoretical paper on the extension of self-observation to include unconscious process but this had not reached the majority (see *Another Dimension of Self-Observation* below) and would not have been intelligible without the experience.

Our sense of the remarkable was furthered by the fact that meetings had to be conducted with running translations, but this hardly seemed to slow the process. Before we went to China, we had feared that the need for translation might greatly inhibit the exchange, especially in the Median group. In the event, conversation flowed without cease, with none of the awkward silences we had often encountered in the west!



Movements practice

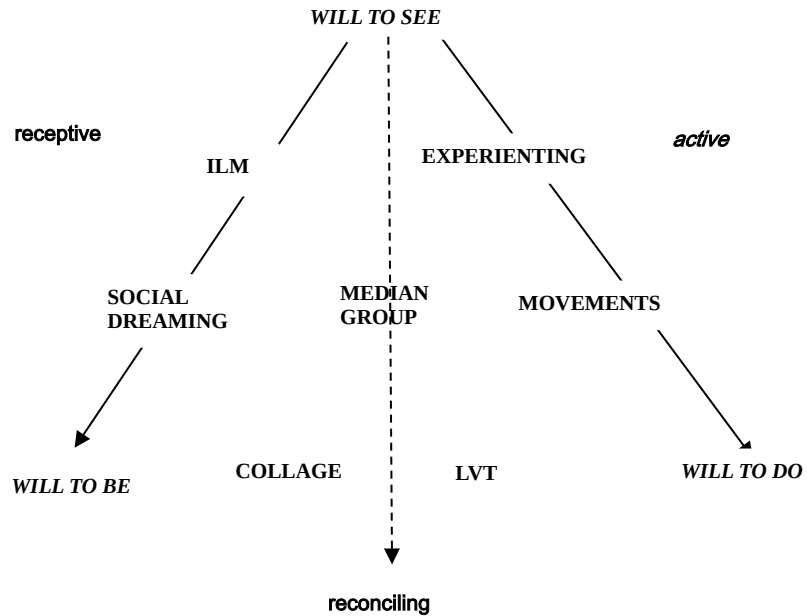
At the end of the event, we asked people to choose three of the seven methods they would like to do more of. The top two turned out to be Collage and Movements; the bottom two, ILM and Social Dreaming. It is not surprising that people are more comfortable with methods in which they are doing or making something. In some ways, ILM and Social Dreaming are the most passive and most elusive. It was partly for that reason that in our final reflective session we included an explanation of the seven methods of psyche education in terms of John Bennett's *seven lines of work* (see the book *The Sevenfold Work*). In this scheme, Bennett divides methods into the active and receptive, with one method in a reconciling role. For purposes of exposition, we gave this reconciling role to the Median group. The whole schema was presented in terms of the *Decad* developed during the course of the Systematics Gatherings, which gives an alternative representation to that of the more widely known *Enneagram*.

The three corners of the triangle are expressed as Bennett does in *Deeper Man*, as the will-forms of the three *centers* usually called thinking, feeling and moving.

We have yet to receive feedback from the group on their further reflections.

There is always a great difference between a theory of a method and how it is experienced by participants.

We very much hope that we will have an opportunity to return to China, perhaps next year. Meanwhile, we have to consider how we might be able to help the group at a distance. The event was unique in many ways but in particular as a test of the implicit assumption in our concept of psyche integration that we have a method that is



trans-cultural and not confined to a western audience. In this regard, we are much further on even than when we introduced psyche integration to an audience in the Conference on Group Psychotherapy held in Turkey last year (see Newsletter No. xx)

Psyche integration is the result of many years of difficult experiment and research. But it must be remembered that we have always sought to address the elementary core of our human experience. The seven

methods can be directly related to basic verbs or actions:

- Experiencing – SIT
- Social Dreaming – DREAM
- Movements – MOVE
- Collage – MAKE

Median Group - TALK
LVT – THINK
ILM - LISTEN

The Doctrine of the Gold Elixir is the most significant tradition of living Taoism. It derives chiefly from the Patriarch Lu Tung-pin (b. 798). See the extract from a commentary on the Doctrine later in this newsletter.

Drawing by R. B. Jefferson



Li Tung-pin

PSYCHE INTEGRATION

Anthony Blake, April 2004

The personality develops through education and social interaction. It thinks to itself and imagines that it is in control of life, but is intrinsically fragmented. In contrast, both spiritual and psychological investigators have said that there is a deeper self, hidden in the psyche, which can be a source of wholeness and hence of healing. A meaningful life is one in which the personality is 'saved' or redeemed by what lies within. This is what we mean by 'psyche integration'.

There are many paths available, crafted over centuries to suit different temperaments and cultures. Our seven-fold methodology is a largely secular and impartial spectrum of experiences that combines individual exploration with group process:

1. *Experiencing* – work with the very 'stuff of experience' through attention while sitting
2. *Social dreaming* – association to the meaning of dreams that are shared in the group as a collective insight
3. *Movements* – gestural language to evoke whole body images that can evolve into a story
4. *Tissue paper collage* – a form of active imagination to bring to the surface unconscious material
5. *Median group* – dialogue of equals to share meaning and develop mutual understanding
6. *Logovisual technology* – articulation of molecules of thought and their integration into unifying insights
7. *ILM* – accessing the field of active information through music and sounds

Each of the radial axes (see diagram) offers its own kind of self-observation, self-knowing and self-understanding. As the personality – represented by the circle at the top of the circular *mandala* – travels through these experiences, it comes under the influence of the hidden wholeness – perhaps

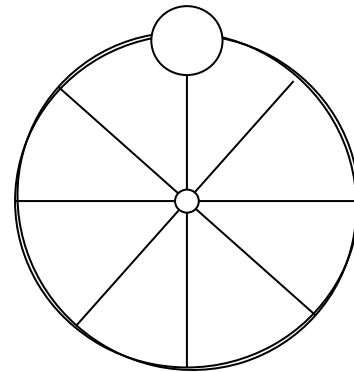
the 'black hole' – at the center. A *labyrinth* connects inner with outer and each person follows a path governed by their question or quest. The inner self is shown as a small circle because it represents the 'still, quiet center' of ourselves in contrast to the active, loud and discordant personality on the outside.

In the center are the mysteries of how our individuality is involved in the being of others, and how our own unconscious dwells in the collective unconscious. We cannot *understand* if we are isolated.

Jung said that the second half of life should be more and more given over to the search for meaning. But even young people can find a deeper education through our 'psyche integration' that helps them begin to restore their intrinsic harmony.

Brought into temporal cycle

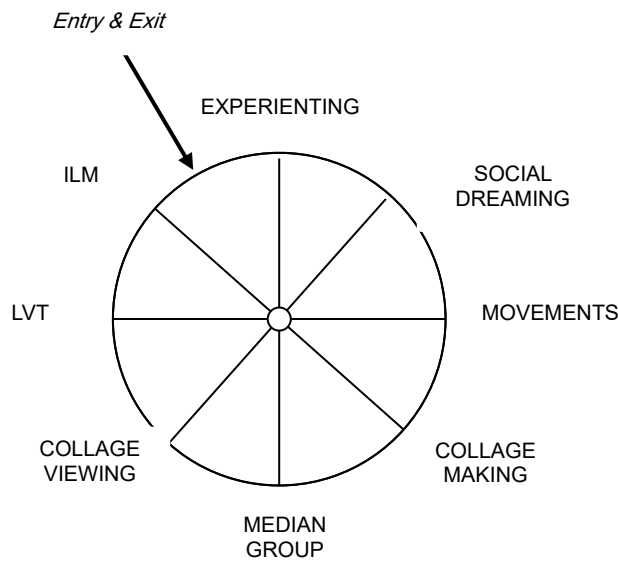
A schedule projects the methods into a sequence. Below is one solution, showing the point of entry. In this case, the sequence runs



THE SEVEN METHODS
Bringing the everyday self
under the sway of wholeness

clockwise. Each version implies special relationships between the methods, while also structuring the time available. Another solution is to start at the opposite point of the circle and proceed anticlockwise.

In both versions, collage is split into two sections, which involve different processes, so that the 'everyday self' is pictured as entering into the circuit just as people enter and leave *medicine wheels* in the Amerindian



traditions. Choosing the point of entry and direction of movement was considered of great significance.

ANOTHER DIMENSION OF SELF OBSERVATION

Anthony Blake

Socrates was told by the Delphic Oracle 'Know thyself'. This marked a turning point in the history of man's relation to his potential. It was a crucial moment in the dawn of the new age that would focus on and develop the individual (which may now be drawing to its close).

In the twentieth century, Gurdjieff (amongst others) emphasized the importance of self-observation and introduced many practical techniques to help people do this. However, he sometimes criticized those around him, saying that they did not know how to observe and even that the way they were trying to do it was pathological.

If we study the teaching in *In Search of the Miraculous* about self-observation we can come to understand that it can mean many things. There are *three* main types of self-observation and these can be categorized according to Bennett's cosmic triad of Function, Being and Will. This is a little artificial but it is a start.

FUNCTION. It is possible to observe what one is doing. I am sitting in a certain posture. I am reacting to what someone says. My thinking is following a certain path. G says that this is one center observing the workings of another center. The practice of this is strongly connected with the sensory-moving center. *Function is best observed in activity.*

BEING. A quite different kind of self-observation is referred to in terms of being aware of the *whole* of oneself. We would say that this is not like 'observation' of function. We have to 'be' in ourselves. A modern way of talking about this is that it involves a *participative* consciousness rather than an observing. In observation, one is separate from what one observes. In participative consciousness one is not. It is strongly connected with the feeling center. *Being involves the unconscious.*

WILL. The most difficult to describe, it may be connected with 'self-remembering' with all its paradoxes. In his descriptions at the end of his life, Bennett began forcefully to connect self-remembering with *self-forgetting*. One of the paradoxes is that it sometimes manifests as realization one does not exist and we can remember that Bennett asserted that 'will does not exist'. It is strongly connected with the thinking center. *Will is best understood in dialogue.*

Concerning being-observation we can bring into the picture what is called in contemporary psychology the 'unconscious'. Needless to say, consciously thinking about the unconscious is a strange business and we can never make it into something we can observe in a functional way. The idea of 'observing' oneself in a way that includes the unconscious is not easy to grasp. What is called the unconscious in contemporary psychology might include what Gurdjieff called 'essence' as opposed to personality. At some points he said that this might be looked at in terms of *feeling*.

Whether one approves of contemporary psychology or not, it is likely that most of us would agree that there are many

aspects of ourselves that are hidden from our own consciousness. In psychology, the approach is to enable what is unconscious to *show itself* through some therapeutic means. However, this usually involves engagement with another person in a relationship of trust and deep listening. It is interesting to note that *listening* is a 'being' kind of experience, more than a function.

In the DuVersity, particularly through the efforts of Karen, we have undertaken the development of a corpus of methods that assist people to 'observe' in a being way. In this, the presence of others also engaged in the process is critical. A core element is *dialogue*. This is because we need to practice a way of being observation that (a) is *in the moment* and (b) involves our *understanding*.

For people used to the standard 'fourth way' approach, this may be an unusual experience. It requires a 'turning around' of observation – rather like turning from 'I observe' to 'I am being observed'! We believe that there is a deeper level from which insight can come if we can allow it to do so.

When we worked with Bennett in groups, it was taken as most important that people come together to speak about what they might have seen. This was because it was understood that having a diversity of types and temperaments enabled what was significant to be recognized. We all needed help from each other in sorting out what was genuine from what was just conditioned response. With the advent of dialogue and other methods, it became possible for this to be done, as we said, in the moment rather than in terms of reporting on what might have been seen at a previous time. So, the talking together is taking place side by side with the living process.

Hence we speak of 'another dimension' to self-observation. It might be felt as an unexpected one!

The perspectives opened up take us very far from simply seeing how we are sitting or talking. They can include patterns that extend over generations. Whereas many

spiritual traditions speculate about 'past lives' and similar things, this approach opens to the way in which experiences of families and societies have been enfolded in us. We know the startling moment of seeing what we are actually doing in the moment – the 'snapshot' as Gurdjieff described it. It is quite another thing to see the pattern of experience that holds us.

Our friend Joseph Rael speaks well of how we need to join with 'child-like innocence' in order to learn. We cannot learn in a *being* way unless we have this child-like condition. And we cannot learn in a *will* way unless we are willing to participate in an action with others in which we are all equals.

Pegasus by William Blake



THE CIPHER OF GENESIS

Carlo Suares



*This extract is from an article first published in the journal **Systematics** in 1970, that was edited by Ken Pledge from a talk given to the Institute of Comparative Study. The DuVersity hopes to be able to republish the whole work, since it is a valuable study that illuminates the principles of **systematics** from a Cabbalistic perspective and is written with exceptional clarity.*

Some Postulates

1. Mystery:

The Qabala begins by accepting that there is a mystery of existence which it is beyond the power of thought to comprehend or to grasp. This mystery has nothing to do with scale. It is as much in evidence when we contemplate the existence of the universe as in a grain of sand. It is inexplicable and it is undeniable. It is a mystery we ignore at our peril. We cannot leave it out of any symbolism that pretends to lead to an understanding of revelation. The letter ALEPH *symbolizes* this mystery. ALEPH symbolizes, not an ultimate principle of explanation—that would be to introduce 'God' in another form—but rather an archetypal sign whose meaning is to *project* into us a constant awareness of the mystery of existence. We have to learn to *remember* that which we would sooner forget.

Although ALEPH symbolizes a concept that is unimaginable and unthinkable it can nevertheless be *used*. The same symbol was, in fact, used by Cantor to stand for the transfinite numbers in mathematics. Although we cannot *think* of transfinite numbers, because they are beyond all counting by definition, they can still be symbolized. And the symbolism is not trivial. For it can be shown that there are different *orders* of transfinite numbers, all unthinkable, all beyond counting. And anyone who has felt the mystery and power of the concept conveyed by Cantor's ALEPH symbolism will be in a position to appreciate what is meant by the *use* of ALEPH in the generalized projective language of the Qabala.

In the cipher of the Qabala, the symbol ALEPH is used to project the concept of an unthinkably immense energy, beyond the limitations of time and space, without which nothing could exist, operating within the structure of everything on every scale as that by virtue of which it is able-to-be. Unconditioned, timeless, unthinkable, yet a power most intimately concerned with our very being.

By taking this mystery into account we do not and cannot, by any means, render it thinkable. But we can bear witness through it to a reality our minds cannot understand of a power beyond life and death that yet participates in both. ALEPH corresponds in force and significance to the ancient concept symbolized in the Chinese *Tao* and the *Spirit of the Bhagavad Gita*.

Alone amongst the Hebrew letters, ALEPH has no pronunciation of its own. Thus in ESH, written ALEPH-SHEEN, the word for *fire*, it sounds like "E". In ISHA, *woman* (ALEPH-SHEEN-HAY) it is pronounced "I". In ROSH, meaning *head* (RAYSH-ALEPH-SHEEN) it is "O". In the first word-equation of the Bible: the untranslatable BERESHYT (BAYT-RAYSH-ALEPH-SHEEN-YOD-TAV), ALEPH is not pronounced *at all*! So ALEPH can be sounded as any of the vowels, and the logic that this unthinkable, timeless ALEPH has no existence is carried into the very usage of the Hebrew language. Although it *is there*, yet because it has no pronunciation of its own it does not really *exist*.

For the Qabala, to be sacred means to *partake* of this mystery of ALEPH. Since everything that exists is alike subject to this mystery: *everything* is sacred. These statements regarding ALEPH constitute the first postulate of the Qabala.

2. Paradox

The second postulate of the Qabala is formulated in the words:

"Everything with ALEPH,
ALEPH with everything,
Everything with BAYT, BAYT
with everything."

The word BAYT, written BAYT-YOD-TAV means house in both Arabic and Hebrew. The letter BAYT is pronounced always as the consonantal "B". Hence BAYT is specific whereas ALEPH is free. There is nothing that is like ALEPH and it is like nothing else. With BAY I. we enter the realm of analogical thought. In the Qabala, BAYT must be understood to project the generalized concept of any physical support, any container, any dwelling.

The second postulate of the Qabala commands us always to separate two aspects in everything, neither of which has meaning in isolation from the other when looked at in this way. With this formula we are bidden to distinguish the container from the contained, the letter from the spirit. The intensive from the extensive, the Yin and the Yang, It provides us with a means of making qualitative distinctions in any realm we apply it to and emphasises and extends the mystery symbolized by ALEPH. It expresses a fundamental paradox: the twin aspects of being-manifestation.

It is paradoxical but inevitable that there can be no manifestation of the timeless unthinkable energy of ableness-to-be that is symbolized by ALEPH unless it be *through* something: some container or vessel in which it can *dwell* "in being". For example, *language* communicates *meaning* :

If I want to say something, I have to talk. I cannot really talk without saying something.

It is so simple, yet it is a paradox. It is so obvious that we fail to notice it, just as we forget the ultimate mystery of the existence of anything at all.

The second postulate draws our attention to the qualitative character of all our experience. It is as if there are two co-ordinates by reference to which the intrinsic quality of anything may be judged. One is intensive, timeless, unthinkable but the bearer of its qualitative nature. The other, without which the first could not manifest, is extensive and know-able, like the words you are reading now, perhaps. Insofar as these words have any value and meaning, they have some ALEPH. The words themselves are just BAYT; fixed and defined the moment they are typed out. Something may be strong in ALEPH but have only slight BAYT, like the vibration of a

piece of music or a poem that moves us deeply because

Everything that lives has meaning
and needs neither suckling nor weaning.

Conversely, it can have very little ALEPH but be heavy with BAYT like

The tale told by an Idiot, full of sound
and fury signifying nothing

In assessing the significance of anything we have to look at it from the point of view of its ALEPH and from the point of view of its BAYT. We can even construct, as a kind of illustrative joke, a way in which the number symbolism of the Qabala might be used to convey this notion through a familiar English phrase. If the significance of something consists in its relative proportions of ALEPH and BAYT we might, in English, express the notion of a *balance* between the two by saying "It is six of one and half-a-dozen of the other". Now six added to six makes twelve, which is written in numbers as 12. One is the number of ALEPH and two is that of BAYT. Hence the notion is there, in code.

But let us now decode an actual example from the Hebrew:

Ahava

The system of the Qabala states that, in Hebrew, the letter HAY (5) is to be understood to project the concept *life* . If it occurs in a Hebrew word it is there to draw our attention to some structure of energies in which something is *alive* . To understand *what* is alive we have to look at the letters next to HAY in the word. Now there is a word in Hebrew which is spelt ALEPH-HAY-VAYT-HAY and pronounced something like *ahava* . What does it mean? The Qabala tells us immediately that this word signifies a structure with the characteristic that both ALEPH and VAYT each have the property of being alive. When the structure expressed by this word is properly and completely exemplified, both are equally balanced. Applied to a human being, VAYT may stand for the body and ALEPH for the spirit, or psyche—alive in the body. Or VAYT might signify the 'worldly' and ALEPH the 'spiritual' life. A HAY belongs to each. When the two are equally balanced in a man's life, then his life is an expression of the meaning of this word, and these two aspects mutually complement each other. The noun *ahava* in Hebrew means *love* (in Greek: *agape*).

There is, probably, no more condensed expression of what love *is* than this simple equation. That is why this word is semantically correct.



When the Morning Stars Sang Together from *The Book of Job*, William Blake (1757–1827).
God attended by his angels reveals himself to Job as the Creator of the universe.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE ELIXIR

R.B. Jefferson



*This extract is from a small book published in 1982, based on a diagram located in a Taoist temple in Beijing. As with the **Cipher of Genesis**, we hope to republish it in its entirety. It affords a unique insight into Taoist thinking and is also an extraordinary example of 'logovisual' thinking.*

According to Irwin Rouselle, the *Doctrine of the Gold Elixir* is the most significant tradition of living Taoism. It derives chiefly from the Patriarch Lu Tung-pin (b. 798). In it, a number of individual teachings and traditions have been fused into a single system for the transformation of man that embraces the quintessence of the entire Taoist tradition.

Taoist alchemy is an ancient science which teaches the stopping of the flow of the generative force inherent in every man, so that instead of being discharged to procreate offspring or to waste away, it is retained in the body for purification and transmutation into positive vitality. This restores the original spirit which existed before the world came into being, so that it can return to its Primal Immortal state.

The diagram representing the doctrine is taken from two sources: one a rubbing from a stone tablet found in the Monastery of the White Clouds near Peking, and the other a coloured scroll painting on which the tablet was based. The tablet is dated 1886.

It is a symbolical representation of a lengthwise section of the (male) human head and torso, together with the spinal column. Nowhere is there any realistic anatomical portrayal, but various allegories are alluded to through symbols and human figures. The body section is surrounded by an almond-shaped aureole, whilst the head is circled by a halo and within this halo is a small circle.

The whole painting depicts a strange poetic landscape embracing Heaven and Earth and the murky waters of Hades - a landscape representing man in many aspects including the spiritual, psychic and animal. All representations of human beings in the picture - with the exception of Laot'se - are shown as children or young people to indicate that they express Eternal Youth. Laot'se as an old man refers to the Treasure of ancient Eternal Truth which was disclosed to him, the Perfect Man.

The picture is also a map by which the aspirant may see in pictorial form the cardinal points of the teaching which he may encounter in the very precise exercises he must practice, in a definite order, through a series of specific stages.

Before studying the picture in detail some introduction is necessary. There are five main concepts of Chinese medicine related to aspects of the chemistry or alchemy of Life and Spirit in their relation to Taoist symbolism and techniques of meditation.

- 1 The Three Rivers
- 2 The Main Pulses
- 3 Sublimation
- 4 The Archaic Anatomy of Individual Organs
- 5 The Cosmic Analogy

1. The Three Rivers

The three rivers or 'humours' which flow through the body are the *Spirit*, the *Breath* and the *Seed* - or, loosely, the Spiritual force, the Vital force and the Generative force or force of Immortality. These are regulated, guided and united through

meditative practices. From their union arises the Immortal Man - the *Diamond Body*.

2. The Main Pulses

Within the body is a network of pulses or channels of breath belonging to the circulatory system - the 'Inner Warp'. Thus, in the painting, the heart and the lungs are depicted as one. In contemporary practice these breath pulses are not conceived as being physically visible. They are understood to lie partly outside the body in open space, and a differentiation is made between inner and outer air, i.e. between the Pulses and the Arterial system. Also, ancient Chinese physiologists observed that in slaughtered animals the veins were seen to be full of blood, whilst the arteries were found bloodless but full of air.

However, certain vital points are localized with anatomical precision and acupuncture is based on these. The points are known as 'cavities' or 'hollow passages' (*hsueh tao*). The cavities are places where energies either accumulate or disperse and from them arise the two main Pulses of breath - *Yin* and *Yang* - situated on either side of the body and connected to twelve minor pulses.

The main pulse of Yang (positive, active) - the Guide Channel or Channel of Control - arises from the area of the junction of the bones of the pelvis between the legs at the front of the body, and ascends by way of the spinal cord - the 'Milky Way' - to the brain, passing through the forehead to the bridge of the nose.

The main pulse of Yin (negative, passive) - the Channel of Function - arises in the genital zone and rises upwards through the vicinity of the navel and continues on through the neck to the lips.

Through the meditative union of the two channels within a closed circuit, the powers of Spirit, Life and Immortality contribute (as in the conception of the corporeal child) to the birth of the Eternal child, and the Immortal Man is realized.

3. Sublimation

In science, sublimation is the conversion of a substance directly to vapour by means of heat and then allowing it to cool and solidify. In

psychology, it is the transmutation of a primitive energy into a higher form.

All the main traditions - Far Eastern, Indian and Near Eastern - affirm a connection between the central nervous system and the generative force or sex energy. The 'brain fluid' flows downwards through the spinal chord to fulfil the generative function, but in the process its potential as a self-transformative substance is lost or dissipated. Hence, in the Taoist view, there is reason to oppose the downward flow by special regulated breathing and meditative practices to induce the 'River of Heaven' to flow upwards through the 'Milky Way'. As soon as the generative force moves to find its usual outlet, it is turned back and then, driven by the inner fire that is kindled by regulated breathing, passes into the *Microcosmic Orbit* for sublimation.

The microcosmic orbit begins at the base of the spine - called the *First Gate (wei lu)* - rises in the spinal column to the *Second Gate* between the kidneys (*chai chi*) and goes to the back of the head - called the *Third Gate (yu ch'en)* - before reaching the *Fourth Gate* in the brain (*ni wan*). It then descends down the face, chest and abdomen to return to where it arose, and so completes a full circuit.

4. The Archaic Anatomy of Individual Organs

In Chinese meditation techniques, the physiological representations of internal organs correspond only partly to their actual form. In part, they also reflect another condition related to forms that have long since disappeared in human physiology on this planet (Carl Jung has referred to there remaining in the human mind mental counterparts of extinct internal organs). The following are some examples:

The Third Eye which, as in the case of deep-sea fish, both sees and illumines objects.

The unbroken connection between the kidneys and the testicles - in Chinese, there is only one word for both organs.

The situation of the Vital Centre or 'field of Cinnabar' (sulphide of mercury) in the solar-plexus.

The 'Three Burners' or water-secreters which fill the lower body at the level of the stomach, navel and bladder - the 'Sea of Breath'.

In connection with the Three Burners, Taoism delineates Three Psychic Centres which are called *Tan t'ien*, translated as the 'field of the drug', where the 'drug' or alchemical agent is produced (tan is cinnabar, or sulphide of mercury).

(1) The Lower Tan t'ien, 1.3 inches below the navel, where the Generative force is retained (so that it does not slip down and drain away) in order to purify it.

(2) The Middle Tan t'ien is in the heart where the Generative force is transmuted into Vitality. (Lu Kuan Yu - Charles Luk - in Taoist Yoga describes it as being in the solar plexus).

(3) The Upper Tan t'ien, the 'Original Cavity of the Spirit', is between and behind the eyes, where Vitality is transmuted into Spirit.

Although there is no literal correspondence between the Three Burners and the Three Psychic Centres, it can be noted that in the terminology used in Taoism a *cauldron* refers to a cavity in which the process of alchemy transmutes the Generative force into Vitality and Vitality into Spirit through each of the Tan t'ien; whereas a *stove* refers to a cavity where the inner fire is kindled by regulated breathing to put the Generative force into the microcosmic orbit and transmute it into Vitality. The stove remains in the lower Tan t'ien throughout the process of alchemical change. (These notes may be helpful when looking at the *Tripod of the Elixir* in the painting.)

The breath, of which there are Five Vital Breaths, is related to the Five Elements. Together with their displacements, they are:

1. Wood Liver and Gall
2. Fire Heart and Small Intestine
3. Earth Spleen and Stomach
4. Metal Lungs and Large Intestine
5. Water Kidneys and Bladder

The arrangement of the Elements related to Tan t'ien are:

Earth in the centre of the body (in Indian Yoga, Earth is placed bottommost)

Fire just below the centre and further back

Water at the very bottom aside from the spine

5. The Cosmic Analogy

Within the structure of Taoist symbolical representation is inextricably mingled the magi-animistic system which dominated ancient Chinese cosmology and the peculiar (to the Western scientific view) structure of traditional Chinese medicine and physiology. Cosmology and physiology are woven together in analogies, symbolic images, beliefs and terminology - all representing Man and Cosmos, Cosmos and Man.

Here his Spirit is the Heavenly Jade City where Lao'tse has his throne. His spinal substance is the Milky Way or the 'River of Heaven'. The two constellations of the Cowherd and the Weaving Maiden are at work in the heart and kidneys. The abdomen is the Ploughed Field of Earth or the 'Supreme Ultimate'; it is here that there is the Yin Yang gate of the underworld and the region of the groundwater.

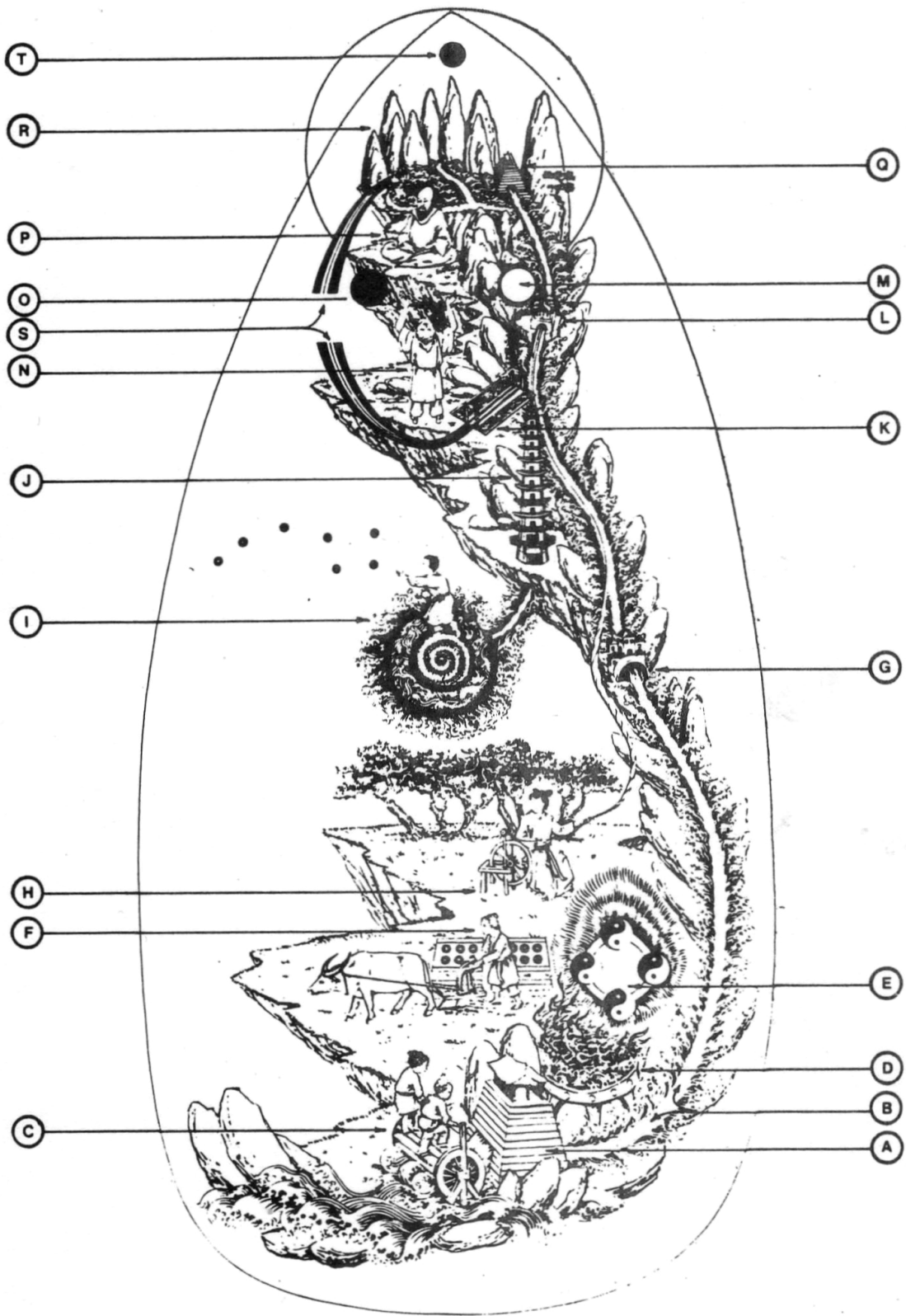
In addition to these analogies of the Microcosm and the Macrocosm, the Yin Yang system embraces the Five Elements and there is a complete system of number symbolism to be understood as a joint expression of the Cosmic Order and Man.

There are three alchemical agents:

1. The Microcosmic Outer Agent is produced by fresh air breathed in and out in order to purify it, restoring the Generative force which has been drained away or wasted and transmuting it into Vitality.

2. The Microcosmic Inner Agent is produced by the Vital Inner Breath in the body, which trans mutates Vitality into Spirit.

3. The Macrocosmic Agent is gathered from Vitality to break through to the Original Cavity of Spirit in the brain, in order that the mortal man may become immortal - i.e. for the integration of Microcosm into Macrocosm.



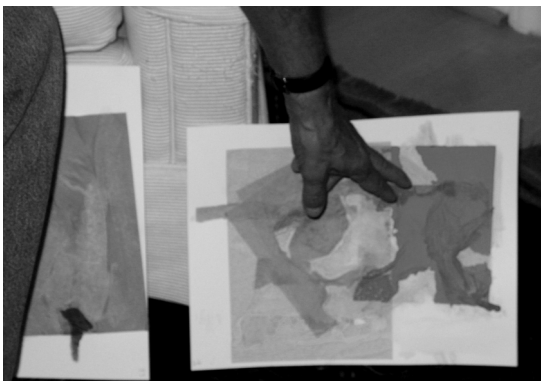
The Painting based on the stone tablet in the Monastery of the White Clouds near Peking.

GATHERING V
A meeting of systematics
May 14-16, 2004, Charles Town



Ron Eirlen, James Patton, Michael xx, Ben Hitchner, George Reilly, Karen Stefano, Anthony Blake, Craig Wells, Richard Knowles

During the last three Gatherings, we had concentrated on the theme of Globalization while, at the same time, seeking to expand the tools and techniques of systematics through new approaches to the higher term systems, use of LVT and TRIZ, meaning games and many other innovations, as documented in the three reports already published. On this occasion, the focus was on how we *do* systematics. A major concern was to integrate what we could do by conceptual conscious thought with more qualitative ‘unconscious’ material. We were also concerned with the meaning of the *progression of the systems*. This ‘progression’ was a major feature of Bennett’s method and we wanted to investigate it further.

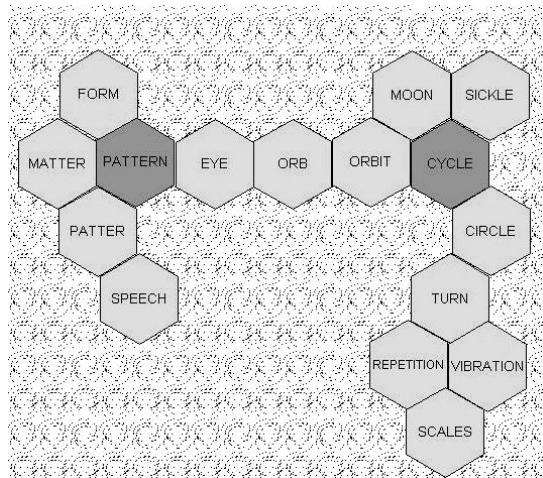


To stimulate access to unconscious material, we had Karen guide us in using tissue paper collage. However, a radical change of approach was introduced by asking

participants to see what systems seemed to be emergent in their collages. This approach was stimulated by a remarkable book by psychotherapist Pratibha Eastwood, *Nine Windows to Wholeness: exploring numbers in sandplay therapy*. We also made some use of Gordon Lawrence’s Social Dreaming Matrix.

To facilitate conscious thinking, we used LVT. Logovisual technology stems from bringing the underlying network of meaning embedded in language into consciousness and we also conducted an experiment that took us back to the original research from which *structural communication* and then LVT consequently derived. In this experiment, which arose from a question of Ron Eirlen, we took the two words ‘pattern’ and ‘cycle’ and brought out associated words to reveal chains of meaning. The words were associated by (a) similarity of appearance, (b) similarity of sound and (c) similarity of meaning, as can be seen from the approximate representation below.

But the most profound session was



the last in which we dialogued the progression of the systems, using all accessible material, including feelings, images and metaphors. Participants felt this made the method alive and meaningful like no other. We hope to transcribe this session to see if we can derive a way of description that will help others in *moving thought into a thinking that marries conscious and unconscious*.

EVENTS 2004

Continuing Your Quest

In celebration of the work of Dr Edith Wallace, a Playshop facilitated by Karen Stefano, Santa Fe, August 6-11

Working Group (Psyche Integration)

USA

Temenos, West Chester, PA; June 30-July 4

Sebastapol, California July 15-18

Charles Town, West Virginia, December 1-5

UK

Hawkwood Collage, Stroud, October 28-31

Enchanted Albion

A journey through layers of meaning in France, England and Scotland, August 26th to September 11th, guided by Richard Heath

Dreaming Peace

A seminar-dialogue using the social dreaming matrix, with Anthony Blake, Karen Stefano and Gordon Lawrence, The Mountaineers Club, Seattle, Washington, November 12-14

INTERNET DIALOGUE

Members are invited to join our forum. Please email Bobbie Harvey to join the group at bobbie.harvey@verizon.net.



The form of Zeus on the sacred mountain Yiouchtas, where he dies - this long, ridged mountain dominates the whole landscape south of the present city of Heraklion in Crete, attractively rich in olive groves and vineyards.

Photo sent by Richard Heath

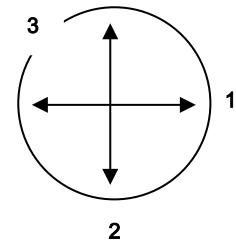
SOME INSIGHTS ON FUNDAMENTAL METHOD

During the course of our work with the group in Beijing, we made an attempt to formulate the fundamental principles of psyche integration in as universal a form as possible. We were dealing with an audience that had come out of interest in the ideas of Gurdjieff and we were introducing them to new aspects of psychotherapy, which we believe complement and enhance the fourth way approach. Our formulation was in three principles.

1. Coming down to the same level.

2. Seeing the mind

3. Encompassing more.

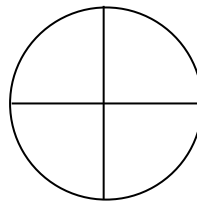


1. We used the phrase 'coming down' because this properly indicates that we need to sacrifice

our 'specialness' if we are to meet on the level, as is required for true dialogue. It is our position that the ableness to participate in dialogue is a key to the transmutation of will from an egoistic sense of power to capacity to relate. It might be better phrased as 'coming up' to being on the same level.

2. 'Seeing the mind' describes all kinds of methods and experiences in which lower is separated from higher and a new kind of 'mind' is released *in relation to* which our ordinary one is mechanical. It is a being-action, in which nothing may change outwardly but inwardly all is different.

3. 'Encompassing more' refers to such ideas as expanding the present moment, assimilating new kinds of information and the progression of the systems. We do not need to specify in advance what this 'more' is, but it does not mean 'more of the same'. It belongs perhaps to function.



Development

Symbol of Harmonious