



This issue is devoted to design and process, but mostly about Psyche Education. The main article talks about what happens during a PI event and how it is put together. It introduces the concept of *ring composition*, which some scholars have concluded has been the basis of many ancient and 'sacred' texts, from books of the Bible to medieval Sufi literature. It may well be that ring composition was one of the sources for Gurdjieff's design of the Enneagram. We have used it as a practical tool for study, thinking and design of programs. It operates like a technique for integration of complexity. We also report on some significant experiments related to PI, one through the DuVersity internet forum and the other through friends in the UK.

The shorter article is a review of two recent or forthcoming books by one time students of John Bennett, Richard Heath and Simon Weightman. Their two books link together to bridge from the theme of ancient wisdom and its transmission through what Gurdjieff called *legomonism* to the structure of complex writings, reaching into the modern era. The monuments and landscaping that Richard proposes came out of the Atlantean civilization can be traced down through the ages into the forms of writing designed to carry significant information over long periods of time.

PSYCHE INTEGRATION – a story of structure and process

Anthony Blake

As some of our readers will know, Psyche Integration developed out of a collaboration between Karen Stefano and myself over many years, in which the aim was to integrate some of the techniques stemming from the ‘fourth way’ and the work of Gurdjieff and John Bennett, with other techniques deriving from insights into group process from the realm of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. There have been other attempts to arrange a ‘marriage’ of the two approaches, but in Psyche Integration the emphasis is on *integration* and the creation of something *new* out of what already exists. Readers of our newsletter will be familiar with the bare idea and framework of the integrative process, but this can hardly have conveyed the flavour of it as it unfolds in an actual event.

To remind you, here are the *seven components* making up the programme (students of *systematics* might recall that seven is the number of integration), given with their original sources. The sequence shown is significant, as we will see.

1. Experiencing. This was derived from the ‘morning exercises’ devised by John Bennett, primarily from his experience of exercises that came from Gurdjieff. I myself further simplified and refined them and subtly altered the *modus operandum*. It is an active work of guided attention (not imagery) that is based in the physical body and is sometimes called ‘somatic thinking’.

2. Social Dreaming Matrix. This came from the work of Gordon Lawrence and uses the material of dreams for the free associations of the group and not for analysis and interpretation. The aim is to produce a new kind of thinking.

3. Movements. The inspiration for this line of work came from Gurdjieff’s movements but has increasingly become an exploration of the language of physical gesture and movement rather than an attempt to perform any of Gurdjieff’s own dance creations.

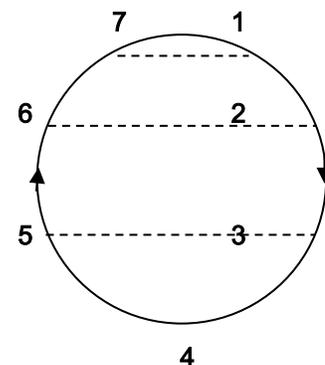
4. Tissue Paper Collage. This came from the work of Edith Wallace and the Jungian school of analysis, under the idea of ‘active imagination’. Karen Stefano has taken on the maintenance and furtherance of this method. In it, people make collages rather like free association, without any planning. They then review what they have made to articulate meaning.

5. LVT or logovisual technology. This came from the invention by John Bennett of ‘structural communication’ and concerns how meanings can be articulated and combined. It is strongly verbal and involves various kinds of mental operation.

6. Median group or Dialogue. This derives from the work of Patrick de Mare and like Social Dreaming uses free-floating conversation, but without any prescribed input or theme.

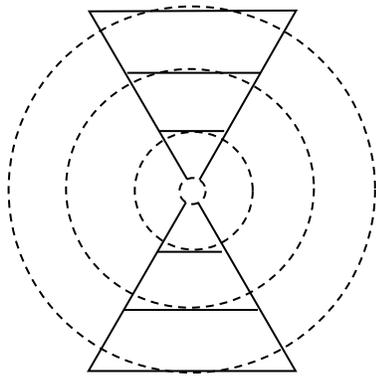
7. ILM or Immediate Liberation of Meaning. This developed from Ted Matchett’s ‘neural education’ and aims to connect with meaning directly without any steps of interpretation, through listening to music or other kinds of articulate sounds.

As can be seen, the psyche integration programme brings together elements from Group Psychology, Fourth Way methods and creativity techniques. In the sequence shown, the seven elements can be arranged as a *ring composition*. This is a way of organizing a ‘story’ or process used in many ancient texts and applicable to any design. Elements across the circle are similar but take a different slant from each other.



Form and Sequence

In ring composition, the bottom element is called the 'turn' because the process folds on itself



Hierarchy and Presence

7 and forms a mirror image from this point. Readers who know Bennett's book *A Spiritual Psychology* may realize that this is just the same form as he used for his sevenfold scheme of human psychology.

6
5
4
3
2
1 We will expand on this geometrical approach later. What we do now is to describe glimpses of an actual event; glimpses because no one participant can register and articulate everything that takes place.

The cycle of seven methods can be unfolded over various periods of time. We have done a compressed version in three and a half hours as well as extending it over more than three days. In each case, there is a period of *entry* into the process and also a period of *closure* or *exit*. People have to adjust to the particular tempo of events as defined by the structure that

integrates them.

The process is *facilitated*, by Karen in the case of Dialogue, Social Dreaming and Tissuepaper Collage and by myself in the case of the four other methods. Though, in ILM, my facilitation almost entirely consists in choosing the piece of music to listen to.

START

The particular event we want to outline and discuss took place at the Franciscan Center in Delaware in November, 2006. Our hosts were a small group of monks, with whom we shared convivial meals. The event ran over four days, beginning in the evening of the first and ending with lunch on the fourth. This gave us two full days between. As we shall see, we ran the second day in the *reverse order* to the first.

The process began with a *Focus* session in which we talked about the various strands of meaning, both individual and collective, that brought us together and what they might lead us to aim for. Here are just some notes on this preliminary phase as it took place in Delaware; not a list and without any explanation.

These events had been running with a very small group of people and we were distraught to learn that two of our stalwarts were unable to come; but it so turned out that two new members (to this group) came along. Both were involved in another forthcoming event, in which strands associated with Joseph Rael and appearances of the Virgin Mary came together. Two other members were involved in local community affairs and had to sacrifice their attendance at a meeting to take full part in our event. It was easy to see the precarious way in which people and strands were being connected. An event is a 'crossing'. One person remarked afterwards:

The number of attendees was an important factor, I feel. Having so few people allowed us to be more informal, which seemed to allow a different kind of activity to take place, more familiar, more exploratory, perhaps, which I feel turned out to be a blessing. I'm left with the feeling it was the right number at the right time.

There had been some lead up to this event through the DuVersity forum and the theme of the *feast* was raised: that PI was a feast to which many had been invited but few came, as in the Gospel story; but also that it was a feast by virtue of offering a special kind of food, this food being thought of analogously to the 'higher hydrogens of impressions' that Gurdjieff spoke of.

We also spoke of words and the need for precision of language. This connected with the need to define aims for ourselves that were exact, tangible and realistic, because only such could connect us to the process.

A brief discussion came of what could be meant by the 'wedding garment' in the Gospel story.

We had dinner with the Monks, eating sausages prepared by Father Bill, asking about the phrase, "The truth shall set you free". Two of us retired to the library to find the reference (the words of Jesus in John 8:32 -- "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free") and ended up amongst the Quakers and the Shakers. We rejoined the group for collage (more on this later) and finished the evening with ILM.

The music for ILM was from Finnish composer Rautusvara. In listening to this, I reformulated the statement of ILM. It is an intrinsic part of PI that it leads to improvement in articulation of itself.

Consider what you will hear is pure meaning and that you happen to be hearing it is incidental; you could as well be eating it, or it eating you. Sometimes, it is called 'music' at other times 'sounds of nature'. Just consider it as pure meaning, as made of meaning. Meaning is contagious. You give your meaning into it and it returns a thousandfold. There is no step in-between-- there is no interpretation; there is only meaning speaking with meaning. Meaning is equally physical, emotional, intellectual and knows no difference between them. But you have to give something, give of your life-blood, your essence, else you cannot join in the feast. Meaning is given freely, but in its own terms, not yours. ILM is the Immediate Learning Miracle, the 'knowledge' that bypasses explanations, models, interpretations through the secret that all meaning is the same. Or the Instinctive Liberation of the **M**use.

FIRST FULL DAY CYCLE

Experiencing

The next day, we began the first full cycle of the seven (note, of course, the suggestion that day = week !) with Experiencing. I guide this process but do not do so from a plan; it is just that someone has to take on the task of language. This first full day, the thought was that whereas we appeared to have a given location in time and space, this might be somewhat arbitrary and there was another kind of location to discover. Can we find ourselves in the 'real world'? Again, no full description can be given of what happened (I am just one person, I forget, my memories are partial constructs, etc.) but only samples.

Referencing the ILM session, I spoke of *logons*, a term Ted Matchett and I had invented for 'particles of meaning'. Logons could be more or less concentrated or 'dense'.

Perhaps I spoke about the divergence between 'what is happening' and 'observing what is happening'?

Releasement into 'another world' where one was free to move and seek greatest meaning.

My own experience of: as some other being coming into control; superdense sensations, and seeking forgiveness of my mother. Each person volunteered their own 'results', such as: visual sense of inner organs; shift in sense of space; something present in the group; comfort in my breath, and so on. Another person reported their remembered experience thus:

Sense of meaning = experience of aliveness + vitality. Container/attention split between voice and sensation. I began with sense of inner emptiness. Began exploration with my attention/awareness of the inside area of physical body. Experienced a felt sense of my intestines, stomach, windpipe, thyroid, face, and eyes. There was a visceral pulse, way to the bones, blood flow, breath, feeling of emptiness shifted and I wondered where all the space had gone. I noticed an opening of dimensional space as explored my spine. Sense of my ancestors, memories arose of grandparents, felt grief and loss, my own, and communal. A strong sensation in my throat I identify as grief and loss felt monumental. The experience of infinite/aliveness/deadness = universality of being human on this planet at this time and all times.

As far as the 'actual process' was concerned, this had the following steps:

Taking the form of container

Waiting (adequate accumulation of logons)

Sensitive Opening

Coming to presence

Breathing

Meaning in the real world

As ever, explanation of any one of these would require a chapter or book in itself. The descriptive-memories of experiencing would ordinarily be considered as *distancing* from the experience; but, instead, they can be a *re-entry* into the experience *in a way that completes it*. I can add a theoretical point, that this exhibits *hyparxis* in the sense of recurrence at a deeper level.

We spent time exchanging our observations and I will comment later on the significance of having this kind of exchange, and how it was extended through the medium of the DuVersity forum.

The *totality* of experiencing can be seen as quite complex and has its own cycle or composition. Every component of PI contains the whole and also *continues* throughout the other components. It is fairly obvious that the exchange of observations enables people to find links in social dreaming, for example, which came next.

Social Dreaming

This requires a whole chapter to itself, but I will just have to provide a few of Karen's notes. Here are some of the associations produced from the dreams:

given second chance

not doing it right

learn by doing

hiding is thinking about saying before saying it

quality of trust in the group

hypnotic state losing control

face to face with god

pantheon of anthropomorphic images of god

Spinoza excommunicated for saying god is nature

Ganesh, Shiva, Shakti, Jesus, Yahweh not Buddha, Set, Horus, Isis etc silence reminds of first dialogue

never give away a dead mans shoes

body disposed

world to come

native American, no one can walk in another man's shoes

death prevented

all saints day is remembrance

As with the other components, Social Dreaming is alive or a chore according to one's attitude. One has to see the value for oneself; but this value will not come until one has seen it! One of the virtues we discussed was that it gave permission to people to speak of the world of dreams as if it were here and now. It is not so much having this or that dream but the very act of treating them as concrete and meaningful for the group, which leads to a sense for 'dreaming-thinking'.

Gordon Lawrence's statement of the 'primary task' of Social Dreaming speaks of 'finding meaningful connections between dreams through free association'. It is more an exposure to a new language than gaining specific new ideas. It is a way of thinking in the moment.

Movements

I was exploring that aspect of 'movements' in which the aim is *total occupancy* of attention, usually through combining three independent complexes. Because the group is not young, I try to find modes of movement that do not cause stress. This time, I even had people sitting down. With their feet they made a simple rhythm. To this was added a continuous rotation of the head, with the requirement to be aware of the room. Then were added the hands, free to move about according to

the initiative stemming from a primary meaning. This meaning was to be, for each person, their strongest memory of meaning.

The theoretical basis for such combinations is Bennett's triad of function, being and will. The foot rhythm represents function, awareness with the head, being and focus of meaning, will. My own experience of this exercise is peculiar to me; I began to 'shake' in such a way that I was reminded of the Shakers!

We then spent ten minutes walking in the garden of the monastery. The effect in me was to be effortlessly *in the present*.

The intention I noted for this exercise would be expressed in Sufism as balance of *hal* (state) and *ilm* (knowledge); in Gurdjieff's terms, balance of being and knowledge.

Collage

The primary material of this method is of course collages. After one has made a number of them in a session, one looks at them privately, beginning to elicit meaning; which often begins by giving the collages titles. For example, my own were: Satan's Feast; Becoming Tasty; Eating and Being Eaten; Doorway at the Edge of the World, and Flying in Comfort. These were enough to establish I was beginning with the theme of 'feast' but then something new was emerging. The sequence of collages often exhibits ones that mark a new turn.

Though the process of making collages is described as 'without thinking' this does not mean it is without attention. There is, for example, an important role for aesthetics, as in sense of colour, disruption of preferences, play of symmetry and asymmetry, etc. Karen points out that one's collages, like one's DNA, are uniquely individual . . . they contain one's essential will-pattern.

LVT

In this session, I decided to take up the theme of precision in language. The following is the resultant description I made after the session.

One of the core structures of meaning in language is the statement. Such structures articulate intent or affirm what is real. In their general or standard form, they are composed of subject, verb and object but each of these three parts may be complex and indirect.

Progressive articulation is when a statement leads to another statement in which the meaning of the first is advanced, refined and made more precise. This can occur by replacing the object by another one, that is by replacing the object-word by another that reveals more, or steers more closely to the reality being addressed. It can also be facilitated by replacing the verb-word by another; and even by changing the word or words assigned to the subject. One can make changes by replacing one word at a time or by a more extensive rewording.

In its primitive form, one begins with a statement coming from and aligned with one's sense of meaning and purpose; and then experiments with substituting new words for the subject, verb or object used in the statement to create new ones. The writer feels or senses a drift of meaning. In practice, nearly everyone can determine what is an advance. There then ensues a series of statements, each leading into the next, but sometimes making a substantial leap from the previous. The primitive form of the progression is only to support those who are uncertain. In its intimate flow, articulation is a progression of illuminating statements, which no one else than the writer could ever understand, and even he may not either.

One of the great values of this method is that it wastes no time in any explanations, arguments, justifications, etc. since it consists entirely of statements all of which are valid. It is the supreme form of allowing meaning to guide the making of new meaning. It is as fully articulate as is possible at the time.

A progressive series of statements can establish a method. The progression of the statements tends towards a condition in which the statement becomes the reality.

Each of us read our sequence of statements and it was fascinating to see how different they were while exhibiting progression in their own ways. Karen's sequence of statements was as follows (though please remember that this has value only when one does it for oneself):

- I will improve myself
- I desire to improve myself
- I desire to increase my mental focus
- I want to comprehend what is happening in the world
- I want to know what is happening in the world
- I want to see what is happening in the world
- I want to understand what is happening in the world
- I want to feel what is happening in the world
- I want to sense what is happening in the world
- I want to hear what is happening in the world
- I want to know what it means
- I want to know what it means when events happen in the world
- I want to know why
- I want to understand why events happen in the world
- I want to know meaning what is essential for life, what kills life what is alive and what is dead
- I want to understand what meaning means to life
- I want to know what makes me alive
- I want to know what makes me dead

Reflection on such a sequence will probably reveal a *structure* and it is even possible that this would approximate to a *ring composition*.

Dialogue

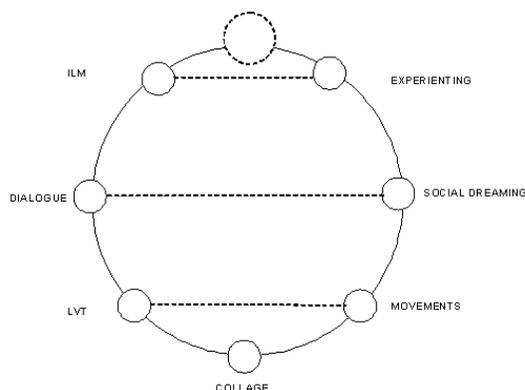
The dialogues are not recorded so only impressions remain and, again, they are just my own and much abridged since it would be impossible to explain all the connections. This dialogue began with a conversation on meaning: how to know, believe, and talk these days. Is there still a fundamental sense of *fact*? Fact then appeared to me as something profound and irreducible. The question of how I can verify anything important during my life.

ILM

This evening, the music was by Terry Riley.

THE TURN

As the reader can perhaps already see the sequence of components is for the most part an alternation of 'centripetal' (focused) attention and 'centrifugal' (permissive) attention. This breaks down at the end of the cycle because Dialogue and ILM have similar character.

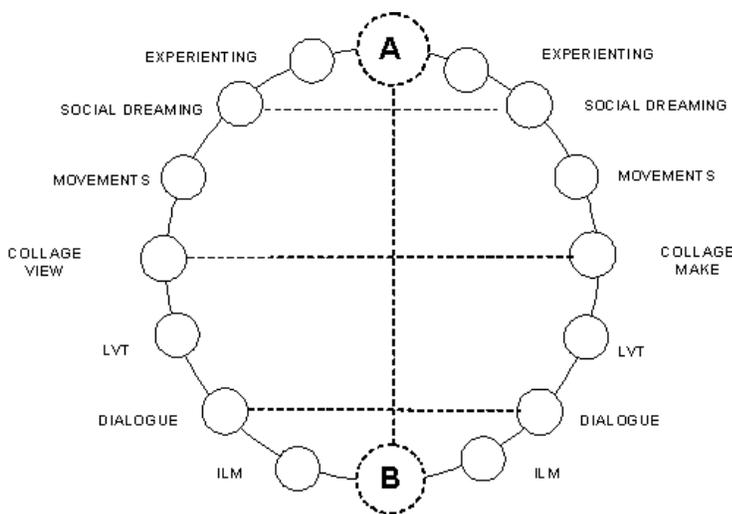


As an experiment, we had already decided to *reverse* the order of components the next day. This meant that the next session, the following morning, would not be Experiencing but ILM! People had been warned about this beforehand and given a complete timetable, but we anticipated some reactions. A paper was prepared to explain the theory but copies were not taken up until after the next day. Here is an abridged version of it.

The diagram shows the PI sequence more or less as it has developed pragmatically. It so turns out the paired elements across the circle do correspond (the details not spelled out here). No account is given of the breaks for meals, or even of private time. It can be seen, however, that the turn and the latch correspond to times which we have given over to private work.

In broad terms, the right hand side is where 'we' actively introduce content, whereas the left hand side is more given over to what emerges of itself. It is also true that the right hand side can develop more into the left type. This bears on the time frame. The diagram is apt for one day. We can consider this simply repeated but we can also frame it differently for the next case of having two *full* days.

Following the principles of ring composition, we would expect to find a more complex sequence and circle of elements. Since we have the daily cycle, we would expect to find this cycle repeated, but *differently*. An essential thing to note is that the sequences of elements on the two sides are *in reverse* of each other.



The reversal of sequence corresponds to the practice of *recapitulation*, in which events are reviewed in reverse order. This practice taps into the same logic as ring composition. The ring composition of two days is given here. A and B refer to items occurring in the night-times at the beginning and end of days, which we will speak of later.

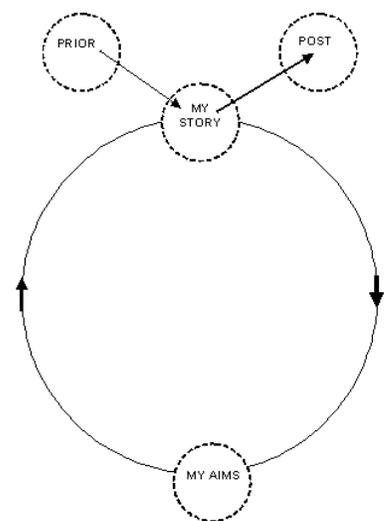
It is likely that the reverse order will appear illogical or difficult. We have mentioned recapitulation, which is counter intuitive. Another aspect is that the reverse order signifies doing something 'intentionally' in contrast to just following a 'natural' sequence.

A pragmatic consideration is that items A and B can be related to collage, which would then appear in the 'four corners'. A and B would relate to private viewing and story writing perhaps? We now have to address the possible reshaping of the PI components in their reverse repetition.

One claim for the scheme is that enables a better appreciation of the interconnectivity of the primary seven elements. Another is that 'breaking the pattern' releases energy while preserving the underlying form.

We now have to address in particular the top point (the 'latch' A) of the composition.

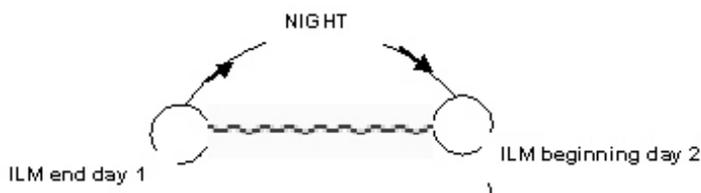
The basis of 'prior' and 'post' is that we tend to have part of a day before and part of a day after the two full days, in which preparation and completion can be extended. The two descriptors of 'my story' and 'my aims' are provisional titles for the transitional components, done at night. The two complement each other. The one deals with the shape and character of my life while the other deals with what I am intending to do about it. The return to the story at the end of the cycle signifies the story extended into the future. Hence the starting point is my story past sense and the ending point is my story future tense.



ILM

The music chosen was Navajo chanting recorded in the 1930s. The most obvious change in having this component first thing in the morning before breakfast was to see people get out their notebooks and start writing, something that is rarely to be seen when ILM is done at night. People reported that they were more restless and partly used writing as 'something to do while listening'. But also the session came out as *more task-oriented*. Instead of tranquil meditation, people were more likely to be solving problems. On gathering reflections, I pointed out that Ted Matchett had first used neural education rather in the mode of problem solving. My own concern continued to centre very much around clarifying the methods and in this case, ILM in particular. These were my observations and ideas, which related to the particular source of meaning used (the Native American chant) as well as to the general case: a sense of the 'brotherhood mind' thinking and acting as one, from the togetherness; the idea that ILM amplified signals from myself to myself; the reflection that actual suspension of outer responses, such as swaying to the rhythm, better elicits an 'inner movement'; the sense of being identical with living forms (such as crows?), and a sense of actual participation in the present moment of the chanting (which resonated for me with Bennett's idea of the 'hyparchic present')

Due to the suggestion of one person, we developed a metaphor of being stoned, referencing the 'stone people' as they are called, the red-hot glowing stones used in the Sweat Lodge Ceremony.



The two ILM sessions link with each other 'through the night' as suggested above.

A comment by a participant:

Each piece of music is like an angel in that it is qualitatively unique. It's like all music has at least two aspects, that which is heard and enjoyed and another that feeds something greater. So I ask if I can worship with it as this is what it is clearly doing/capable of/qualitatively structured to do, which is very friendly as like an angel it cannot refuse such a request once genuinely made. Each piece of music is like a statement, a unique statement, an LVT statement. It may well not have the same structure or format as an LVT statement, nevertheless like the uniqueness of an angel has its own 'realness' of rules to follow.

Another person remarked:

For me, ILM in the early morning was quite different from late in the evening. The morning ILM changed the perspective on the day somehow

Another noted:

Felt a kind of awe in relation to this cycle. Acutely aware no female voices in the chants, at one point it felt like half of life at another point it felt cosmic. Aware of a transgenerational link with past present and future.

Dialogue

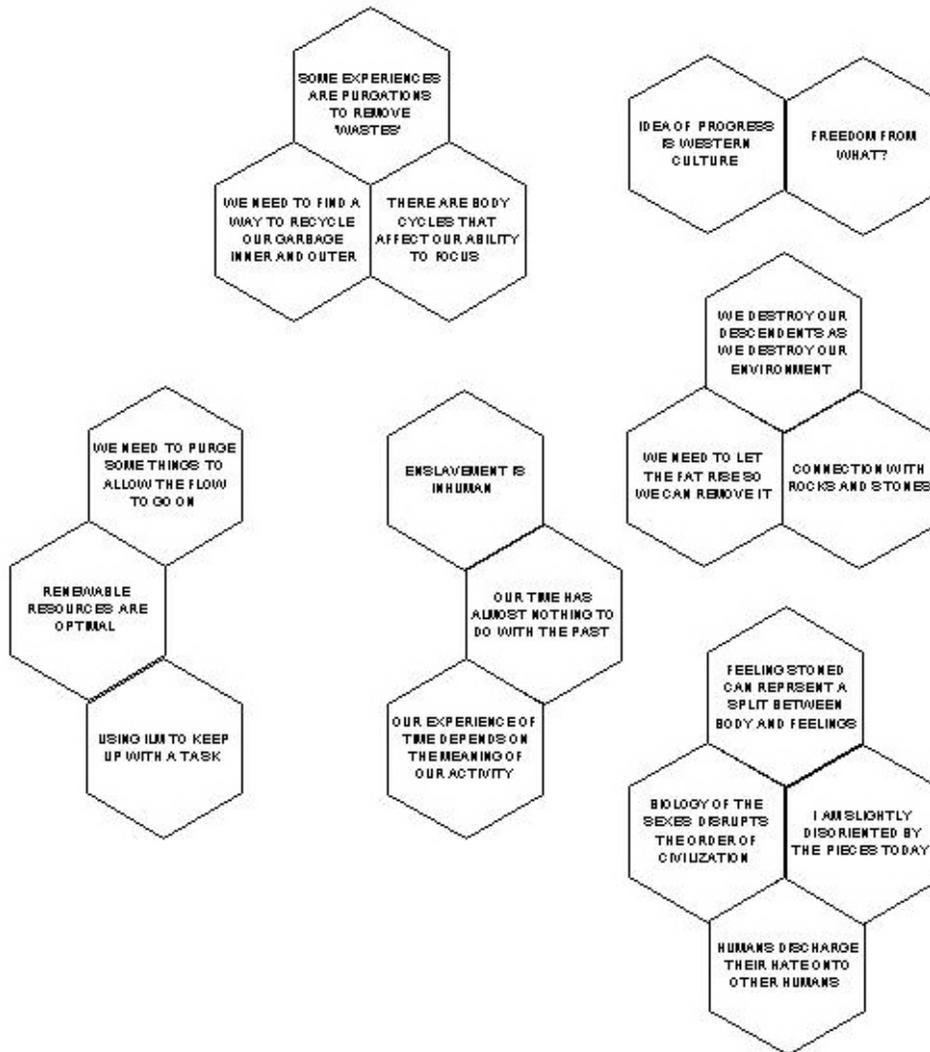
A remark from one of the group:

Dialogue: Just remember it being completely different from other dialogue sessions, easier, less 'heavy'. Before now there always seems to be this almost permanent gap between the efforts and awareness of the people and that wanting to be realised, from 'above' so to speak.

Another remark:

It seemed some were wrestling more than I was with the political notions or what is going on globally in the median group discussion. Most of what developed was a consensus without wide polarities.

LVT



This session *used material that emerged in the dialogue*. Everyone was asked to write two or more 'molecules of meaning' (MMs) on magnetic hexagons and these were put at random on the board. The mental operation to be addressed was to do with the power of *combining* MMs to make new meanings. I later wrote up a brief description of the method as follows:

A field of charged meanings is created by dialogue. Individuals articulate (see above) statements from this field. They are arranged (as MMs) on the board at random. One of them is selected 'at random' and then another; the two put into conjunction. This conjunction is probably at first seen as 'without meaning': there

are the two MMs and a gap between them. Discussion may yield a connection, which is then substantiated by deliberate selection of a third MM to take the role of a bridge or connecting idea. The nature of the 'composite dynamism' can be further discussed and elaborated; and possibly reach a point at which the 'new emergent idea' can be formulated. There is then the question of how this is to be done. It must, for instance, not replicate or be similar to the contributing MMs.

The whole field can be treated in terms of 'triads', leaving open the option of then linking these triads into chains or other forms (e.g. ring composition).

One of the apparent features of the method is that it serves in some way similar to a 'recycling process'. This has yet to be explored in any precision.

[Note: the technique here reverses standard LVT process, in which people put MMs together because they fit, since here we put MMs together that, precisely, do not fit together.]

A diagrammatic reproduction of our board is shown above.

Movements

The exercise of the previous day developed into a more complex form, this time involving six components. This was the way I wrote it up *afterwards*:

Totalisation of bodily function and sense leads to a shift in location or type of initiative. The method is to build up requirements in steps, until the system 'over-spills' into another modality – 'as if in another world'. There are six steps with a seventh implied.

The first is to establish a comfortable rhythm with the legs. This should not be jarring, but precise. The second is to let the arms form gestures and movements in some semblance of patterns. The next two steps are more to do with awareness than function. The third step is to be aware of the room the eyes can see. The fourth is to attend to and cultivate a sense of 'balance' in the body (i.e. vertically).

The fifth step is to be conscious of breathing, which can lead to deepening and amplification, sighing, making sounds, etc. This step can in fact be introduced almost anywhere in the sequence.

The sixth step is to bring into oneself a 'meaning memory', or some image of significance, value and concern. This bringing into oneself is as if to make it the centre of one's presence and hence in a role to act as key informing intelligence. This sixth step can build over time, since it involves a recurrent factor. The technical specification of this factor is that of the *hyparchic present*.

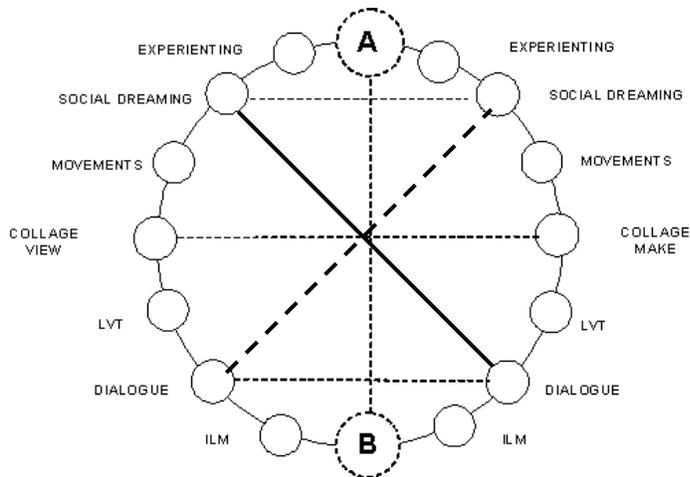
The seventh step – similar to the 'seventh dimension' after the six (three of space, three of time) – is to allow or submit to the act of what is totally out of one's control, which may be referred to as the 'witness consciousness' or *purusha*. To realise that one is seen.

As one of the group pointed out, the Castenada idea of 'shift in assembly point' might be useful for understanding this method. Another comment by the same person:

Very brave to undertake movements the way we did on that last session! Maybe you just didn't know what else to do with us! I can't imagine that any number of Gurdjieff movements could have brought us to that which we came to towards the end of that final movements session. It was truly individualised movements together as a group - or at least for some/most of us.

Social Dreaming

One of the themes weaving through the dreams was language. One person dreamed that she had to remember a three-part word, but of course could not when she awakened. I remembered my dream the night before of someone telling me the name of a beautiful flowering tree, in fact three times since I asked it to be repeated (it was something like 'holding'). Another member of the group went back to a dream he had a year ago, before he came to the PI event in the UK, when he was in front of a blackboard and someone wrote a sentence on it that was all-important, that he had to remember. Of course, he did not, but there was an effect that continued and he felt he had been 'plugged-in' to something.



One of the group members had a most extraordinary dream of great detail and complexity that ended with a terrifying vista of thousands upon thousands of robots taking over. He reported that the dialogue of the previous day had been so disturbing that he could only download it into a dream. This is shown in the geometrical figure as a *chiasmus* or cross-over, the dotted line indicating a possible complementary link (for which in this case we have no evidence or report).

Any such link serves to 'bind' the whole together in a strong way.

Experiencing

Since this session was the last thing at night, I modified the approach to allow for a more meditative modality. For this purpose, I used a version of the *vayu-prana* meditation exercise.

Experiencing: have found the practices more and more helpful as the days have gone by since the event, thank you for that. The power and efficacy of the simplicity of them is...reassuring, is PI-ing in that they help to unite the seemingly separate activities in my life.

This completed the two day cycles, in which the second was the reverse of the first. By this time, I was aware that at least some of the group were disturbed by the reversal. I suggested that people read the paper (referred to and summarised above) that explains the thinking behind the reversal. The next day, it appeared this had made a considerable difference at least to one person.

FINISH

After the two full days, we were into an exit and closure.

Experiencing

On this morning, the exercise evolved to become an 'embodiment discourse': beginning with the idea and sense of the body as a vase. The classic three realms of belly, breast and head were explored as both meaning and sensation. The treatment was to render the body in the similitude of a library of inherent wisdom. This was in fact a reflection of our starting point in the original Focus meeting, so served however unconsciously to reinforce the mirroring or ring composition of the event.

Collage

There were quite profound shifts in the expressions of some people. Each participant reviewed their work and found new meaning held in the images. After becoming used to the technique, people start to experiment and gain confidence. There was also some possible gain in the domain of theory of collage. I have to say here that 'running' a PI session is not like going through a routine but is being alert and responsive to its transformations. Perceptions of the methods – or 'the' method – are a significant part of the process.

Reflection

This was a dialogue reflecting on the experiences we had had of the process. It was a loose recapitulation and designed, amongst other things, to help us *assimilate* the implications or threads of meaning that had interweaved the seven practices.

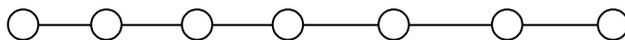
COMMENT ON THE PROCESS

The reversal and further structuring of the process seemed to foster a greater awareness than before of the interweaving of the components. As already illustrated, some new insights into the methods arose. These were not 'experiences' but theoretical steps. Another example is the following analysis of the tissue paper collage method, made by myself during the event. It is followed by some other comments on other issues.

TISSUE PAPER COLLAGE – the process of interpretation – three aspects

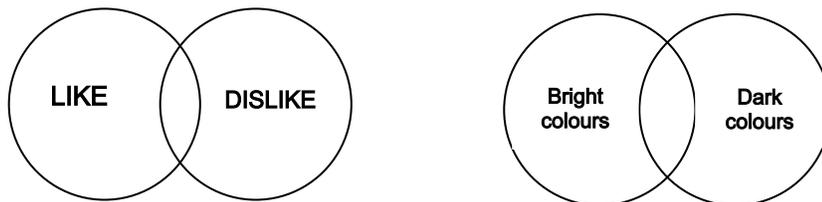
Serialization

The standard approach takes the collages as they have been produced, in their linear order. Interpretation centers on the meaning of the successive transitions, or a 'story'.



Sorting

An alternative approach divides the collages into two sets, such as those liked and those disliked by the artist. Interpretation looks into the meaning of divisions of this kind.



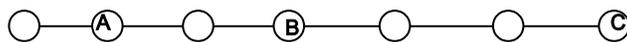
Selecting

The series of collages can be viewed through the metaphor of DNA. In broad terms, there are three kinds of element:

Active information

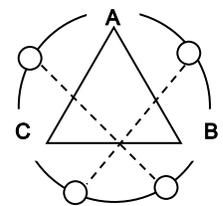
Transitional or 'switching' – these do not 'do' anything except switch on switch off the active elements

Transposons or 'spacers' with no (known) informational content



Removing 'spacers' and also 'transitioners', a sequence of collages reduces to a *significant set* such as [A, B, C] in the above example. A cyclic arrangement can amplify the pattern of the significant set.

From this can come an arrangement of *structured process*, when the transitions are taken as significant. This would be the most radical departure from linear order or serialization, effectively making a picture (structured arrangement) out of the pictures (collages).



The A-B-C type figure or the more complex form could stand for the 'interpretation' and in principle *not require any verbal explanation*.

These are speculative reflections and whether they would be helpful to people or not is not known. What is intriguing is whether we might one day find a reflection of the PI process in the sequence of collages the group produces (that is, some summation of the individual collages).

DIALOGUE OF METHODS

One of the terms we have in the methods of PI is *matrix*. A matrix is the non-linear connectivity of people, events and ideas that is implicit in any gathering and which might holographically carry the pattern of larger wholes. It can be pictured as weaving dynamically back and forth in at least two dimensions in contrast with any specified linear sequence. One does not 'get anywhere' in the matrix; it simply shapes the present moment. Thus all our intentions, goals and purposes must be interwoven with accidents, emergence and purposelessness.

THE DUVERSTY FORUM

After the event, Karen and I had conversations about the need for some ongoing furtherance of the process *between* events, 'at a distance'. This took two forms.

In the first of these, I came almost by accident to initiate an exploration of experiencing as being practised by some of us on our own. I set myself to record as far as I could just what ensued in sitting down in the morning, inviting others to do the same. As far as possible, I did not set out what people should be doing; I gave no technique or procedure besides offering my observations on what happened with me. Some people bravely struggled to say what they did, or at least report on some aspects of it. Again, as far as possible, I refrained from commenting on reports. Here is where the discipline used in tissue paper collage, of allowing each person who 'shows' to make their own comments before the others are allowed to say anything was taken up in a strong way.

By using the written word, the ordinary tendencies to exchange back and forth were subdued. The statements could just stand on their own. No one judged any other person's account or practice. The result has been an almost unique experiment in dialogue. At the same time, it is similar to the *theme* approach of Bennett, when he would set a theme – such as 'noticing' – and invite people to bear it in mind during the week and, when they come together, to speak about their observations (Bennett Books has published some of the Theme Talks, if you want to look into this further). Bennett would pull it all together and add his own insights. In our case, I tried as far as possible just to refer to available texts that might illuminate what had been recorded, rather than making any interpretations of my own on what people had observed. I found that for myself the process greatly enhanced my understanding of mystical techniques.

Writing down observations is in itself a way of evoking and assisting genuine self-observation. It ties in with our new practice of making a sequence of statements that might draw nearer and nearer to the truth.

Some people observed that they remembered that when they had taken part in experiencing during a PI event, it was as if when I spoke I was 'reading off a screen' which in some way reflected the experience of the group. It seemed to me that the 'private' practice of people also had a 'public' side and that the two enhanced each other. We have stumbled upon a way of helping each other in our practice through the medium of the internet. Though we are not actually present to each other, we are nevertheless present in some other way that has a strong effect. Simply knowing that I may write about what I am experiencing makes it much more powerful than if I did not. Needless to say, both others and myself have not excluded any uncertainties, troubles, anxieties, etc. that may have come up and we have not just presented ourselves in a flattering light.

SELF-MANAGED PSYCHE INTEGRATION

In the second extension, there emerged a wish amongst some of the people who had attended Psyche Integration in the UK to meet together on their own initiative. This was managed by John Kirby, who wrote the following for the forum:

A few months ago we had some postings on the forum from previous PI attendees on ideas as to what kind of activities we could undertake individually and/or collectively between PI events. Shortly after that, towards the end of the year, the idea came up amongst a small group of people here in the south of the UK – people who had previously attended PI weekends – of the possibility of having a PI day (or two!) on a more frequent and more localised basis.

It was thought that this may help nurture the fruits of what we had tasted during the main PI weekends with Tony and Karen, which here in the UK so far have only been held once a year.

One of the questions as part of the preparation for the day was whether Tony and/or Karen would be with us. It is interesting that we 5 were willing to get together for this experiment regardless of whether the main facilitators were with us or not. In fact, it was a secondary thought as to whether they would/should be with us. I think this showed how much confidence we have in the process of PI .

So last Saturday we hired our local village hall and 5 of us, who all live within an hour and a half of the hall, met for the day for a one day PI experiment.

An 8 hour timetable was produced in advance and discussed together at the beginning of the day, slight modifications were made as a result (tea breaks introduced!!).

Our confidence in the PI process turned out to be well founded. The paradox in PI “that we are looking to put something together that is already together” began to become more and more directly and gently recognisable as a conscious realisation as the day went on. During only the second session of the day, the social dreaming matrix, as we were recounting some of our pre-event dreams there was a growing awareness that we were recognising elements in each other’s dreams, elements that we had tasted already in our own dreams, recently or otherwise. The term ‘social dreaming matrix’ was seen as being very apt. In speaking of our dreams it developed an increasing common sense of ‘place’ (a matrix?) within which it became interesting to note that we seemed to be already connected, the medium being deeply knowledgeable, informative and energising, in fact, the medium was that from which the connectedness between us could manifest, the intent and willingness of the participants giving permission, as it were, for this to ‘blossom’ in this way.

This unfolded in a surprising, yet easy way, in the following session, collage creating. I have noticed – and if you have attended a PI event you may also have observed – Karen sometimes/often (it varies) needs to exercise her skills at containing the session, so that not too much talking and frittering of attention goes on. In our collage session following the social dreaming matrix barely a word was spoken, and when it was it was whispered and brief, without any announcement or encouragement of such behaviour either in advance or during the session. One participant describing it as “so concentrated and engrossing that I didn’t even notice it was.” 5 people did 24 collages in about 45/50 minutes (it was a tight schedule!).

Indeed, the tightness of the schedule seemed to invoke quite naturally a condensing, even intensity, of the PI process.

Also, perhaps the PI process (the gods or spirits of PI!!) as if recognising the lack of usual facilitators ‘showed itself’ by more than making up for this by enveloping and engaging the group as a whole, at least more than I had been aware of on previous PI events. Perhaps the participants also contributed to this by simply not having the opportunity of offloading responsibility for the ‘success’ of the event onto Tony and Karen (I at least saw that in myself), i.e. no established facilitators, which is always a temptation. At the same time the energy of the event itself develops and encourages a ‘we’ feeling, of being in this together, and thereby encourages a greater sense of self-responsibility for the day. As a result we found ourselves entering much more in to the nature of the *almost eager* integrative process.

I feel it should be said that this kind of PI event, that is without Tony and Karen, would be difficult for someone who had not already attended at last a couple of ‘main’ PI weekends with T and K.

Overall it was fun and seemed a natural progression from attending several main PI weekends.

DECODING THE PAST – RING COMPOSITION AND SACRED NUMBER

An overview of some books, including new ones by Richard Heath and Simon Weightman.

Richard led us on our Enchanted Albion trip and is a student of the ideas of Bennett. Like William Sullivan, our guide in Peru, he has been inspired by the book *Hamlet's Mill*. Both Richard and William have thought a great deal about Bennett's view of history. Simon was a student of Bennett and drew on his ideas in developing a theory of language and a scheme of mysticism based on his Energies.

Hamlet's Mill, an Essay on Myth and the Frame of Time, Giorgio de Santillana and Hertha von Dechend

Sacred Number and the Origins of Civilization, the Unfolding of History through the Mystery of Number, Richard Heath

Rumi's Mystical Design, Reading the Mathnawi Book One, Seyed Safawi and Simon Weightman (as yet unpublished)

Thinking in Circles: An Essay in Ring Composition, Mary Douglas

Hamlet's Mill was one of the inspirational books of the twentieth century, now well known amongst people at all concerned with the reality of ancient wisdom rather than its fantastic distortions in popular culture, but hardly at all amongst the general public. In this extensive, complex and original essay, the authors explored the frame of time through myth, beginning with the mill or grindstone of the original Scandinavian Hamlet and reaching back through the *sampo* of the Finnish *Kalavela* to primitive images of the gods churning the waters of the galaxy, coming to the conclusion that all such stories and myths point to one self consistent 'memory' or idea of the discovery that *even the heavens change*; now known as the 'precession of the equinoxes', in which the axes of rotation of the Earth slowly describes a tight circle over 25,000 years, the ancient Great year. This mind-blowing discovery, so Santillana and Dechend hint, may go back ten thousand years or more; they seemed further to suggest that the myths recorded from little more than three thousand years ago may have been a very late attempt to enable the remembrance of vastly ancient discoveries, the frame of time measured in the cycles of the heavens, in pure number.

Far from being a primitive prelude to the modern age of science and technology, the age of myth was more likely, in fact, to have been the last echo of an earlier time of measurement and knowledge. Putting the ancient science into myth was a technique of transmission, just as modern day television is used to spread elements of the noosphere, the biosphere coming to know itself through humanity. Santillana and Dechend speak of the mythic language as capable of transmitting exact knowledge over long periods of time through unsophisticated ordinary people:

"The main merit of this language has turned out to be its built-in ambiguity. Myth can be used as a vehicle for handing down solid knowledge independently from the degree of insight of the people who do the actual telling of stories, fables, etc. In ancient times, moreover, it allowed the members of the archaic "brain trust" to "talk shop" unaffected by the presence of laymen: the danger of giving something away was practically nil."

"...one should emphasize that it is, of course, satisfactory to have cuneiform tablets and that it is reassuring that the experts know how to read different languages of the Ancient Near East; but Gilgamesh and his search for immortality was not unknown in times before the deciphering of cuneiform writing [i.e. because the same story is present in other myths but with slightly different characters and details]. This is the result of that particular merit of mythical terminology that is handed down independently from the knowledge of the storyteller. (The obvious drawback of this technique is that the ambiguity persists; our contemporary experts are as quietly excluded from the dialogue as were the laymen of old.) Thus, even if one supposes that

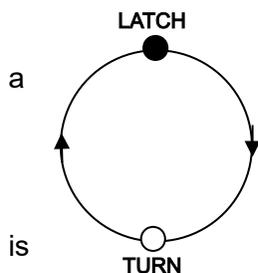
Plato was among the last who really understood the technical language, "the stories" remained alive, often enough in the true old wording."

Richard Heath's book takes up the theme of Atlantean wisdom as an intermediary stage between the deep past of original astronomical discoveries and measure, or primordial number consciousness, and the historical world reaching into our present time from the age of myth creation. There is no descent into fantasies of claiming to know where 'Atlantis' was, or to elaborate imaginary notions of a previous civilization now utterly effaced. Heath's attention is to the information and know-how of an ancient way of knowing deep rooted in the properties of number, which found expression in astronomy thousands of years before the Babylonians, Greeks and Druids made their name on the basis of their celestial understanding.

The transmission of ancient knowledge was a deliberate act (*legonomism* as Gurdjieff called it), not the mere accidental leaving behind of relics that require modern thinking to make sense of; it was the making of a language built into the Earth itself, using the natural properties of land landscapes as reflections of the patterns of movement of the skies. In Heath's picture, the original Atlantean culture arose before the onset of agriculture and was perhaps subdued by climatic change at the ending of the Ice Age. What did survive, which was in substance a *form of ideas*, came through rituals into the megalithic era, starting some six thousand years ago, lasting for a whole epoch. This left a legacy that eventually became manifest once more in monumental building, this time of monasteries and cathedrals across Europe. Even to this day, Heath concludes, there are echoes of the original 'big bang' of insight brought into landscape and architecture, as evidenced in the placing and lay out of Washington D.C.

If Richard Heath's gripping story takes us from Atlantis to the city planning of Washington, then Simon Weightman's co-authored book on the structure of the *Mathnawi*, the greatest Persian poem written in the thirteenth century by Jallaludin Rumi the founder of the 'whirling dervishes', deals entirely with meanings woven into writing. It seems that the cycles of the heavens became incorporated into the composition of historical texts.

The pioneer in this field was the English anthropologist Mary Douglas, also renowned for her work on the symbolism of the body in social terms. In her studies of apparently rambling and incoherent texts such as the *Book of Numbers* in the Old Testament, she discovered a pattern that revealed them as far from incoherent, highly elaborate and crafted to contain and convey subtle information. This pattern she called *ring composition*. What Douglas discovered in books of the Old Testament and also in Homer, Weightman came to see in Sufi literature of the thirteenth century. It seems that this literature became the carrier and guardian of an ancient wisdom conveyed through the *form* of the writings.



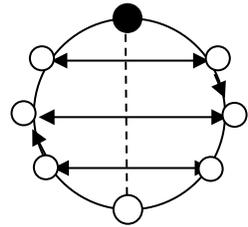
The principles of ring composition are deceptively simple. First, when we read text like that of the *Iliad* we follow it along step by step, episode by episode, carried by the momentum that makes for a compelling story. But, reflection leads us to step outside the linear order of one thing after another and to have what is called a *synoptic* vision of the whole, where sequence is no longer primary, but correspondences and relationships of meaning prevail. The text no longer a 'line' of episodes but a 'circle'; a circle because it is the simplest form in which we can contemplate wholeness. Once we see the circle, a great deal follows.

First, there must be a conjunction of beginning and end, alpha and omega, which are 'latched' together. Then there must also be a middle section, opposite both beginning and end, where the movement of the first half 'turns' into the movement of the second; in the case of the *Iliad* this is the third night of the story, which goes over four days and five nights. The episodes on the one side of the circle are mirrored by those on the other and present complementary views.

We are used to alternations and patterns in verse form, as in the rhymes ABA'B'. In a *chiasmus* or cross-form the elements can take the form ABCB'A'. The basic idea can be extended from the

rhyming of words to the correspondence of passages, involving their *meaning*. To illustrate, we can make this chiasmus of statements (our invention for the sake of illustration):

You lead me forward into the light
You take my hand
The way is long
I am held firmly
I am led away from darkness



The first and last, second and penultimate statements mirror or echo each other, while the middle one marks the divide. In a proper ring composition with more complexity, the structure reveals three modes of ordering: sequential, around the circle; parallel across the circle, and vertically uniting beginning/end and middle. In the *Mathnawi*, the first order concerns the *shariat* or religious law, the external teaching; the second that of *tariqat*, the path of the seeker, while the third is that of the *haqiqat*, or of divine truth and reality.

Studies have been of the *Gathas* or Hymns attributed to Zoroaster himself (and maybe then even as much as three thousand years old – the Hymns were not written down until after the coming of Islam) that claim to show that the inner connections directly express the deeper and more radical aspects of the prophet's theology than appears on the surface (of the circle). 'Those who have ears, let them hear' – the Gospels acknowledge this tradition and, incidentally, in many places insert 'strange information' (such as the 153 fishes drawn up by the disciples, an astronomical reference) to tell the knowledgeable people of the time that the writers knew the old stuff!

The structural capacity of myth and poetry was recognised by Gurdjieff and his *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* is a prime example of the craft. It is interesting that, whereas while teaching in Russia he presented the structural format called the *Enneagram* in skeletal form, in his book he does not mention it all but just illustrates it by the writing itself. One important term he does describe is *harnel-aoot* – the point poised equally far from both beginning and end. This is no doubt the same as Mary Douglas's *turn*.

It must be emphasised that all this has nothing to do with present day fantastical 'decodings' of the Bible and the Qur'an, which are at best a distraction; but, as Rumi put it, the counterfeit is indication of the real.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

[Continuing Your Quest](#) - August 3-8, Santa Fe

[Psyche Integration \(USA\)](#) - February 8 - 11, St Francis Renewal Center, Delaware

Systematics Gathering - March 23-5, Charles Town, West Virginia

[Psyche Integration \(UK\)](#) - June 7 - 11, Benedictine Centre, Brighton, UK

[Psyche Integration \(USA\)](#) - June 28 - July 1, St Francis Renewal Center, Delaware

PUBLICATIONS

We want to draw your attention to the recent publication of our report on the Systematics Gathering VII, held last year, called *The Systematics Code*, and to remind you of the availability of the previous three reports.

GLOBALIZATION

A Case Study in Systematics – 2001 186 pages

GLOBALIZATION AND THE HIGHER SYSTEMS OF SYSTEMATICS – 2002 117 pages

GATHERING IV

Globalization of History – The Struggle and Emergence of Global Time – Symbiosis and Synergy - 2003 68 pages

THE SYSTEMATICS CODE – 2006 134 pages

Globalization, a Case Study opened up the application of LVT to Systematics through a study of Globalization initiated by Ben Hitchner.

Globalization and the Higher Systems carried this study on while also making an approach to the higher systems, Octad to Duodecad.

Gathering IV developed the Undecad and furthered the application of LVT

The Systematics Code introduced many complex issues but in particular *meaning games*.

All four volumes provide new technical information on the systems and on methods of doing Systematics. They have many illustrations. They include material from actual work done during the Gatherings.

Email karenstefano@citlink.net for further information and purchase. Copies \$20-25 each (plus p & p)

August 5th Na prikope Prague, 1968 Anthony Blake

A country in search
of freedom is erotic.
It means for them the
moment of release to come.
People return to their bodies -
the living darkness there

They make an open display
of what is hidden -
To focus the will
where there is no knowledge.
Where all is intrinsic
decision matters -
there is no authority

Distinguish the passionate from the sexual
There is suspense to bring into existence
Potentiality, potency.
To act is for renewal
The darkness is once more
Remembered

Bhakti-slava!
The dancers are in the streets
Young mouths articulate and sensual
Energy enabling them to embrace
Forever in a feverish
Duration.

