

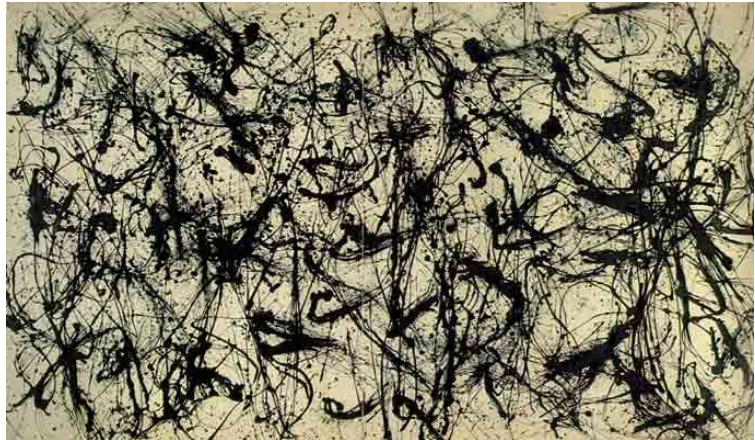
DUVERSITY 32 - 2012

32 is the fifth power of two and the fifth *happy number* (n is a happy number if one can take the squares of its digits, add them, and continue in this process to arrive at 1): 32 - 13 - 10 - 1.

It would not be the creative generation as 23, which is the reverse of 32, but rather the plan, the diagram, of the various forms of creatures modeled by the Creator.

It is the number of letters of the alphabet which God would have taught to Adam. Some of them would have been lost. Someone claims indeed that the face of God would be formed of **32** letters which all were not discovered, nor deciphered and ordered. If that had been the case, the man would have found his dignity of the son of God. The Gospels have succeeded to decipher 24 letters, the Pentateuch 22 and the Koran 28.

Jackson Pollock, *No. 32*



In this issue we are sometimes reprinting material which has appeared elsewhere. Perhaps a message is conveyed by their conjunction? It's a mixed bag or a secret message.

Gurdjieff's Transformational Psychology
Immaculate Conception and Mary's Birth
Learning to be Human
Sufism and the Way of Blame
Masters of Wisdom of Central Asia
Some Properties of the Enneagram
Nature of Choice
The Emerging New Paradigm

Russell Schreiber
Anon
Jason Stern
Yannis Toussulis
Hasan Shushud
David Eyes
Robert McKee
Ben Hitchner

IMAGES, METAPHORS AND MYTHS: an exploration into the untamed frontiers of the imagination.

Sebastopol, California January 25 & 26, 2013 contact Elizabeth Schreiber eesand@earthlink.net or call 707.292.4836
Taos, New Mexico Saturday October 12 through October 16, 2013 contact karenstefano@citlink.net or call 304.728.6757

These workshops invite a new matrix of creative expression inspiring profound levels of insight to emerge in relation to self, family, community and culture—from the personal to the archetypal. Working with the imagination, the symbolic language of the unconscious comes into the foreground allowing for a clearer vision and a more authentic experience of self. Intuition, insight, and vitality come alive in this reflective process awakening the instinctual and primitive parts of the brain allowing deeper interior truths to be revealed. The synergistic experience of creating collages, writing and sharing personal stories as myth or fairytale, movement classes and group meditation all ignite the heart with newfound inspiration.

GURDJIEFF'S TRANSFORMATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY—THE ART OF COMPASSIONATE SELF-STUDY



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Dr. Russell Schreiber has been involved in the Gurdjieff work since 1968. He studied with Wilhem A. Nyland from 1968 till Mr. Nyland's death in 1975 and was active in the Nyland group until 1980. Meeting Annie Lou Staveley in 1982, he was in contact with her until her death in 1996, visiting her on a regular basis. He has been involved in work groups to develop the deeper aspects of human potential for over 40 years and currently works with a group in northern California. He is a California Licensed Clinical Psychologist at the Lomi Psychotherapy Clinic in northern California. As a staff psychologist, he supervises and trains psychologists and psychotherapists, and specializes in depth psychology and somatic psychotherapy

Russell's book Gurdjieff's Transformational Psychology—The Art of Compassionate Self-Study will be out early next year. Here, he gives an overview of his thinking and why he wrote the book, based on his many years of participation in Work groups and professional psychological practice.

Let me begin by saying that I consider the teachings of George Ivanovich Gurdjieff (1877-1949), his ideas, sacred dances and other practices, to be an exceptionally advanced system for the harmonious transformation of human consciousness. Referred to as "the Work," the teachings that he brought to the 20th century appear to originate from sources that had reached a very high level of development. However, an important element in his opus regarding the transformation of human consciousness has been neglected. This element is the recognition and development of compassion alongside consciousness. When compassion is left out, we miss a vital piece of the Work. My book, *Gurdjieff's Transformational Psychology—The Art of Compassionate Self-Study*, explores the importance of compassion in the Work.

Having been involved in it since my early twenties, I found that an important emotional aspect was missing. The Work ideas and cosmology certainly contained a wealth of concepts, principles and practices that were both stimulating and practical. However, through studying myself and other people, I found that as individual evolution progressed, other psychological factors that inhibited emotional development remained overlooked and underdeveloped.

If you are familiar with the ideas, you may remember that Ouspensky refers to a "second conscious shock." This shock is not addressed directly in work material, but is a shock that affects our emotional center. The development of emotional center is indirectly addressed in Work ideas by Nicoll's interpretations of internal and external considering and by Gurdjieff's description of the degradation of "Faith, hope and Love." In addition, the sorry state of our emotional lives are depicted by Gurdjieff's constant critique of our lack of consciousness, conscience and negative behaviors of self-love, vanity, deceit, unnecessary anxiety and muscular tension, etc. But, the nuts and bolts of how to deliver ourselves from such habitual emotional patterns, how to give ourselves this "second shock," is simply left out. Instead, we are directed to engage in self-study through self-observation, work at sittings, do the Movements, etc. Somehow these practices will make us grow up. However, the direction of the development of emotional life is neither explicit and difficult to infer from Gurdjieffian reading or practices—thus the second conscious shock remains somewhat of a mystery.

As time passed, I noticed that individuals in Work groups suffer from the same emotional immaturity that I suffer from. Gurdjieffians discuss their observations, theorize, go to work days, but suffer as much as the clients I treat in my psychology practice in their inability to develop their emotional lives. Work may not have helped us develop emotionally beyond magnetizing emotional center, that is, teaching us to focus on an aim and crystallize our wish to become real men and women. I desired a more complete understanding of how emotional development was to be accomplished. This desire sent me back to graduate school and into the field of clinical psychology.

My practice as a clinical psychologist has shown me how the emotional center can be developed. I began to see the emotional habits and inner dynamics that keep us locked up emotionally and make it difficult to develop emotionally. These dynamics and ways to work with them are not extremely complex, and are needed by those who pursue Gurdjieff's work. Gurdjieff's methods needed psychological filling out. Additionally, I realized that the practice of current psychology was deficient in some fundamental ways. It lacked a larger framework to contain its deeper purpose, the development of inner life or the individuation process. Additionally, psychologists assumed that both they and their client were "awake," an assumption that profoundly affects psychological therapy without their realizing it. All of this led me to the conclusion that Work could help psychology and psychology could help the Work. They need each other.

Gradually, my clinical practice in psychology enabled me to develop compassion, both for myself and for others. Through my inner work and psychological work with others, I realized that compassion had been the missing ingredient in my work. I found that compassion and self-compassion were not sufficiently emphasized in Work. Compassion provided the environment and acted as the catalyst for my emotional development. Different aspects of Work came together for me. I found compassion to be a cornerstone in the foundation of Work; it had been there all along, but I had missed it.

Most practitioners of Gurdjieff's ideas dismiss modern psychology. It is to be avoided. People believe the self-understanding that comes through Gurdjieff's method of self-observation or another aspect of the Work is all that is needed. Perhaps people believe that psychotherapy or psychological ideas are confusing. This actually makes little sense to me because Gurdjieff was a master psychologist, his writings and methods are psychological, and even the practice of Movements represent a unique psychological arena for self-study and emotional development. And yet, our emotional life depends on something more than self-study or a specific practice of Work.

I have found that difficulties arise when the interpretations of Work ideas and practices fail to include self-compassion and compassion for others. Perhaps aspects of the exclusive and punitive nature of our Judeo-Christian background have caused this. Many of us, when we encounter some difficult insight about our self or another, get stuck in judgment instead of developing greater compassion. In addition, if one adopts an artificial mask of seriousness that says, "I am in the work, and I am special, whereas others are just asleep," compassion is neglected and forgotten. Such divisive attitudes cause different sects to form in religions and include shunning people who do not conform and other forms of abuse. The Gurdjieff work is not immune to this process. I believe the exploration and development of all forms of compassion may be a significant antidote to these diseases that fragment our collaborative effort to evolve.

Gurdjieff was reported to have said that one of the signs of the development of real being in a person is their ability to bear the unpleasant manifestations of others. This is a clue as to the direction in which we need to proceed. This phrase does not mean that while living in my own self-centered world I must somehow simply learn to tolerate the unpleasant behavior of others in a dismissive way. This would be a superficial interpretation of Gurdjieff's statement. Gurdjieff directs us to learn how to consider others, to understand how they are limited just as we are, and

respond to the real needs of the person or situation. Recognizing that each of us is imprisoned in automatic unconscious behavior is one of the keys to developing compassion.

Psychology offers many tools to help us develop our compassion. For example, I have found that in order to help another person, I must learn to fully enter into their experience. To do this requires that I not judge them, but rather understand and accept their behavior. This process develops my compassion. This ability is not something that can be done unconsciously, it does not happen by itself and it requires an intentional effort to put myself aside. It took me some time to realize that real acceptance of another person was dependent on the degree of self-acceptance and self-compassion I had developed for myself.

Working as a psychologist continues to highlight compassion as a key ingredient in facilitating transformation in my work with clients. I have found that self-understanding is directly related to compassion and is founded on two interconnected abilities: the ability to gather facts of my behavior and the ability to fully accept these facts by being interested in them. These two abilities develop self-compassion and compassion for others.

It is of primary importance to understand what compassion means in the context I am using it in this book. Compassion, as a human virtue, implies that I can be sympathetic and empathic to the suffering of others and wish in some way to alleviate that suffering. Compassion is the highest virtue at the core of every religion and philosophy. Compassion requires that I am able to place myself in the position of another and that I can understand and share their suffering. The suffering of another cannot be understood intellectually. Rather, I can only understand and empathize with another's pain or suffering through developing my capacity to experience and tolerate real suffering. Compassion is not feeling sorry for someone, fantasizing about someone else's suffering or indulging in sentimentality as an emotional reaction to what I imagine they are going through. Compassion is developed through my work. Compassion means that I intentionally allow myself to be affected by another person, experience how they are caught in suffering without the need to change them. Compassion for another provides a container for that individual's growth and helps them.

One reason for the lack of development of compassion in the Work may be that Gurdjieff did not paint a very flattering picture of our behavior. Many written accounts of Gurdjieff's work with groups are in the form of question and answer sessions where he repeatedly points out the failings and weaknesses of participants. From such accounts, it is all too easy to believe that this is what Gurdjieff wished to emphasize: that humans are really quite horrible and ignorant. Or, that even when people work on themselves, they may not get anywhere because of their weakness and other unbecoming defects. However, the latter could not be farther from the truth. Gurdjieff placed had faith in the possibility of the development of consciousness and compassion in those who work. Sadly, many group leaders imitate what they believe was Gurdjieff's behavior of demeaning his students and believe that by doing so they are somehow on the right path. Perhaps, Gurdjieff was trying to shock us into waking up, trying out different ways to see what was effective for students at the time.

It is time to realize that Gurdjieff was always experimenting and evolving the transmission and application of his transformative ideas. This constant evolution can be seen in the distinctive aspects from accounts of his early work and lectures, then his work at the Priuré, and finally in his later group work. His writings also show constant evolution. I surmise that the reasons for his changes in exposition and application are that he was working to find and refine the most effective means to transmit the teachings he had assembled so that his followers could make correct use of them.

Gurdjieff had noticed that his teachings were often too narrowly interpreted. This was a constant problem that he began to address in his later work. Different groups, sometimes in different countries, would fixate on a particular aspect of the work to the exclusion of other

important parts. For example, a group might fixate on self-observation and make that aspect of work the centerpiece of their efforts. This is a common fault we all share when we find one method useful and then repeat it while tending to dismiss other methods that might be equally important and effective. This becomes especially significant if the overall aim of Gurdjieff's legacy is the harmonious development of men and women. It is important to note that his institute at Fontainebleau was called the *Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man*. Harmony requires both intellectual and emotional growth and the exclusion of compassion has been a loss that can now be rectified.

It is very difficult to develop a balanced understanding of myself if I only record my behavior without developing the compassionate container needed for exploration and growth to begin. Further, I may habitually add to my observations that I am "good" or "bad," but this will not give me any clues to the underlying reasons for my behavior. The tendency to see myself through this good/bad lens is especially prevalent in the Gurdjieff work. It ends up being purely intellectual analysis and has little to do with the growth of consciousness or compassion. Compassion requires the development of emotional center whereas consciousness requires the development of intellectual center. This dual development is indicative of a new type of human being.

Many written accounts fail to show the truly compassionate love of people that Gurdjieff demonstrated. There are a few books written that do speak of this. In addition, oral accounts by individuals who sat with Mr. Gurdjieff report that he emanated great love and compassion. There are even accounts that tell of the depth of his understanding and his attempts to develop compassion in his students in unorthodox and creative ways. Images and stories of Gurdjieff's caring for people and his empathic nature need to come to the forefront.

It is now possible and necessary for all of us to turn our attention to the development of compassion and respect for each other. This represents a new direction and the beginning of a new octave in the Work. Gurdjieff directed us to begin our emotional growth by learning to care for plants and animals. Compassion for plants and animals is a beginning; deepening compassion for another human being in the midst of life completes this octave. Compassion is the only force that when linked with consciousness can metabolize the hatred that is rampant on our planet and transform it. If we are able to work with compassion, this may provide the catalyst to allow higher forces to enter humanity and synergistically work through us to create the expansion and shift in consciousness that is needed on our planet.

I propose that this is the time for such a new beginning, to take as a collective aim for both individuals and groups *to work to develop self-compassion and compassion for humanity*; a compassion that Gurdjieff so aptly demonstrated through his life and the legacy he left us. Compassion is a lost fragment we have not realized was needed. Let us now move forward and create a new octave: development of compassion.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND MARY'S BIRTH

Note by John Kirby: The enormity of Mary's suffering, passion and capacity are clear from this article, whose author is unknown. What strikes me in Mary's more recent Medjugorje messages is her calling for us to join in, participate in such words as: "My children, help me in my motherly battle and pray with me that sinners may become aware of their sins and repent sincerely. "...as a mother I implore you to persevere...", ""Dear children, I am calling you and am coming among you because I need you." "I am calling you because I need you. Accept the mission and do not be afraid, I will strengthen you. I will fill you with my graces." "I am with you and your suffering is also mine."



To speak of Mary is to speak of grace, at the same time it is necessary to come to see that Mary's life was a hard, self sacrificing and passionate one, a life that drew down the graces needed to sustain and enlighten it.

It has been a gross misunderstanding of Mary's life for the best part of the last two thousand years to see it as being one of exemption and privilege. Nothing could be further from the truth. Only in the last few decades has the world, and the Church, come to see Mary's life as being more one of faith and struggle than exemption. For far too long the perception has been that Mary was exempt from not just original sin at her conception, but also the physical pains of childbirth, fatigue, doubt, ignorance, temptation and even from death. As these are all consequences of sin it was thought that, Mary being sinless, she was exempt from such trials. This would, however, disassociate her from her Son, who, though sinless, was described by St. Paul as

"...not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning." (*Heb 4:15*).

By seeing Mary's life as having its own Everest Climb, one climbed in faith and obedience rather than carried by exemption and privilege, we can start to see how she is the figure of the Church and also glimpse something of the extent of her greatness. It has been said that a persons spiritual greatness before God is not measured by what God gives the person, but by what God asks of the person, and in this light it can be seen that more was asked of Mary than of any other person in history, including Abraham.

It has been a dogma of the Catholic Church for the last 150 years that Mary was conceived without the stain of original sin. This is what is known as the Immaculate Conception. In reality, this tell us more about God than it does of Mary. The Immaculate Conception can only come about by an act of God. The Catholic Church declares that Mary was conceived without sin "...in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, our saviour." Jesus, the New Adam, comes to offer salvation and redemption, to offer a life free of sin, to turn the tide that has been flowing since the time of Adam. To show immediately what this could mean Mary is conceived immaculately, again, "...in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, our saviour." As Dante has pointed out, this really makes her the daughter of her Son. It also clearly portrays her as being the potential fruit of the act of accepting our salvation and all that that means. As we have seen, this means that although born sinless Mary she was open to all the temptations and travails that we, and all people, are subject to, but through her obedience, struggle, faith and effort she remained sinless and revealed to us all that such a life is possible.

The current Pope has ascribed to Mary a life of *kenosis*. This is the quality St Paul attributes to Jesus when he writes: "Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied (*ekenosen*) himself" (*Phil 2:6-7*). The current preacher to the papal household, Raniero Cantalamessa, has said: "Mary followed her son in his kenosis, these words, due distinctions made, apply to her also and are the key to understanding her life. Although she was the mother, Mary learned obedience through what she suffered. Was Jesus perhaps not obedient enough in childhood or did he not know what obedience was, so that he had to learn it through what he suffered later on? No, 'learn' in this context means what 'know' generally means in the Bible, that is to say, the practical meaning of 'experiencing' or 'relishing'. Jesus practised obedience and grew in it because of what he suffered. An ever-greater spirit of obedience was necessary to overcome ever-greater trials and temptations, to the supreme trial of death. Mary, too, learned obedience and faith; she grew in them through

what she suffered, so that with all confidence we may say of her that we have a mother who is able to sympathise with our weaknesses, our fatigue, and our temptations, one who was tempted as we are, yet without sinning." (*Mary, Mirror of the Church*, p. 81*).

Another practical reason for the Immaculate Conception was that Mary would be helped in her preparation for the Incarnation. As Edward Matchett has written in the *Sophiagenic Synchronicity of Life, Need and Nothingness*, "Matter is formed by media exactly as it should be, taking into account all attendant circumstances, inner and outer conditions. This local ordering may seem miraculous and defy explanation, it may be obviously beneficial, very pleasing aesthetically, but it is never more than the total circumstances both permits and needs at that point in the space-time matrix. This holds even for a high order revelation or incarnation. Even the incarnation of the Lord Buddha or the Christ child is thus constrained: no more than all attendant circumstances in the realm of matter currently permit and require."

We can see, therefore, that Mary's responsibility in these things was immense and profound. Hence the need for her to be trained and educated from an early age in a life of true wisdom and the capacity to access, moment by moment, the knowledge and media necessary for each hazardous, meaningful moment whether seemingly great or small. It was necessary that Mary, before and after the Nativity of Christ, be able to co-operate in the ordering of the inner and outer conditions to provide the optimum circumstances for the Incarnation, childhood, ministry and Passion of Christ.

* *Mary, Mirror of the Church*, by Raniero Cantalamessa and Frances Lonergan Villa, Liturgical Press, 1992

Edward Matchett on Sophiagenics

Sophiagenics developed from an extensive research study aimed at identifying the precise nature of creative genius, viz., the nature of the truly original mind that produces the step change, the new paradigm, the seemingly impossible.

This research revealed that the highest levels of creativeness - that we label 'work of genius' or 'miraculous' - are not the output of a human brain working more fully and efficiently than hitherto, but a natural consequence of its learning how to be totally sensitive and obedient to the moment-by-moment guidance given by Divine Wisdom. Divine Wisdom is the creative intelligence that structures the whole of the natural order, the continuous primal act of creation that has produced and sustains our universe ... and that produces every mutation and symbiotic relationship.

It is when the brain discovers that it is a gross mistake to try to be self-sufficient, that it must function, primarily, as an input device, a receiver, not as a self-contained computer, that - then - real creativeness and the real miracles commence.

To reach this point, a condition of being in tune with the infinite, requires a process of education - or re-education - in which almost all the common actions of striving for achievement have to be turned on their heads. Then a person discovers those actions and values that were predominant in certain earlier moments in history, moments that contained the first teaching and practice of the core disciplines of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, and subsequent brief periods of renaissance of these and other great World Movements.

Sophiagenics is the essential discipline for producing intelligent change and progress, necessary new patterns and new orders of things and ideas; not a formula for perpetuating proven patterns and orders. It is not merely the causal agent of external change and progress, but also of important radical internal developments - up to full maturity, and being truly wise.

Self reliance is exchanged in each new moment of Sophiagenic application for a total reliance on Creation itself: the one source that has structured and empowered all the organisms of nature since the 'big bang'. The continued practice of Sophiagenics converts logic-based thinking into an exact instinct and illumination, in which 'media' (the perpetual emanations and creative action of the one source of Creation) and matter (existing creation) combine naturally and organically to make and extend meaning in and for each new moment.

LEARNING TO BE HUMAN

Jason Stern



Extracts from his collection of essays from the 'Esteemed Reader' column in Chronogram Magazine (Coddhill Press, 2010) with permission from the author

May 2007 The Power of People Together

I have always had an "I-will-do-it-myself" streak. It must be congenital, for as a child, I was usually alone, attempting some feat of derring-do. Indeed it appears that the gene has been passed on—my two-year-old, Asher, frequently yells, "Don't help me!"

Natural or nurtured, it doesn't really matter. But recently I have been struck by the power of working together with others as a team, or simply gathering and inviting the appearance of meaning. Three recent experiences have brought this lesson home:

1) The April *Cafe Chronogram*, at the Muddy Cup Coffeehouse in Beacon. The line-up was Greg Martin, the photographer responsible for the cover art for the March issue of *Chronogram*; Pamela Pentony, an amazing jazz singer and teacher; and Da Chen, the inimitable writer/flutist/performance artist.

When Da Chen stood up, he joked about how his publisher at first demanded that for marketing purposes he must do something other than write. He acknowledged then, to those assembled for the Cafe, that he plays the flute. Producing a simple bamboo flute he began to play, and at that moment the place became still. Yes, the notes that emitted from his instrument were clear and precise, and the traditional Chinese melodies were beautiful. But there was something else that caught my attention about Chen's performance: Despite his otherwise playful and light manner, he played (and perhaps that is the key word) his flute with great intensity. Eyes closed, but relaxed in concentration, shoulders hunched around his instrument, Chen's presence created a sense that his entire body was involved in the playing. "This is Kokopelli," I said to myself. (Kokopelli is the humpbacked, flute-playing, Hopi god of fertility. His playing chases away the winter and brings about spring.)

After his performance Chen signed his books with brush and ink, rhythmically rendering Chinese characters and hand-stamping his signature—different characters like prescriptions for the person who sat before him. I mentioned that his flute playing resembled the characters he drew on the pages. Like the characters, he became a conduit for something that could arguably be called an archetypal quality to be channeled into the room, and into the world.

Of course for a quality to be brought in requires more than the conduit itself. It requires that there be some people present (and not just physically, but with their attention) to match the activity of the performer with an equal receptivity. The small group assembled at this event was ready to be brought into such a state of receptivity, and the effect was that for a few moments the event became an Event in the true sense of the word. I am reminded of an introduction to a Sufi parable by Idries Shah.

He writes,

When a number of people come together, and if these people are harmonized in a certain way, excluding some who make for disharmony— we have what we call an event. This is by no means what is generally understood in contemporary cultures as an event. For them, something which takes place and which impresses people by means of subjective impacts— is called an event. This is what some term a "lesser event," because it takes place in the lesser world, that of human relationships easily produced, synthesized, commemorated. The real event, of which the lesser event is a useful similitude (not more and no less) is that which belongs to the higher realm.

We cannot accurately render a higher event in stilted terrestrial representations and retain accuracy. Something of surpassing importance in a higher realm could not entirely be put in terms of literature, science, or drama, without loss of essential value. But certain tales, providing that they contain elements from the high-event area which may seem absurd, unlikely, improbable, or even defective, can (together with the presence of certain people) communicate to the necessary area of the mind the higher event.

2) The evening before the *Cafe Chronogram* I had the privilege of hearing Al Gore speak at the Omega Institute's Being Fearless Conference in Manhattan. If only he had been so candid when he was running for president, the **vote!** in his favor would have been so numerous as to prevent the election **from** being swindled.

Gore's message was clear: The problems of environmental distress and global human conflict are a direct result and reflection of the state of consciousness of humanity. We are afraid - afraid to give up the comfort! we know, afraid to look at the results of our actions beyond the immediate personal gains we might enjoy, afraid to stop lying to and about ourselves. The talk was a brilliant tapestry of interwoven themes, all pointing back to the central theme of the conference: How to overcome fear and acknowledge the inherent unity of humanity and indeed all life.

When Gore stepped down the group of several thousand stood and clapped, continuing long after he had left the stage. There was a palpable sense that something real had been touched in each and all.

3) "What's that noise?" Asher asked, as I pushed him on his swing in the back yard.

"Yes, what is it, Asher?" I asked in return, for I knew he knew.

"A bird is talking to me!"

"What kind?"

"A woodpecker."

I stopped his swing and we looked in the direction of the sound. There, silhouetted against the darkening evening sky, was the outline of the long-beaked bird on a high tree branch. The bird's knock-knock-knock resounded in the calm of dusk.

March 2008 Lunar Eclipse

It is different in these times. The needs of the world are very much wider and there is a task that can no longer be performed by a few. Many people are needed. Jesus said that the harvest is plentiful but the reapers are few, and now it is even more so like that. The harvest is enormous—the whole future of mankind.

—J.G. Bennett, *Talks on Beelzebub's Tales*

Tonight I am watching as the earth passes between the sun and the moon. A bite is taken out of that beautiful closest celestial body. And as the mythical method suggests, everything we experience and perceive has a meaning within the matrix of our psyche. This meaning is not available to deduction, but can only be seen, tacitly, in the moment. This event is not an exception.

It is not a coincidence that the words "lunatic" and "lunacy" are rooted in lunar—the moon. Like the earth, our bodies are 80 percent water. The moon pulls at us as dramatically as it rhythmically moves the ocean tides. It impels us to act, and creates agitation—irritation even—as our bodily and hormonal stasis is disturbed. Many women menstruate with the moon, and the lead-up to this event can be distressing. As a man I often feel the onset of PMS-like symptoms as the moon approaches fullness, and relief at the moment it begins to wane.

The moon is related to what is habitual and reactive in us. It is the realm of fidgeting, obsession, hysteria, war. And there is even a reciprocal relationship between the moon and our lunacy.

Philosopher G. I. Gurdjieff said, "The evolution of humanity beyond a certain point, or, to speak more correctly, above a certain percentage, would be fatal for the moon. The moon at present feeds on organic life, on humanity. Humanity is a part of organic life; this means that humanity is food for the moon. If all men were to become too intelligent they would not want to be eaten by the moon."

The bright side is that the influence gives us something to struggle with. It produces the inner friction that is the grist for work on ourselves, as we struggle to maintain balance and equilibrium in the face of our most destructive habits.

Whether the lunar influence is real or symbolic doesn't matter. What matters is that most of humanity is in the grips of a mass psychosis. We have fallen prey to influences that produce suspicion, fear, and hatred, and caused us to forget what matters most—the inherent unity of life. Fear of lack has led to greed, which has led us to pillage the natural world and mercilessly abuse and kill one another in competition for resources. Our collective situation is undeniably bleak. Even the independently wealthy need to live in the natural world their personal gain has ruined. You can't eat money.

Unfortunately political activism is meaningless in a system that is fundamentally flawed. As much as I have fantasized about how different things would be if the Bush/Cheney *coup d'etat* of 2000 had failed, and Al Gore became president, I also know that nothing can really be different until there is a fundamental shift in consciousness. If spoiler Ralph Nader helped accelerate the process of effecting this shift, he is to be thanked, not derided. Thanks to him, it is now crystal clear to anyone with eyes half open that our elections are rigged and the US "democracy" is a farce.

The activism that might effect a transformation is an effort to free ourselves from the hypnosis of the world in which we live. How can we connect to and engage with what is real, with one another in a meaningful way? Our society is terrified of cults because we *are* one. How can we wake up and be deprogrammed from the cult of distraction and fear?

Forty years ago J. G. Bennett wrote, "We speak of liberation 'in this very life'; but this also means in this very moment, not a bit yesterday, a bit today and a bit tomorrow. If we do not work now, we never work."

At least a few of us, who have sufficient wish, can escape from prison. Let's go!

The eclipse is almost complete as I write these words. I feel the possibility of automatism and lunacy being subsumed into a radiant solar influence. I feel a brightness in my chest that radiates warmth. I summon the effort to sense my body sitting in the chair. As the moon goes dark, I become whole.

October 2008 Making a New World, Not Escaping the Old One

Our present society, based on great institutions that control economic resources and political power, tends to strengthen the materialistic and egoistic sides of human nature.

We need a new kind of society in which concern for needs of others and of Nature as a whole will predominate over self-interest and fear.

—Prospectus for the Claymont Society for Continuous Education, November 1974

My parents were sure the end was nigh, and they intended to be prepared. It was the early '70s, and abundant, fertile land in a remote area was cheap. They learned to build houses by building them. They learned to farm by farming. They started a "free school" in a burned-out house and eventually came together as a community and built a schoolhouse. They met often for encounter groups and other varieties of "consciousness-raising." On weekends we marched on one Capitol or another, against nuclear power, against imperialist warmongering. Their solution to the problems of society was to become self-sufficient. To drop out and reject their bourgeois origins.

That was almost 40 years ago. Today, the problems that seemed to have us on the brink of disaster are amplified. The balance of nature is teetering under the weight of our environmental impact. Our leaders and their cheerleading team, the media, are so blatantly evil and ignorant as to be laughable. The lumbering behemoths of the multinational corporations are stumbling and falling under their massive girths and the reptilian stupidity of their profit-fixated myopia. The feeding of the world's natural resources into the gaping maw of our industrial monster—which consumes oil, forests, oceans, whole species of animals, glaciers, and peoples before shitting out an Amazon of toxic waste—is on the rise. Social inequality, globalization, and the exploitation of "human resources" are rife. We are waking up from the "American Dream," which was yet another cynical joke at the expense of the malleable masses who stay tethered to the treadmills of industry, futilely stretching toward the dangling carrot (forever out of reach), ultimately falling off the track to be ground into dust as the machinery of progress makes its unstoppable push forward.

And there is a sense that, more than ever, despite the ignorant elements in our midst, the world is just too small to think only about personal salvation. Dropping out and becoming "self-sufficient" is no longer the answer. We are in it together.

Since I've lived through the Back to the Land movement, it seems clear to me that what is needed now is best described by an old adage: "Be in the world, but not of it." We need to make the new world right here in the midst of the old one. And it is for people to come from our best

selves to create something that knits together a meaningful community. We need to create something new—not spend our precious energy rebelling against the old.

The great pitfall of activism and politics is that they engage well-intentioned people with a paradigm that is fundamentally flawed. Even the illusion of democracy in America is dead. Now let's let the dead bury their dead while we create something new.

I look around the community and see so many people doing amazing work that has the remarkable quality of putting their values into action. Here are seven examples that spring immediately to mind, because they all live and work within a half-mile of my home: Pete Taliaferro, and family, and his organic community-supported farm; LagustaYearwood and her impeccable, local, organic, vegan meal home delivery service (and her bicycle-powered washing machine); Mario Torchio and his 60 Main Arts Collective & Cafe; Kim Kimble and daughter Noelle Kimble McEntee and their Celebration of the Arts event; James Yastion and the ultra-green strawbale house he built himself; Chris Harp, apiarist, and his passionate work to educate about bees; Ron Khosla, farmer, and his work to organize community farmers nationally under an organic certification independent of the USDA.

Seven people doing amazing work in and for the earth and community— and within a half-mile of my home. What if I extended the circle to two miles?!

The work for a new world is happening here, now. As the corporate dinosaurs die, the warm-blooded mammals—small, interrelated, interdependent communities that operate with an awareness of their own neighborhood and the planet as a whole—will flourish.

A Talk with Dr. Yannis Toussulis Author of *Sufism and the Way of Blame: Hidden sources of a Sacred Psychology*.



David Paquiot *with permission see <http://mycaravanofdreams.com/>*

*The suicide bombing that killed forty-one people earlier this year in Pakistan, and the dervish killed in the Iranian government's ongoing crackdown against the Sufis was a sobering reminder about how the cultural, political and social climates, to borrow a phrase from Dr. Toussulis, 'change the articulations of sacred traditions.' I was fortunate to have been able to further discuss some interesting points in his recent book: *Sufism and the way of Blame* which I reviewed in the previous issue of *Sufi magazine*.*

In your book you say that ' Religious teachings are not formed in a political vacuum, and that it is important to investigate their socio-historic context.' You go on to treat Sufism as a multiplex phenomenon requiring a multidisciplinary approach to understand and appreciate it. Do you feel this takes away from the mystery at the heart of this mystical path, that aspect of Sufism which lies beyond rational study and the mind?

For me, no. The point I make in my book is that Sufism is a cultural manifestation of something that is not exhausted by its multiple or manifold expressions. The heart of mysticism – any mysticism is a great mystery because it entails developing a unitive mode of perception; but such a mystery is not the same as the mystification that occurs in many esoteric or occult schools. The greatest mystery is found at the heart of life itself and not in esoterica. Sufism is

one way of approaching that mystery. No one religion or form of spirituality can capture or encapsulate the sublime (and inexpressible) experience of discovering the unity that lies at the heart of life. The experience I allude to is an event, an encounter between human being and Being Itself. The rational mind (alone) is not sufficient to grasp such an event, but it nevertheless gives shape to it. One should, therefore, refine one's intuitive capacity ("spirit," "heart," etc.). One "catches" the experience at the heart of Sufism like a virus if one is intuitively prepared to receive it, but one must work hard to cultivate that receptivity, thus a contemplative discipline is necessary.

I have seen the sentiment expressed by some Sufis that what can be written or said about Sufism isn't Sufism, that Sufism is an experience. Is it possible to shed light on this deeper aspect of Sufism while looking at both the sociohistoric settings and actions of some celebrated Sufis of the past?

I have detailed many of the "sociohistoric settings and actions of some celebrated Sufis of the past in my book, so I will not repeat myself here. The deeper aspect of Sufism is that it helps catalyze and shape an "event." The fully developed Sufi encounters something sublime ("God," "Being," etc.) in such a powerful way that it shifts his/her basic way of perceiving reality itself. This shift in perception leads to a transformation in psychological functioning; the "I" that I knew before this event is no longer the same "I." Such an event must take on a number of interpretive forms to render it a fully developed experience. These interpretive forms are supplied by the given culture and/or religious tradition that one inhabits; and such symbolic forms are important because they help organize the "event" in a meaningful way that can be communicated to others intersubjectively (or communally). Anyone who has an intuitive capacity can thereby attain a "taste" of such an experience, and much of Sufi poetry and metaphysics conveys that momentary impact or impression to a broader community.

Can one draw a line and say how much of the mystique of Sufism in the west can be attributed to Idries Shah, Gurdjieff, Bennett and just the natural mystique created over something novel. I would imagine given our love for novelty it's harder to see things for what they are?

I am sorry, but I have to rephrase your question in order to understand it. I believe you are asking something like this: "When it comes to spirituality or materiality, many of us in the West have a desire for something novel or exotic. Given this desire for something exciting and entertaining, are most of us in the West able to understand Sufism in its deeper aspects?" If this is close to what you are asking, then I have several propositions to make. First of all, mystical experience is rarely understood (on its own terms) by most people whether "Eastern" or "Western." The very word "mystical" originally meant "close-mouthed." In other words, not much can be said about mysticism to those who do not have an experiential reference by which to intuitively grasp its meaning. So the question you are asking does not pertain only to people in the West. The consumption orientation that has reached an apex in the West – and which has now spread¹³ globally – is definitely a barrier, but so is the assumption that "Easterners" (or traditionalists) understand mysticism far better than secular Westerners. One thing I can say for the "East" is that traditionalist cultures still maintain a deeper interest in mysticism, but often in a deeply conformist way that is reflexive in those cultures. Romantic sentimentalism, for example, is often confused with an appreciation for mysticism in many of those settings, but I doubt that this is necessary to penetrate the deeper secrets of Sufism. In many parts of the Middle East, Sufism is more like a social movement that bears many of the features of a folk-cult that many ascribe to out of habit, but how many people can really grasp the profundity of a great Sufi like Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabi, for example? Instead, Easterners" and Westerners have a marked tendency to follow their own habits, and this is no less true of Muslims than it is true of non-Muslims. As far as the Islamophobia that is so prevalent in the West, much of it is an unthinking response to the events of 9/11 and the politicization of religion. My point is that one must break

through the deep conditioning of the mind and psyche in order to appreciate the transformative qualities of Sufism, and this task requires an understanding of both individual and collective conditioning. As for Shah, Gurdjieff, and Bennett – and notwithstanding the fact that I am critical of some (but not all) of their teachings – I think that they were trying to do this in a somewhat haphazard way. Unfortunately, all of these teachers succumbed to their own mystifications in the process, a great danger that all teachers face as they become convinced of their own authority.

What need do you feel that Sufism is addressing currently in America given its sometimes anti religious, anti-Muslim climate and the entrenched materialistic propensities.

Given most sociological studies, it is actually surprising to find that the United States is one of the most religious societies on the planet. For example, one study found that approximately 84% of the people in this nation profess a belief in God and most of them are nominally Christian. Many in the Middle East also profess a belief in God but that doesn't necessarily mean that they are any less egocentric or "materialistic." Over several years of traveling in the greater Middle East I found that there is a collectivistic form of ego-centricity that is no less problematic than hyper-individualism that one finds in America. A collectivistic form of egocentricity simply presents different problems than the hyper-individualism. Being "religious" may be a starting point, but how many people become intelligently religious? One must question what it means to be religious in the first place.

What does it mean to be religious?

I use the word "religious" in its original sense, from the Latin *religare*, "to be linked together." A "religion," therefore is a vehicle for linking people together and reminding them of their interdependence. We can become more interdependent in an intelligent way or we can link up as an unthinking herd. Much of what passes for religion is actually reflexive habit or cultural conditioning. The Prophet Muhammad (sa) once said, "Prayer without knowledge is useless." For me, being religious means that one must learn to think with both ones head and ones heart; one must unite the two in a form of intuitive-intellection. Sufism, in its classical forms, educates this ability in a very direct manner that is applicable to every-day life.

While reading your book I wanted ask you, 'What is a Sufi' and 'How does one identify an authentic Sufi teaching or teacher?'

The most important question to ask is whether or not I have an authentic desire to know God -- in and for Himself. In my estimation, most seekers are actually masking other needs that they have with a need for closeness to God or Reality. These needs include a deep desire for psychological healing, a need for community, and a need for simple solace and meaning. Of course, all of these needs may be genuine in their own right, but they are not the same as a burning desire to know God or to know Being in its own right. If I am genuine in my desire for a true form of existence, then I will see-through any partial or false teacher or teaching sooner or later. Of course, one may encounter many falsehoods along the path, but suffering them and learning and finding ones truer compass is all part of ones spiritual education. As William Blake once said, "the fool who persists in his folly will become wise." You ask, "what is a Sufi?" A simple answer would be that a "Sufi" is one follows a premise – such as "God may exist" to its final conclusion. Simply put, the "I" (in the form that we imagine) does not truly exist. Instead, it may become immediately apparent that Existence is suffused with an intelligence and compassion that was formerly inconceivable. In the process – as one of my teachers once said, "you must be crazy without truly becoming insane." To be a Sufi, it is often said, one must balance (mystical) intoxication with sobriety. Mystical intoxication must first be found and then tamed. Sufism is one way of doing that: it can enable one to find an "intuitive" form of intellection that, nevertheless, requires a greater form of rational intelligence to succeed in its enterprise.

You said "During the Rumi craze the premises of Sufism were almost completely reversed in the

interest of spiritual consumerism." What is spiritual consumerism? Where do we see it at work today? What can be done to change one's understanding of the basic premises of Sufism?

As long as I have an untamed form of egotism, I will seek to consume. Feeling that my sense of ego is ultimately empty, I will seek to fill it up. Finding that I cannot fill it up sufficiently to ease my sense of ultimate emptiness, I will seek to replace one object with another. It doesn't matter what form such an object may take, whether spiritual or material. My desire will be to shore-up my sense of a substantive ego no matter what it takes. One of the fundamental premises that we find in classical Sufism is that only God (or Being) truly exists. One must place a wager or gamble with one's life to find out if this is truly so. In this sense, Sufism is a disciplined form of inquiry that seeks to directly verify whether or not "I" truly exist in the form that I imagine. If not, what truly exists? Do I simply disappear, and if so what will replace me? Is the universe ultimately empty, or is there a greater intelligence that suffuses all of Existence? If I am too busy trying to simply survive (the condition of much of the planet), or if I am too busy trying to fill myself up with added "goods" – the condition of most of the "developed" world -- then I may never get around to seriously asking such questions, let alone set about trying to answer them.

Looking at the way that Rumi and Sufism has been fashioned in the West what if anything can you infer about the West, its understanding of love, the mystical Path, and Islam ?

"The West" is a rather broad category, and usually by using that term we are indicating a region of the world that has embraced secularism and rejected traditionalism. But is that true of most of Europe and North America? Certainly those regions have been most affected by industrialization and capitalism, but the rest of the world is catching up. With the "triumph" of industrial capitalism, many social philosophers exclaim that most of the world is entering a period that is referred to as "high modernity." With the latter comes a higher degree of individuality, the breakdown of many traditional norms, etc. Islam holds many meanings for many people, and with the process of globalization, these meanings are being increasingly deliberated – and often with a greater sense of urgency and attendant conflict. So the broader question that interests me is how will love and the mystical path be understood as we are entering this period? "Islam," "love," and "the mystical path" are not unchanging categories with preset understandings that are set in stone. It may be convenient to think that all of these things were more fully understood in the past, but I rather doubt it. Islam and the mystical path are in a continuous process of evolution and adaptation. Perhaps that is a "Western" view, but I find this view reflected in some of the classical Sufis as well. The question you ask, therefore, is an open question. First one must endeavor to follow a path, and then to gauge its results. I believe that it is better to seek Sufism in its more traditional form, learn from it and then question its fundamental premises again-and-again in an increasingly intelligent and experienced way that gradually unfolds. Suffice to say, Sufism will not remain the same, although its fundamental structures and discoveries will remain intact.

You use the term 'sacred psychology' in the subtitle of your book. Can you for those who may be unfamiliar tell us what you mean by 'sacred psychology', how is it similar to what we know as psychology, how does it differ?

Perhaps the term "psychology of the sacred" might be more apt; and I certainly don't mean "psychology" in the modern sense of the word. The origins of psychology can be found in the Platonic tradition where the former was joined with philosophy and religion. This tradition of psychology was passed on to the three great monotheisms, including Islam, and it had to do with investigating the meaning of the psyche (or soul) and how it connects with the sacredness of existence itself. For Platonists, the origin of the soul was to be found in the "One," so the meaning of existence was bound-up with rediscovering the divine origins of human being. A psychology of the sacred, today, would concern itself with the same quest, but in the main, most of psychology no longer concerns itself with that. Exceptions can be found in the analytical

psychology of C. G. Jung, the existential-phenomenologists, and “transpersonal psychologists,” but they are rather on the fringe of mainstream psychology, so we must “dig out” those central concerns from ancient traditions like Sufism and rediscover their relevance for people today. In the process, of course, the study and practice of sacred traditions like Sufism will change and become more psychological or highly individuated, but that should be expected. An authentic form of individuation leads us back to our basic, human interrelatedness, and this is one of the goals of Sufism.

Murshid Mehmet Selim Bey says in your interview with him that "It is imperative that mystics of the world's religion come together in dialogue in order to share the particular gifts given to their respective traditions." Through what means can mystics of all traditions come together?

What Mehmet Selim Bey and I agree on is that there are “core” phenomenological experiences that can be discovered in various forms of mysticism and these experiential structures can be contrasted and compared. Certainly all religious traditions are equally concerned with finding “God” or the source of “Being,” and they are all part of our global heritage as human beings. Mystics who are less parochial can – and have – studied other traditions, but this requires a new form of ecumenical or interreligious dialogue that is less politicized. The mystics of each tradition can still stand as “witnesses” for the efficacy of their own paths without, however, trying to privilege their own ways as the only – or even best – way. Of course, this requires a greater degree of religious humility, and only some, not all, mystics exhibit this quality. Those that do have such humility have come together throughout history with respect for their religious differences; and we would like to see those “meetings of the ways” increase in the interests of reducing inter-communal conflicts like those that we see, for example, between Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Middle East.

I was curious as to why the Malamatiyya changed their 'policy' for lack of a better word, after the formation of the Turkish Republic to accept those seekers who weren't part of an already existing tariqat?

By the turn of the nineteenth century, many Malamatis (like others) observed that a many tariqats had become mired in hierarchical, medieval structures that mirrored the power structures of the Sultanate. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and as a new, secular republic emerged in Turkey, some Malamatis saw this as an opportunity to re-visit and to reform Sufism as a path. After the formation of the Republic, Malamatis such as Hadji Maksud Effendi and his son, Mahmud Sadettin Bilginer, saw the need for a more adaptable approach that would welcome seekers who had a more secular education. Seekers such as these were often shy of embracing what they saw as the more “backward,” authoritarian style of many of the tariqats. While searching for a new “way,” many Malamatis sought to return to a simpler and less rigidly structured approach to Sufism that was also evident in the earliest years of the tradition in Baghdad and Khorasan. They believed that they found the old ways more malleable than later forms of Sufism, and they applied those old ways anew.

I was wondering if you could shed some light on the saying of Bahauddin Naqshband that appears twice in your book " Today the doors of Shaykhhood are closed and the door the spiritual friendship has opened"? Mehmet Selim Bey also added his own signature to this saying "The door to Shaykhhood has always been closed, and the door to spiritual friendship has always been open.' Can you shed some light on the consequences of adopting this saying?

(I will take these two questions together, since they form a whole). There is nothing new about the saying that you quote above. In ninth century Nishapur (Iran), the earliest Malamatis eschewed outward signs of tariqat affiliation because of the religious wars that were taking place in that region between the adherents of different schools of Islamic law. By the fourteenth century C.E., certain Sufis like Bahauddin Naqshband had also become dismayed at certain

aspects of Sufism that they believed were fetishistic and promoted cults of personality. Naqshband believed that Pirs and Shaykhs were being worshipped as divine intermediaries, something which contradicted Islam. Ironically, perhaps, this became a feature of many branches of the Naqshbandiyya later in history, but the earlier Khwajagan and Malamatis always believed that a murshid should act as more of a “spiritual friend” than an authoritarian leader. Simply put the consequences of applying this approach is that spiritual seekers are challenged to shed their fantastical expectations of Shaykhs and assume more responsibility for their own wayfaring. The murshid in the Malamati Way acts more like a catalyst, and a support, rather than a divine intermediary with miraculous powers.

As we approach the 10 year anniversary of 9/11, what would you like to see for the world over the course of the next 10 years. What role would you like Sufism and also the Malamatis to play in this time?

There’s a lot I would like to see happen in the world that may or may not occur. For example, I would like to see a greater promotion and acceptance of basic human rights, of equity and justice, of responsible governance and the development of a more highly educated citizenry, etc. These are basic human “goods,” but I believe that the basic greed and avarice of a few prevents this from happening. Sufis refer to this as the dominance of the “commanding nafs,” which is basically power-driven. I think that there are treasures to be found within classical Sufism that offer an antidote to the “nafs (or ego) that inclines towards evil.” The treasures are sometimes obscured by cultural trappings that are less suitable for people living in modern, secular societies. I would like to see a thorough-going critique of – as well as renewed appreciation for – traditional norms and values in Sufism. In short, I would like to see the development of more mature and discriminating form of the quest take place through a renewed interest in the Sufi classics that is far less emotional and far more discerning. Those “classics” include a rich array of poetic and metaphysical insights that can only be plumbed through devoted practice. The path requires seekers with courage and perseverance, but likewise, the path requires better prepared teachers who are better educated, yet forthright and humble. I would like to see Malamatis and other Sufis come “out of the closet” more and challenge people to stretch themselves and grow up spiritually and psychologically.

I was happy to see clear definitive history of it presented in your book and also to read the progressive ideas of Mehmet Selim Bey. 'What' or maybe I should ask 'Whose' need does your work introducing the Malamati way address, the individual seeker? society at large?

Properly speaking, there are no individual seekers. Individuals are formed by – and always remain partly interdependent with – the societies they inhabit. To be sure, there are individual and unique characteristics to every person, but people are basically social creatures. If an individual changes deeply the effects radiate outwards into the rest of society. Likewise if a society is balanced and just, it supports the endeavors of individual seekers. In this respect, the Malamati way addresses societal, as well as individual, needs. If one becomes inwardly balanced, ones relationships with others necessarily changes.

INTRODUCTION TO *MASTERS OF WISDOM OF CENTRAL ASIA*

Hasan Shushud

This book, translated by Muhtar Holland, has been unavailable for many years and we plan to reprint it soon. One of the sources for Shushud's book was the Rashahat 'Ain al-Hayat recently translated by Muhtar as Beads of Dew from the Source of Life, in which Masters of Wisdom is acknowledged. This book also was seminal in John Bennett's Masters of Wisdom.



J G Bennett with Hasan Shushud c. 1972

In the Name of God, All-Merciful and Compassionate

THE aim of this book is to acquaint the reader with a community of saints and sages from the golden age of Islamic Sufism among the Turks. A serious effort has been made to present the subject in a realistic light, clear of the grotesque fantasies that have been woven around it in the past.

Islamic Sufism is divided into two main branches: the Northern Sufis and the Southern Sufis. The Northern group comprises the Aryan and Turanian sages who lived in East and West Turkestan, Transoxiana, Khurasan, Iran, and Azerbaijan. The Khwajagan—'Masters of Wisdom'—were the basic component of this branch, although many other great mystics emerged in those regions, including Abū Yazid (Bāyazīd) al-Bistāmī, Hamdūn al-Qaṣṣār, Junaid al-Baghdādī (who was originally from Nihawand), Abū f Alī al-Daqqāq of Nīshāpūr, Abū-l Hasan of Kharāqan, Abū-l Qasim of Jurjān (Gurgān), Khwaja 'Abdallāh al-Anṣārī of Herat, Najm al-Dīn al-Kubrā, Alā' al-Dīn of Ardabīl, Shams al-Dīn of Tabriz, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, Sayyid Qasim of Tabriz, and many others.

The other branch is formed by the Sufis of Iraq, Syria, Arabia, and Africa. The Northern Sufis are distinguished from these (and from the Ottoman Sufis, who occupy an intermediate position) by their characteristic emphasis on the ecstatic realization of such primary concepts as liberation and occupation, annihilation of the self, permanent non-being, and non-existence. This emphasis is apparent in their temperamental disposition, their methods of training, their sayings, and their literature; it has enabled them to maintain their position at the forefront of all mystical endeavour, not only in Islam but throughout the world. The Southern Sufis present a sharp contrast, for they concern themselves with secondary notions like existential monism, union, love, manifestations and visions, unification, and so on.

The spiritual dynasty of the Masters of Wisdom lasted for five centuries. Its political contemporaries were the Khwarazm-Shāhs, Jenghis Khan, Tamerlane, and his successors. In the guise of the Naqshbandi Order it has continued in existence down to the present day.

The title of Khwaja or Master was first given in Central Asia, where it was conferred upon great scholars and sages, as well as on men of noble descent and worldly distinction. The first important figure to be recognized by this title was the venerable Yūsuf al-Hamadānī.

What did the Masters of Wisdom discover and what did they impart ?

They found that which is discovered by all who escape from illusion into Reality. They never withheld their discoveries from seekers who showed signs of promise. They lifted the veil of

materialism and solved the riddle of creation. They achieved absolute deliverance. The significance of all this can be appreciated by those endowed with perspicacity.

Even today, they are ready to bring their truth to the aid of all who are capable of receiving it. Divine abundance neither increases nor diminishes with time. The 'Age of Bliss' is ever present and enduring. The Masters of Bliss do not stand aloof from the communities of mankind. The ways of Realization, in all their purity, are still open to us now, provided we are ready to pass from imitation to verification. For Sufism consists in leaving metaphor for reality, in forsaking mere words in favour of direct experience. Such attainments call for talents of a high order, such as those that emerged over centuries among the Masters of Wisdom and their fellows of like disposition. Those rare individuals included Khwaja Naqshband, Muhammad Parsa, Sa'd al-Din Kâshghari, Mawlana 'Abd al-Rahmân Jâmî, and Khwaja 'Ubaidallâh al-Ahrâr. Their degree is that of absolute liberation, which is attained only by the renunciation of all relativities. In the words of Niyâzi-i Misri, it is allotted 'to one out of a thousand perfect men'.

What doctrine or method is responsible for the mature development of the saints and sages we call the Masters of Wisdom? It is the path of realization followed by those who cannot accept the Creation as a *fait accompli* and who reject the space-time world system. Such souls are the aspirants to genuine initiation. Their course is that of pure Sufism, which leads to God-consciousness and aims at transcending both existence and awareness.

This is the direct route of verification and realization. The goal of those who take this path is the shedding of all that is merely relative, escape from the cosmic illusion, attainment of absolute liberation, detachment from individualization. The starting point is Annihilation in God (*fana' fi-llah*) and the diminution is the Most Sacred Mystery of Non-Being (*ghaib*). This is pure Sufism, the prerogative of the most perfect beings, of the greatest Prophets. It is bestowed upon the Masters of Oneness, who have been divinely guided to 'weariness with being'.

Annihilation (*fana'*) is the essential basis of realization. Without it, contact with reality cannot be established, the veils that hide the true nature of things cannot be removed. Without annihilation, the cosmic illusion does not cease, the fictions of mind and memory are never ending.

What is annihilation? It is to pass from phenomenal existence to real being, to the Mystery of absolute liberation, to perceive the unreality and insubstantiality of the universe as it appears to exist; in short, to awaken.

It is generally supposed that annihilation means the merging of the creature in the Creator, of the servant in his Lord, so that both become unified. In reality, as Saint Abû 'Alî al-Daqqaq declares, 'it is bringing the being [*wujud*] to ecstasy [*wajd*]'. (Ecstasy means 'being on a transcendent plane'.) In other words, it is the extinction of all that appears to exist, whether subjectively or objectively. It means passing from the concrete to the abstract.

Annihilation is achieved by very few and it is reached by way of hardship and suffering. The degrees of annihilation are:

Annihilation of Actions (*fana' al-afâ*);

Annihilation of Attributes (*fana' al-şifât*);

Annihilation of the Essence (*fana' al-dhât*).

To be transported from the realm of physical sensation to the spiritual realm is to achieve the Annihilation of Actions. The Annihilation of Attributes is the grade of relative occultation, the stage of potentiality and love. By attaining the Annihilation of the Essence one is set free from existence and from the pitfalls of relative consciousness.

Intellectual problems concerning the nature of reality are resolved when one reaches the Annihilation of Actions, which is also called the 'Presence of Knowledge'. Emotional needs are satisfied in the Annihilation of Attributes, which is also known as the station of love. With the Annihilation of the Essence, all 'occult' problems disappear.

Annihilation reaches its consummation in Permanent Non-Being, in the freedom of 'as if it had never been'. This transition can also be called the path of ecstasy or the way of Oneness. It is accessible exclusively to those who are subject to 'divine compulsion'.

Annihilation is the fruit of rigorous self-discipline and contrition. Aptitude and perseverance are its prerequisites. When success is attained, the Eternal Ideas (*al-a'yân al-thâbita*) are perceived. At the lowest level these are the 'objects of knowledge' (*al-a'yân al-'ilmiyya*), while on the highest plane they constitute 'occult substances' (*al-a'yân al-ghaibiyya*). As the Eternal Ideas are 'the realities of the potentialities established in the Divine Consciousness', the visions experienced by aspirants who achieve annihilation are truly beatific.

On the way of realization, even loftier attainments lie ahead: transcendental vistas far surpassing any mental comprehension. To speak of these, we must have recourse to metaphors and a special terminology. Religious and esoteric truths are generally expressed on three levels of understanding. For those who have not achieved annihilation, symbolic examples are provided. For those who have made genuine progress on the mystical path, explanations are based on the experience of annihilation itself. For those who have attained permanent non-being, the state of non-existence supplies the key. For example, the concept of Divinity is perceived quite differently in each of these three grades. Similarly, such basic concepts as prophethood, sainthood, 'presences', materiality, spirituality, body, soul, and annihilation itself all transmute themselves into different realities on the various levels. Though essentially the same, they present themselves with different attributes. In the rational and traditional sciences, progress is supposedly made by adding new knowledge to old. In esotericism, one advances from the coarse to the subtle, from existence to non-existence, i.e. from potentiality to necessity. As Sufism is an ascent, through renunciation, from the corporeal to the Divine, a gradual penetration into the realm of absolute liberation brings one to the domain of miracles surpassing ordinary understanding. It has always been considered unwise to divulge the realities perceived there.

The Masters of Wisdom are among those who have accomplished this miraculous ascent. Steering well clear of mythical and superstitious nonsense, they represented Islamic Sufism in all its sublime purity.

The Reality of realities, the Truth of truths, in search of which mankind goes knocking in vain upon a thousand doors, has for centuries been discovered by men in the depths of their own God-given greatness. This they have achieved by way of annihilation and extinction, through non-being and non-existence, by forsaking the lines laid down by reason and tradition. Mysteries forever concealed from the 'living' have surely been revealed to those who found the way to escape from the world of appearances into the realm of real discovery. They became free from all problems, whether mental, emotional, or occult. They came to know all there is to know, just as God Himself knows: with the Knowledge of Certainty, the Vision of Certainty, and the Truth of Certainty. This is the Essential Knowledge that comes with annihilation and permanent non-being (*fana' wa-baqa'*).

More important still: on this path a man becomes rapturously and ecstatically aware of the mysterious connection between the reality of man and the Nature of God. He understands the true significance of the concepts creature and Creator. He is privileged to drink of the waters of Paradise. From the state of a miserable underling, he returns to his primordial nobility and learns what it means to be raised to 'the place on high'.

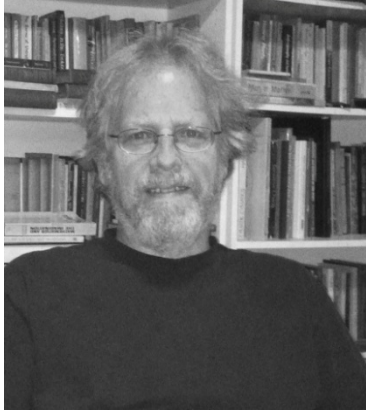
I pray that Almighty God may help those who derive benefit from these pages to attain that priceless bliss. Amen. Amen. In honour of the Chief of God's Messengers.

From the shortcomings of my unworthy pen I take refuge in the spiritual grace of the great Saints, and so I offer this humble work to the perspicacious and high-minded reader.

SOME PROPERTIES OF THE ENNEAGRAM

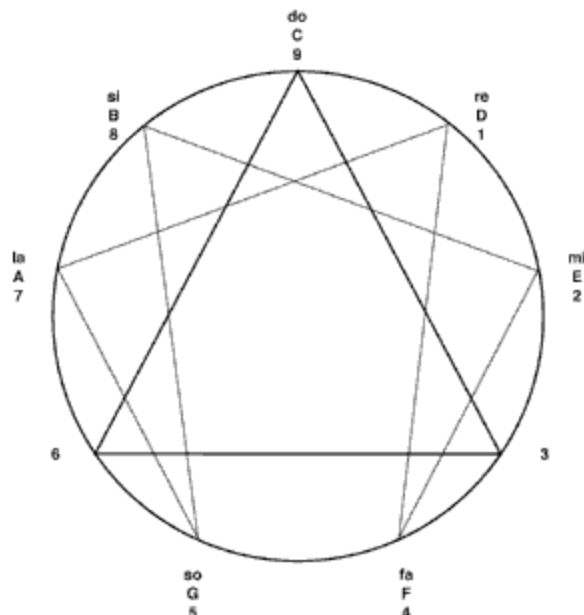
David Eyes

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The question as to the ultimate origins of the enneagram may be with us for a long time. Beyond the question of origins, or of the origins of a given application of this symbol, such as for personality or ego fixation typing, the question stands: what is the enneagram, and why is it just so? It has clearly been found to resonate strongly as a practical, empirical tool: but what underlies its construction? Is it simply a given, or can we try and find a better foundation for applications based upon it by discovering the how and why of its unique construction. This brief outline attempts to survey what is already known about its construction, and to introduce a new viewpoint that can expand our appreciation of this symbol.

The enneagram figure or symbol first came into general view in the 20th century through the teachings of G. I. Gurdjieff. Gurdjieff's presentation and focus was in many ways different than that found in Ichazo's teaching or in studies derived from it. In general, the enneagram type system is presented primarily a system of three groups of three subtypes. As such, it can be grasped intuitively fairly readily. However, the interior six-pointed figure of the enneagram, suggesting a nonlinear relationship between certain points, is less easy to explain, although it is a key aspect of what makes the enneagram such a compelling visual symbol. Even if we are certain that these relationships exist empirically, we are at a loss as to why just these relationships apply, and not others. It is regarding this inner figure, connecting the points 1-4-2-8-5-7, that this article attempts some fresh insights.

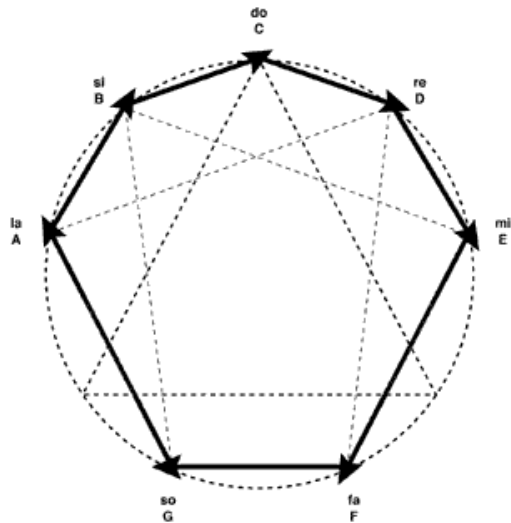


Gurdjieff's presentation of the enneagram did not apply directly to personality or character types, although one of his second generation followers, Rodney Collin, did develop it into a system of 'planetary' 'essence' types. (It is interesting to note that Collin spent his last years in Latin America, the same part of the world from which Ichazo's formulation would arise).

What instead was characteristic of Gurdjieff's presentation of the enneagram was that he described it as a symbol relating the law of the triad (law of three) to the law of the octave (law of seven). Thereby he brought the enneagram into relation with the form of the musical scale. The points along the outer circumference of the enneagram represented corresponding notes on the musical scale.

The sequence normally considered is that around the circumference, note to note, as in figure 2 (the 'shock points' are disregarded for this discussion).

As with the C major musical scale, there are points of 'missing semitones' (that is, the sharps and flats, the "black notes" of the piano). In the representation of the enneagram, the first of these 'gaps' is suggested by the apex of the internal triangle (representative of the 'law of the triad') at point 3.



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To Gurdjieff, the motion around the enneagram represented the ascent (clockwise) of an impulse or process from start to finish, to completion, or musically, from 'do' to 'do' on the next higher octave.

The missing semitones' (between mi and fa and si and do on the C major scale) suggest points where the process can go wrong, where a new, corrective influence from outside must be brought to bear in order that the intended impulse reach completion. The second crisis occurs on the musical scale at the interval between si and do - that is, just prior to completion. However, as the enneagram indicates, the second point on the triad (which is intended to show these 'shock' points), occurs at point 6. This is to allow the same impulse (that is, the third octave begun at point 6) to serve as both the first corrective 'shock' for the second octave begun at point 3 as well as provide the impetus to get the original impulse over the si-do impasse.

This description is incomplete and sketchy; to appreciate the necessity for this mechanism involves calculation of the ratios of each of the different 'notes' of the scale. In the diatonic (sevenfold) musical scale, the note 're' is $1/8$ (of the length of the octave) above 'do', mi is $1/4$, 'fa' is $1/3$, 'la' is $1/2$, 'so' is $2/3$, and 'si' is $7/8$. These proportions underlie the structure of the

enneagram, although the even spacing of the points of the circle disguises this fact. The best references for exploring this aspect of the construction of the enneagram would be Russell Smith's Gurdjieff: *Cosmic Secrets* and A. G. E. Blake's *The Intelligent Enneagram*.

Returning to the interior figure, as explained in P. D. Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous*, that it is constructed by forming a decimal fraction out of 1/7 (or 2/7, 3/7, etc.): $1/7 = .142857\dots$, that is, it is an infinitely repeating decimal.

Thus this intriguing figure is formed by tracing a line between the points in this sequence.. It is interesting to note that decimal system, being based on the number ten, incorporates the number seven and three by their addition. One may further note that the interior figure suggests a relationship of seven elements that are equally proportioned, whereas when the 'law of seven' interacts with the 'law of three,' the relationships between the elements (now considered as 'notes') assumes the diatonic proportions described above.

All this, however, is merely suggestive and a rather slim basis to impute a special significance to the relationships between points suggested thereby.

Tony Blake, after J. G. Bennet, a pupil of Gurdjieff, has developed a concept of the interior figure as part of a 'self-correcting feedback process' and simply an aspect of one instance of a broad class of 'N-grams' (16-grams, 25-grams etc.) displaying certain similar characteristics. However, fruitful as these insights are, the properties of 'N-grams' do not exhaust the properties of the enneagram, which additionally incorporates the idea of progression across a musically-proportioned scale.

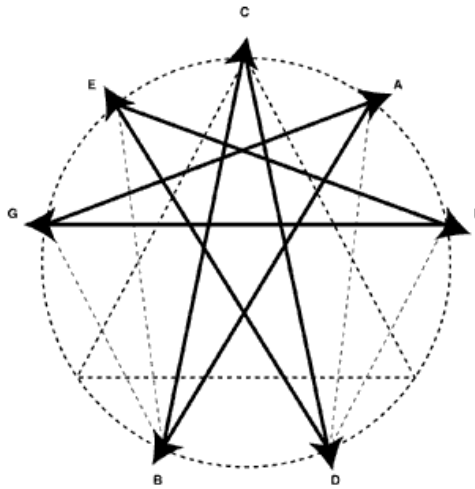
What are the laws underlying the creation of the musical scale? Without going into the details of musical temperament or tuning, the sevenfold (or twelve-fold, if you count the semitones') scale is produced by generating a 'chain of fifths' (or their inversion, fourths). Just as when we strike a tone and then sound the tone with half or double as many vibrations, we hear a unity (the octave), when we relate two tones in the proportion 2:3, we also hear a special consonance -- this is the interval of the fifth. On the piano keyboard, one can travel by fifths: F - C - G - D - A - E - B. Thus all seven notes (and the semitones as well) can be formed from the same basic consonance, the fifth. However, when they are projected in the range of a single octave, they sort themselves into the familiar order of the C major scale, and reveal the distinctive ratios that provide for, among other things, the need for the special 'shocks' that are such a distinctive part of Gurdjieff's teaching.

The assumption that underlies all of this is that there is a correspondence between the expression of musical and acoustic law and the fundamental nature of reality, both in ourselves and the cosmos. Gurdjieff however was not alone in suggesting this; the idea goes back as far as Pythagoras and beyond into ancient India. There thus exists a large body of work - sometimes called 'speculative music' -- concerning these relations.

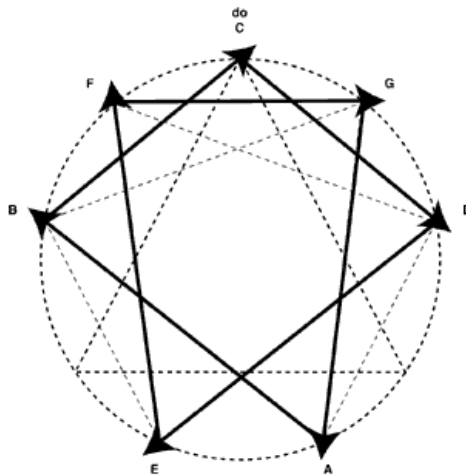
What then of the interior figure? As we can see, each point corresponds to a note (excepting 'do' or C, which is the 'fundamental' tone). Points 3 and 6 correspond to the 'shocks' or 'place of the missing semitone'.

Whenever the interior figure is discussed, it is usually in terms similar to how the motion along the circumference is described - the motion of a point, or process, from stage to stage. However, if rather than moving from point to point along the path of the interior figure, we instead move the points themselves - considered as notes, not simply as points - simultaneously along the paths of the figure, we obtain a new disposition of notes around the circle (to better correlate the points with the musical intervals, the notes of the scale are given the corresponding notes of the C major scale, thus do = C, re = D, mi = E, etc.). In other words, 'D' at 1 moves to 4; 'E' at 2 moves to 8; 'F' at 4 moves to 2, and so on.

As can be seen in the figure, the order around the circumference (clockwise) is now C - A - F - D - B - G - E - C.



Some qualities of this figure soon become apparent. First, if lines are drawn connecting the 'notes' in their original order C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C -- a regular seven-point star is traced (dashed line in figure). (The two 'shock' points are disregarded). And whereas previously the notes on the circumference progressed clockwise by ascending seconds, considering a form of 'inversion' has occurred, they now progress counterclockwise on the circumference by ascending thirds. (Or descending sixths clockwise). Although the sevenfold star figure seems distorted projected against the ninefold circumference, they are in fact 'evenly-distanced' where 'distance' is understood, not metrically, or even in proportion of 'vibrations', but in proportion of intervals.



The notes can be progressed a second time. A moves from 1 to 4; F from 2 to 8; and so on, yielding the sequence C-G-D-A-E-B-F-C around the circle. This time, the notes are in the relationship of ascending fifths (clockwise, inverting again) to each other, that is, they have assumed the form of the 'generating' chain of fifths. And now a second type of star-figure is formed if one reconnects the points in their original order.

Progressing further, the relationships recur, only this time as 'mirror images' of each other; ascending intervals becoming descending, (or are inverted). The continued progression through the six points of the enneagram thus appears as a kind of 'breathing'.

What might be the significance of this? First, remembering that the enneagram is based on the proportions of the octave, it is striking that by exchanging positions in the way described preserves an ordered musical relationship between the notes. Geometrically speaking, the interior figure is a member of a set of 'Pascal Hexagrams', of which there are twelve possible types - that is, twelve possible figures connecting six points with six lines. However, it is only this

particular figure which yields an intelligibly ordered result when the note-values are 'circulated' along the path.

It is also striking, and perhaps suggestive, to see that the path around the circumference is transformed into regular, star-like patterns. It is also suggestive to compare these to the nine-pointed stars of Ichazo's 'enneagram of integration' and 'dynamic enneagram', which display similar (nine-fold instead of sevenfold) star patterns. (There is another geometrical figure that will generate the nine-fold star patterns.)

Both of these orderings suggest that there is more that underlies the construction of the enneagram, and particularly the interior figure, than simply the decimal expression of the fraction one-seventh.

The significance of various constellations of notes or tones is a matter for future study, about which only suggestions are offered here. Within the body of speculative or cosmic music, the most intriguing suggestions are found in the idea that different intervals are related to different types of consciousness. Indeed, in humanity's historical development, there have been a number of different musical systems, each taking a different interval as the cornerstone of its musical system. It is not a great leap to assume that these different musical systems express something of their unique inner natures, that is, how they experience the world.

An excellent survey of this idea is found in the work of Hans Erhard Lauer, who developed ideas of Rudolf Steiner's regarding the changing experience of the various musical interval's during mankind's development. In his *Evolution of Music Through Changes in Tone-Systems*, (translated by Joscelyn Godwin in his *Cosmic Music*) Lauer gives a comprehensive and very suggestive survey of the development of musical forms throughout history and correlates this with different ways humanity experienced itself in relationship to the cosmos and to itself. Most relevant in this context is the general idea that the experience of the twelvefold progression of fifths (expressed in outward form by the early development of the pentatonic scale) related man to the whole cosmos (that is, to the 'zodiacal' periphery, or specifically, the passage of the earth through the cycle of seasons) whereas the experience of (or expressions of) the chromatic scale of later times was an indication of mankind's progression to a more earthbound consciousness, in which the 'I' could develop fully. Lauer's exposition (based on Steiner) is a very worthy study in itself; it is referred to here because it expresses the idea of different "states of consciousness" being somehow correlated with different experiences of musical scales. This idea is a key to the possible significance of the thoughts presented here.

The original disposition of the notes around the circumference of the enneagram is in the linear sequence that our everyday consciousness is used to processing everything, it is a world of (apparently) ordered cause and effect, yet, as Gurdjieff pointed out, this 'diatonic' law of seven creates a world of hazard, a world where things can go wrong, if the proper corrective steps are not taken.

What might a world of thirds tell us? Musically, the third is where the idea of the major and minor modes is expressed. That is, the 'tension' that is the soul-experience of modern man is expressed now as confident self assurance, now as melancholia. As Rudolf Steiner describes in a lecture of November 12, 1906: "When the minor third is played, one feels pain in the soul, the predominance of the sentient body, but when the major third resounds, it announces the victory of the soul." Thus the progression of the constellation of the enneagram may point to a threshold of enhanced self-awareness, wherein the soul is challenged to overcome the tug of matter (minor mode) and express the spirit (major mode).

Progressing to the circle of fourths and fifths, these intervals are 'perfect', they have no major or minor form. In the fourth and the fifth, we have perhaps returned to the creative source (remember, the scale is generated via chains of fifths, or its inverse, the fourth). From this more

cosmic perspective, perhaps this suggests that it is only from our 'earthly' viewpoint that events seem to be out of joint and in disharmony.

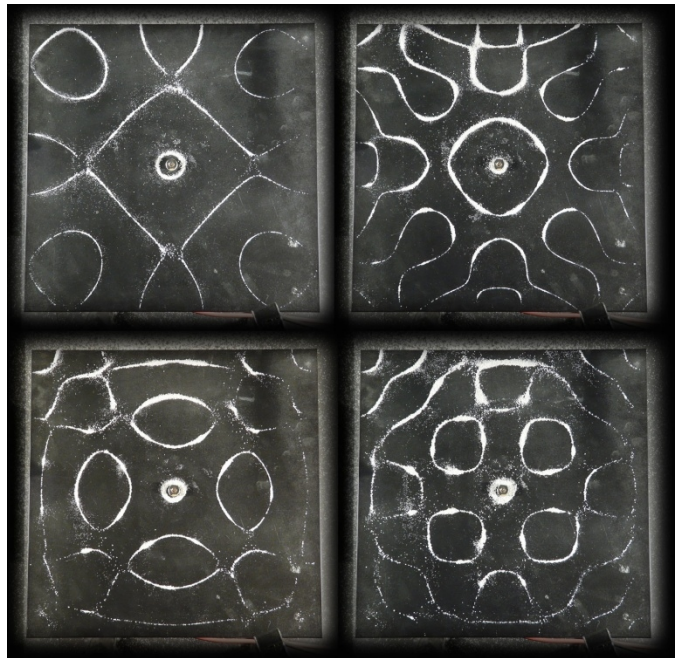
From the point of view of a linear process, however - going do, re, mi, fa, so - the approach to the fifth (so) at point 5 represents the point of 'maximum tension' of 'farthest distance from the source', the point of greatest hazard. But from the cosmic, peripheral perspective, everything is related to everything else by the interval of the fifth, which, despite representing (or causing) the 'maximum tension' is also the primal creative consonance (as opposed to the unitive consonance of the octave). By showing this underlying relationship to the production of the diatonic scale by means of the fifth, the enneagram is also brought into direct relationship with the zodiacal symbolism of the number twelve; it can be seen that the 'shocks' in a sense represent the influence of the 'hidden' 'unmanifest' five notes of the complete twelvefold chromatic (zodiacal, peripheral) scale.

Indeed, there is a rich store of literature on 'speculative music' and musical symbolism that can be fruitfully brought into relationship with this figure of the enneagram once the power of metamorphosis of the inner figure is understood. What is intended here is simply to indicate this basis of relationship. By means of these indications, it can be seen that the interior figure is a function for transforming the relationships of the elements of the octave themselves, revealing other modes of relationship beside the 'given' of the 'natural' diatonic sequence. With each progression, a new threshold is experienced.

The inner figure is now seen as a kind of 'cipher ring' or 'metamorphosing function' that transforms the given interval relationships of the enneagram. This transformation shows the inter-relatedness that is part of the deep structure of the enneagram, a symbol that can be interpreted from many directions. The inner figure progresses through different constellations of tone-relationships; these indicate a different relationship among the points than that given in the linear sequence around the circumference. What these constellations ultimately signify, and what is the dynamic underlying this progression, is a study for the future.

When the enneagram is used as a symbol against which to cast the system of personality or ego types, clearly the ideal is the self that is fluid in all points of the enneagram, one that is able to move freely to all points. As seen by the interior figure, 'motion' need not strictly be a linear concept, but rather can be provoked by a re-contextualization of the entire environment. Insight into the construction of the interior figure, and a further study of the symbolism of speculative music, may serve then as a guide to intuition.

The ancient idea of a creative 'divine monochord,' creating the various realms of spiritual and bodily existence, is reflected in the physical world in the concrete example of the so-called Chladni figures that form themselves in vibrating sand or powder in response to a musical tone. If indeed there is a world-creative power in tone, then it will express itself in the structures underlying consciousness and personal expression as well.

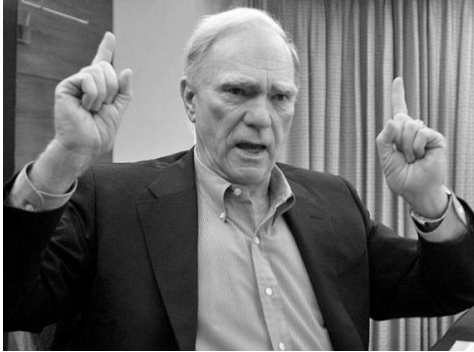


Thanksgiving week, 1997

THE NATURE OF CHOICE

Robert McKee

[From *Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting*, Methuen Film Library](#)



[McKee became famous for his *Story Seminar* on screen writing and a cameo of him in this role appears in the film *Adaptation* \(2002\). He strongly asserts that writing is not innate but has to be learned. His principles of character and plot resonate with systematics. He regards *Casablanca* as the ultimate cinema masterpiece. His psychology is profound: "In life, meaningful decisions are triangular"](#)

A Turning Point is centered in the choice a character makes under pressure to take one action or another in the pursuit of desire. Human nature dictates that each of us will always choose the "good" or the "right" as we perceive the "good" or the "right." It is impossible to do otherwise. Therefore, if a character is put into a situation where he must choose between a clear good versus a clear evil, or right versus wrong, the audience, understanding the character's point of view, will know in advance how the character will choose.

The choice between good and evil or between right and wrong is no choice at all.

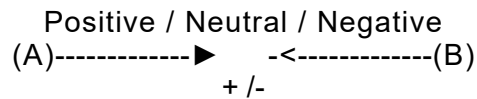
Imagine Attila, King of the Huns poised on the borders of fifth-century Europe, surveying his hordes and asking himself: "Should I invade, murder, rape, plunder, burn, and lay waste . . . or should I go home?" For Attila this is no choice at all. He must invade, slay, plunder, and lay waste. He didn't lead tens of thousands of warriors across two continents to turn around when he finally came within sight of the prize. In the eyes of his victims, however, his is an evil decision. But that's their point of view. For Attila his choice is not only the right thing to do, but probably the moral thing to do. No doubt, like many of history's great tyrants, he felt he was on a holy mission.

Or, closer to home: A thief bludgeons a victim on the street for the five dollars in her purse. He may know this isn't the moral thing to do, but moral/immoral, right/wrong, legal/illegal often have little to do with one another. He may instantly regret what he's done. But at the moment of murder, from the thief's point of view, his arm won't move until he's convinced himself that this is the right choice.

If we do not understand that much about human nature—that a human being is only capable of acting toward the right or the good as he has come to believe it or rationalize it—then we understand very little. Good/evil, right/wrong choices are dramatically obvious and trivial.

True choice is dilemma. It occurs in two situations. First, a choice between irreconcilable goods: From the character's view two things are desirable, he wants both, but circumstances are forcing him to choose only one. Second, a choice between the lesser of two evils. From the character's view two things are undesirable, he wants neither, but circumstances are forcing him to choose one. How a character chooses in a true dilemma is a powerful expression of his humanity and of the world in which he lives.

Writers since Homer have understood the principle of dilemma, and realized that the story of a two-sided relationship cannot be sustained, that the simple conflict between Character A and Character B cannot be told to satisfaction.

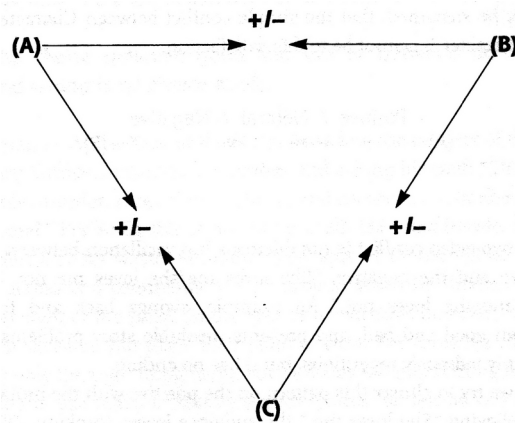


A two-sided conflict is not dilemma but vacillation between the positive and the negative. "She loves me/she loves me not, she loves me/she loves not," for example, swings back and forth between good and bad, and presents insoluble story problems. It isn't only tediously repetitious, but it has no ending.

If we try to climax this pattern on the positive with the protagonist believing "She loves me," the audience leaves thinking, "Wait until tomorrow when she'll love you not again." Or if on the negative "She loves me not," the audience exits thinking, "She'll come back. She always did." Even if we kill the loved one, it's not a true ending because the protagonist is left wondering, "She loved me? She loved me not?" and the audience exits groping for a point that was never made.

For example, here are two stories: one that wavers back and forth between inward states of pleasure and pain and one of inner dilemma. Compare BETTY BLUE with THE RED DESERT. In the former, Betty (Beatrice Dalle) slides from obsession to madness to catatonia. She has impulses but never makes a true decision. In the later Giuliana (Monica Vitti) faces profound dilemmas: retreat into comforting fantasies versus making meaning out of a harsh reality, madness versus pain. BETTY BLUE'S "mock-minimalism" is an over two-hour long snapshot of a helpless victim of schizophrenia that mistakes suffering for drama. IL DESERTO ROSSO is a minimalist masterpiece that delineates a human being grappling with the terrifying contradictions within her nature.

To construct and create genuine choice, we must frame a three-sided situation. As in life, meaningful decisions are triangular.



The moment we add C we generate ample material to avoid repetition. First, to the three possible relationships between A and B: positive/negative/neutral, love/hate/indifference, for example, we add the same three between A and C and between B and C. This gives us nine

possibilities. Then we may join A and B against C; A and C against B; B and C against A. Or put them all in love or all in hate or all indifferent. By adding a third corner, the triangle breeds over twenty variations, more than enough material to progress without repetition. A fourth element would produce compound interlocking triangles, a virtual infinitude of changing relationships.

What's more, triangular design brings closure. If a telling is two-sided so that A vacillates between B and no-B, the ending is open. But if choice is three-sided so that A is caught between B and C, A's choice of one or the other closes the ending with satisfaction. Whether B and C represent the lesser of two evils or irreconcilable goods, the protagonist can't have both. A price must be paid. One must be risked or lost to gain the other. If, for example, A relinquishes C to have B, the audience feels a true choice has been taken. C has been sacrificed, and this irreversible change ends the story.

The most compelling dilemmas often combine the choice of irreconcilable goods with the lesser of two evils. In the Supernatural Romance DONA FLOR AND HER TWO HUSBANDS, for example, Dona (Sonia Braga) faces a choice between a new husband who's warm, secure, faithful, but dull versus an ex-husband who's sexy, exciting, but dead, yet his ghost appears to her in private as flesh and blood and sexually insatiable as ever. Is she hallucinating or not? What's the widow to do? She's caught in the dilemma between a boringly pleasant life of normality versus a bizarre, perhaps mad, lift of emotional fulfillment. She makes the wise decision: She takes both.

An original work poses choices between unique but irreconcilable desires: It may be between two persons, a person and a lifestyle, two lifestyles, two ideals, two aspects of the innermost self - between any conflicting desires at any level of conflict, real or imagined, the writer may devise. But the principle is universal: Choice must not be doubt but dilemma, not between right/wrong or good/evil but between either positive desires or negative desires of equal weight and value.

THE EMERGING NEW PARADIGM



Ben Hitchner

Crystal Blue Persuasion <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LN38vED24Eg>

Last summer I heard a CD of the 1969 song *Crystal Blue Persuasion*. It seemed to me to be a message as pertinent to 2012 as it was in 1969. *Crystal Blue Persuasion* was played in an Open Heart Sweat Lodge Ceremony. I thank Anna Castro who sent me a you tube video of the song that inspired me to reflect more on its meaning. In formulating the following comments on each lyric I have drawn on my contact with my extraordinary teachers whose names and ideas are mentioned.

Beautiful Painted Arrow, Joseph Rael taught that vibrating sound is at the source of the creation.ⁱ Joseph's mission to build sound chambers relates to empowering people with creativity to make a new world. All phenomena is some form of sound. Music is a catalyst for raising consciousness. Sound, music, might be thought of as a metaphor prior to language and mathematics in the objectification of matter. Music ranges in form from the drum to organized music of the modern world. Music speaks! Music engages the nervous system; it has been

termed, neural education. Anthony Blake included neural education in some of his Baltimore Seminars.ⁱⁱ

I learned from Edward Matchett we should make quests for meaning. Meaning brings light into darkness. He played music in his Sophiagenic workshops to help in our getting the meaning of meaning. The core of Sophiagenics is the availability of a higher intelligence he called primary intelligence.ⁱⁱⁱ It is original intelligence; a spiritual source for creativity. I associate the earth's manifold biosphere to be an example of primary intelligence. Our intelligence is secondary because it is based on a processing making it subjective to our genetic heritage, education, and our programming to powerful mass media. The cave in Plato's story is symbolic of this. We see only shadows of reality on the wall of a dark cave. To access primary intelligence we need to empty ourselves of our beliefs and what we know.

It seemed to me the song writers Tommy James and the Shondells must have had a contact with a prophetic intelligence in producing Crystal Blue Persuasion. The song seems a message of changes now crescendoing. In this context Crystal Blue Persuasion is an example of John Bennett's notion of the present moment.^{iv} The present moment is a coming together, an organizing of the past and future based on values of a predestined future. Graphed, the present moment is a circle that includes a line showing a vertical of spirit and matter and a horizontal line showing past and future. The song calls us to become aware of an eminent change on earth. Joseph Rael had a vision of this eminent change bringing abundance and peace.

"Look over yonder what do you see"

We look from our eclipsed vision of the whole and we see some part of the creation. Our senses and mythologies tell us that the creation made existence. It is under, over, in and all around us. We can't know the source of the creation. Our knowledge of the past indicates that life and the physicality of the creation have had a multiplicity of manifold changes. Our life may only be a crossing through a section of time of the creation. But this time is special because it carries an opportunity to self perfect. Looking *over yonder* we see a turn. A turning from thousands of years of cultures of barbarism, prisons of slavery, and the separateness within and of civilization. Planet earth is ascending and providing favorable conditions for self perfecting that moves above the vain striving of human egoism. We are informed of a 'ray of creation' that eternally offers an opportunity not to get stuck in a robotic life directed by outside influences. The ray of creation is a ladder of Being. Our step-up to the next level of Being requires a finer integration of our inner life. Pierre Elliot referred to this as making another body.^v This body, our inner life will control our life. We can, then, intentionally serve the spiritualization of existence and become joyfully free. We see this happening over yonder. We rise above our assumed separateness to the higher level of knowing that we are related to everything. We see *looking over yonder* a new time made from a different pattern of galactic influences, availability of divine intelligence, explosion of human knowledge and revealing information. We have the inspiring work of past saints. During the last century and half we have the legacies from many enlightened masters who were harbingers over yonder, a few examples are Madame Blavatsky, Alice Bailey, Jiddu Krishnamurti, George Gurdjieff, Osho, and Rene Guenon. They left diverse teachings, but on deeper inspection this diversity shows a oneness. We note their blessings.

"The sun is a rising most definitely"

A sun of a designated divine transformation is rising. The sun is what we see of the 'ray of creation.' The 'ray of creation' now offers a special opportunity to make new, to become what we already are. We will *be* more in 'tact', more inwardly whole. We accord with the 'ray of creation' by working to raise ourselves.

"A new day is coming ooh ooh"

The new day is the sunlight of a new consciousness that integrates the spiritual with the material. We are being released from the slavery of the quantitative, modern world formed 500 years ago. We fell deeper into materialism ever producing and consuming more. Work on earth will be modified from conditions of monetary debt to a work to free oneself inwardly. The Hebrew Day of Sabbath meant to be a day of repose from physical work, but every day will be a Sabbath seeking peace with the joy of doing physical work and reconciling with nature. An abundance of material provisioning for human needs has been in the offing for a long time, but now can be actualized. War, starvation, poverty and debt slavery ends. Abundance will replace the premise of scarcity in economic thought.

"People are changing Ain't it beautiful ooh ooh"

Many more are finding and walking personal spiritual paths. The teachings and work of spiritual masters and shamans is being carried on by people working together and reaping a rise in consciousness. We pray more. Human hubris is falling in prayers seeking help from higher intelligences.

"Crystal Blue Persuasion"

Living from self will persuasions is fading. Real persuasion is sourced in the crystal clarity of the blue light of spiritual emanation. Such persuasion is continuous to self perfect. Shakespeare had it right, "Self-love, my liege, is not so vile a sin as self-neglecting."^{vi} Blue light transforms the light of the soul deepening its will to traverse spiritual depths. and turn to the path of return to our source. We don't neglect making a new body.

"Better get ready Goin to see the light"

We are jumping-up in the light of the 'ray of creation.' The ray of creation is a light within the light. George Cornelius who was not known for writing poetry wrote, "I have seen God's ray of creation...Then the evening star in the west reflected on the light of my conception on the mountain-top of service as the light within the light."^{vii} A Muslim, Sufi Saint, Bawa Muhaiyaddeen gave talks referring to our need to act in the light of God's qualities if we are not to waste our life.^{viii}

"Love, love is the answer ooh ooh and that's all right"

We have not been clear on what love is. The glorification of romantic love in the classic age of Hollywood films spawned illusions about love. Love is the authentic answer, it has no illusions. Love always answers a need.

"So don't give up now ooh ooh so easy to find"

We have gone to far out-there to find peace and love, an out-there that includes politics, churches, the law and finance. We are inwardly blind. Our soul is as close to us as is our heart and easy to find. We have the perfect tool to find peace and love, it is our attention, direct it to the soul.

"Just look to your soul and open your mind"

We have been soul blind. Our soul is our I, our take of divine consciousness. It needs more attention to become more perfect, to make it crystal clear blue. We focus our mind by asking our soul. Our mind needs the help of our soul to keep it open. A Russian Orthodox prayer opens "Almighty God, unto all hearts be open... cleanse the thoughts of our hearts"^{ix}

"Crystal Blue Persuasion mm"

Color affects our life essence. Crystal clear color blue is active and moves us toward our obligation to act. Seek the intelligence to discriminate between when to be passive and when to act, such decision feeds the soul.

"It's a new vibration"

The song's sound vibration speaks to the new vibration of transforming life on earth. The song calls to wake-up to this new vibration. When we do we will join into the new vibration.

"Crystal Blue Persuasion Crystal Blue persuasion"

The sound vibration of the music of Crystal Blue Persuasion harmonizes fully with its lyrics. The sound depicts a rising and a falling back, but each wave when rising becomes more expansive. We are now falling into a global job crisis, which is really a system purifying. However, we have a rising wave of heartfelt compassion for all the earth's people and for the earth. We are now looking to how to open the potential that we know we have to create a modus operandi for human security.

"Maybe tomorrow when he looks down"

We are the he who looks down. We see how we have destroyed the earth and need to learn how we can stop. We have denied that the earth is our mother and we have shunned our father, the spiritual. We have the vision of children who only see a short surface, and we have viewed the earth only for our indulgent taking of resources. Tomorrow when we look down we will see a blue earth green.

"Every green field and every town All of his children every nation"

Green is a healing color. The earth, its people, and children are undergoing a green healing. We are aware that our efforts to globalize via emphasizing only the material failed to bring peace and brotherhood. Corporate capital has not been green leaving many a field and town short of providing for human need. The green legacy of a Cambodian Buddhist monk exists. Bhante Dharmawara lived in a Thailand forest for seven years where he learned that water kept in different colored jars, kept in sunlight provides a healing substance.^x He held meditative healing sessions in green light. A green vibration persuades us that it is time to heal the earth that will make towns and fields green.

"There'll be peace and brotherhood"

Peace and brotherhood does not come from long term processes of diplomacy in complicated negotiation. All that is required is that a critical mass say Bhante's heartfelt prayer: "I send my good will and wishes to all beings—big and small, far and near, friend and foe, known and unknown, visible and invisible."

"Crystal Blue Persuasion Crystal Blue Persuasion"

This present moment is the time of the divine feminine. John Kirby reflecting on a photo of Mary's shrine at Open Heart Lodge informs that Mary's title given at Medjugorje is "Queen of Peace." Mary's images in blue is a divine seed offering crystal blue persuaded peace.

- ⁱ Joseph Rael's "Being and Vibration," a great little book
- ⁱⁱ www.duversity.org
- ⁱⁱⁱ Edward Matchett's "The Sophiagenic Discipline" is in print
- ^{iv} "Dramatic Universe," Volume IV
- ^v Pierre Elliot was the spiritual leader of The Claymont Society for Continuous Education.
- ^{vi} King Henry V
- ^{vii} George Cornelius, A Fourth Way teacher conducted workshops in Oregon in the 1980s
- ^{viii} Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- ^{ix} Prayer said in a Memorial Service, Parish Church, Sherborne, Gloucestershire, UK, October 29, 1972
- ^x Bhante for a while was the spiritual leader for East Asians in California. Bhante was hosted by John Bennett and by the Claymont Society.