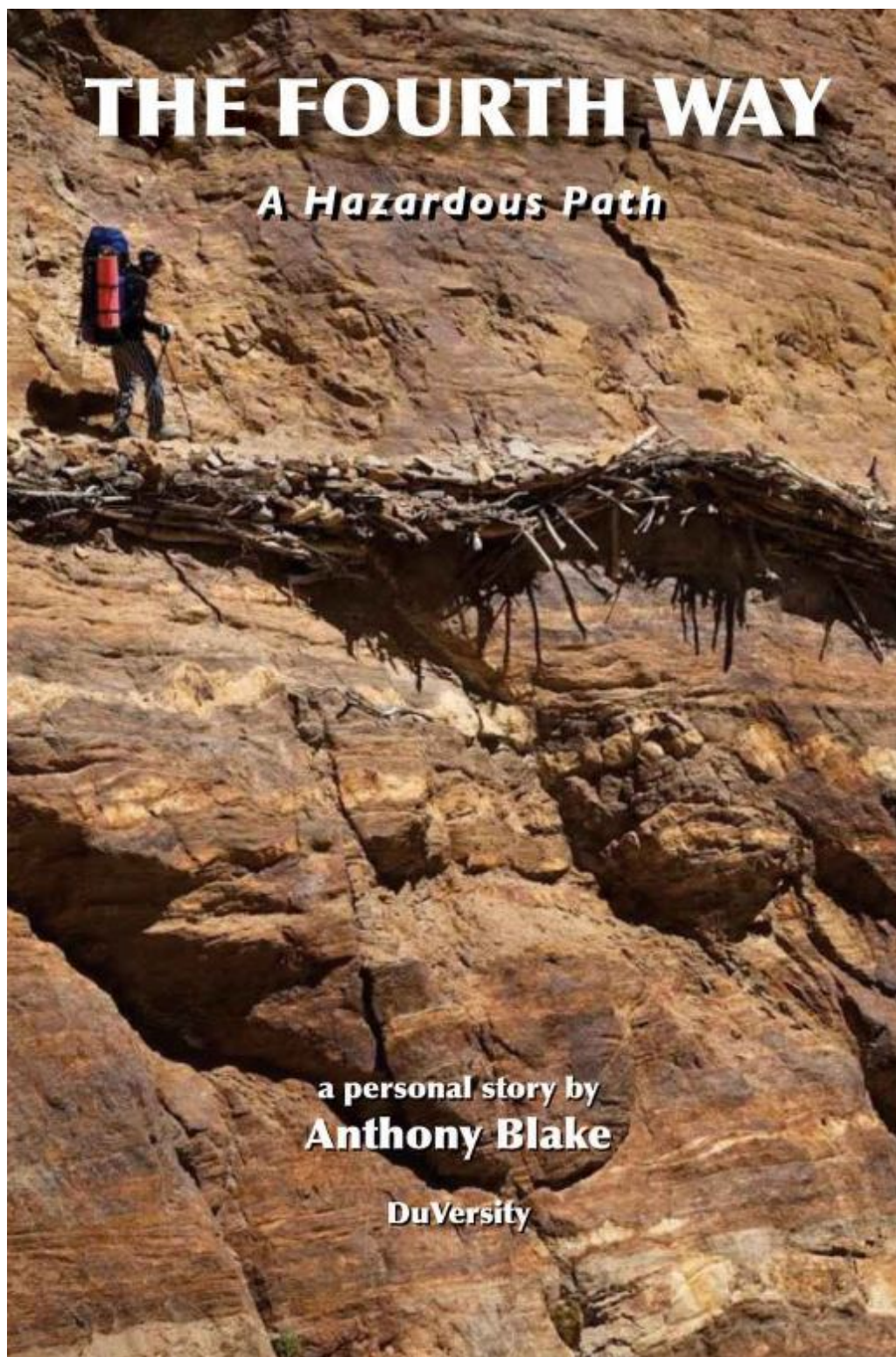


# DuVersity 56 Winter 2023

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## **THE FOURTH WAY**

*A Hazardous Path*

a personal story by  
**Anthony Blake**

DuVersity

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**2023** was the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our foundation. So I have tried to give some impression of our history and the diversity of our operations. But the diversity and range are such that I can hardly do it justice. The result is impressionistic but, hopefully, it brings out the major threads of our work which weave together in a rich dynamic tangle making a fabric of meaning.

I have included in this issue of the journal, an extract from an article in the volume dedicated to David Bohm called Quantum Implications. This is partly because it gives a depiction of dialogue using Bohm’s language of implicate and explicate orders. I think it important to look for a deep theory of dialogue as well as practice it.

The extract is important on two other accounts. Firstly, it integrates questions of meditation and dialogue in the way that I explored in my book *The Supreme Art of Dialogue* where I even used the equation  $\text{meditation} = \text{dialogue}$ . The second is that I realized how close various teachings or expositions are to each other. In particular, I realized sameness between Bohm’s implicate order and Matchett’s media as he expressed it first of all in his 3M equation.  $\text{Media} + \text{Matter} = \text{Meaning}$ .

Media is the nonmaterial dynamic structuring informing everything in the cosmos. The other implication of sameness between different teachings comes out from Bohm’s discourse upon the unfolding and enfolding taking place between the implicate and the explicate. Here, I am thinking of the scheme of essence classes that Bennett wrote about in *The Dramatic Universe* that embraced the duality of essence and existence. He speaks of the spiritualization of existence and the realization of essence, which then correlate with the enfolding and unfolding of Bohm’s scheme.

As background to our history, I have added information about William Pensinger and Edward Matchett. We should remember them.

## THE STORY OF THE DUVERSITY - 25 HAZARDOUS YEARS

Anthony Blake

The DuVersity was officially registered in 1998. It had its roots many years before. Its origins can be closely associated with John Bennett's four volume work *The Dramatic Universe*, which was in part his reflection on the extraordinary novel written by his teacher G.I. Gurdjieff called *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*. Both books can be seen as attempts to include everything. The series of writings by Gurdjieff that began with *Beelzebub* was in fact called *All and Everything* (even at one time *All of Everything*).

Bennett attracted many people around him and in the 60s this included several young scientists like myself who were attracted to Bennett's exposition of a cosmic vision of wholeness, embracing science and religion together, that provided ways of exploring and changing our very own consciousness to enable us to hold a cosmic vision. In our mutual exchanges we young men sometimes talked of creating a 'Dramatic University'. It was obvious to us that education was seriously lacking in vision and depth. For this reason, Bennett had been friends with the educational pioneer Maria Montessori who in her own work included a cosmic education.

Cosmic education is introduced to children aged six to twelve as a representation of the whole world and the universe as a whole, with the aim of making them feel that they are a "cosmic agent": the child is invited to embrace the whole world, broaden their point of view, look more broadly than the environment of their home, their school and their close knowledge. Montessori Action

During the time I was with Bennett I with others witnessed his encounters with the insights of spiritual leaders such as the Shivapuri Baba and Hasan Shushud while maintaining his investigative studies into how we think in the realms of physics and philosophy. His last life task was the creation of the International Academy for Continuous Education, a radical experiment in transmitting the ideas and practices of what was sometimes known as the fourth way introduced by Gurdjieff (but also developed by many of his followers).

Bennett was an exemplar of enquiry in the spirit of Gurdjieff, whose dictum was to take the wisdom of the East and the knowledge of the West and then search. He was au fait with the world of mathematical physics as much as with the realm of spiritual techniques, which many mainstream exponents of spirituality and followers of Gurdjieff found difficult to understand.

After he died Bennett's students were forced to look at what they could do without him, so tried various ways of applying what they had learned. But there was always an inclination just to continue or copy the programme he had developed for the Academy at Sherborne, not allowing for creative innovation or further exploration. In my own case, I took up the task of editing and publishing his last thoughts in which I had found the emergence of new insights. In particular, I went ahead to produce a book entitled *Deeper Man* to represent one he had proposed – with the sexier title of *Dig Deeper Man* - but then died before he had created all the lectures upon which it was to have been based. But the book still became recognized as a valuable reference for fourth way ideas and practices.

I had often reflected on the good fortune I had had from being with a teacher with grounding in the natural sciences and mathematics. He was capable of arguing from experiment and empirical evidence rather than relying on mystification and authority.

I continued to experiment and explore, starting from the projects that Bennett had left us as works in progress when he died, for example to do with structural thinking, the nature of time, integration without rejection, higher intelligence and so on. In the cause of this I engaged, whenever I could, with people in various experimental workshops.

An important thread in the story comes from the quantum physicist David Bohm, who had been my tutor in Bristol University and also the supervisor of my colleague Henry Bortoft in Birkbeck, London. Bohm had visited Coombe Springs to talk with Bennett and some of us 1962 to '64 but it was only after he had died that I heard of his work with what is called dialogue which appeared to me a strong candidate for a way of learning that did not rely on authority and hierarchy.

Joining up with psychotherapist Karen Stefano. I was persuaded to make a not-for-profit foundation the DuVersity, to further the aims of the lines of research initiated by John Bennett but not exclusively enclosed by his ideas. The mission of the DuVersity was stated as follows:

The DuVersity is concerned with the importance of diversity for the development of human intelligence. It seeks to improve communication in groups, encourage multiple viewpoints on the same reality, understanding how thoughts arise, and have insight into the way cultures emerge and are shaped by their encounters with each other. DuVersity is a universal phenomenon, beyond questions of race and gender.

The DuVersity is not identified with any religion, ideology, political view or scientific theory. It has developed its own specific tools for its research and educational programs.

The DuVersity has historical roots in the Systematics method mainly developed by the philosopher John Bennett in the 60's and in the Dialogue process promulgated by the physicist David Bohm and the psychotherapist Patrick de Mare in the 80's. It has been applying its ideas to the design of new kinds of conferencing, as in the series held in Baltimore since 1997. In 1995 it developed a new system of structured conversation. In 1998 it initiated a new area of study, the study of arrangement or pattern. In 2000, it began its series of working group seminars, based on many years of investigation into transformative education. It has continued a series of seminars based on the principles of understanding of Systematics since 2000.

The word "duversity" was a combination of DU from dramatic universe, and as an amalgam of university and diversity. DuVersity is a word indicating a kind of diversity that generates unity – just as the word universe translates quite exactly as turning into unity in an active sense. The word also has the merit that no one else uses it!

Interestingly enough, I always had a puzzle about Bennett's title for his magnum opus *The Dramatic Universe*: what made it 'dramatic' in any obvious sense? Certainly, he spoke about an uncertain universe on all scales, but there was no explicit connection to the dramatic arts. His book could have been called *The Meaningful Universe*. However, these days I am glad of the dramatic name because it supports my ventures into theatre, of which more later.



The DuVersity made associations with many creative individuals and enterprises. Anthony worked knew them personally. It is for this reason that we have not included such major overarching influences as Gurdjieff whose passionate and wild all of everything genius is perhaps the most influential of all. Gurdjieff was, after all, the major influence on John Bennett. Also not included are such geniuses as G. Spencer Brown, author of Laws of Form, an English mathematician who understood the logic of distinction like no other, and Charlotte Bach whose ideas on evolution and the alchemical quaternary were without parallel. Anthony was privileged to study with them. There is also Henri Bortoft influential author of The Wholeness of Nature and Simon Weightman Head of Religious Studies at SOAS, London University, who were both students of John Bennett and friends of Anthony but were not engaged in DuVersity projects. All these people have now passed. Here are some more names, most of whom have passed but mentioned as an important part of our history.

[Ted Matchett](#) (1929-98) was a friend of Anthony over 25 years. Ted was a design engineer who transcended the confines of industrial design to develop methods of creativity of astonishing spiritual genius. Many DuVersity members revered him.

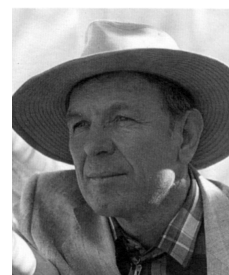


[Edith Wallace](#) (1909 - 2004) was a pupil of both Carl Jung and John Bennett. Her 'playshops' under the title Continuing the Quest are managed and assisted by Karen Stefano and use the method of tissue paper collage that she first developed while at Bennett's International Academy at Sherborne.



[Joseph Rael](#) is a shaman embodying both Ute and Pueblo traditions. He is an visionary artist and inventor of dances, but also a master of the Tiwa language of metaphor. He guided a DuVersity tour of sacred sites in the South West in 2001. His kindness and spirit has been of great support over many years.

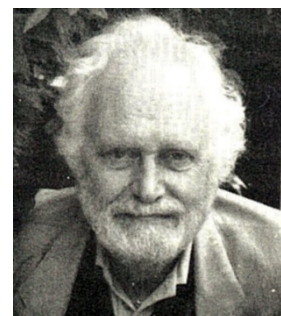
[John Allen](#) met Bennett and Blake around 1970. He was the visionary creator of the Biosphere 2 project in Arizona in part conceived, built and managed through Bennett's systematics. A dramatist and poet he has been of constant stimulation over many years and continues to meet and dialogue with Anthony.



[David Bohm](#) (1917-1992) was physics tutor to Anthony Blake and dialogued with Bennett (1962-64). He was a leading proponent of the dialogue process. His ideas continue to inspire and guide our work.



[Patrick de Mare](#) (1916 - 2008) had 60 years of experience in working in groups, including working with Foulkes and the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations during the Second World War. When Bohm's psychotherapist, he introduced him to his



ideas on dialogue, which were later developed into the ideas of koinonia (impersonal fellowship) and the median group (between the small and the large), which we have incorporated into our own programs.



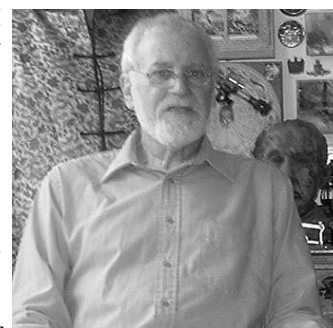
**Anthony Judge** was director of UIA (Union of International Associations) based in Brussels and responsible for the encyclopaedic World Problems and Human Potential and one of the most brilliant and insightful critics of present day attempts to think globally and in large groups. He was co-founder of the School of Ignorance where Anthony Blake had some of his early major experiences of the dialogue process.



Gordon Lawrence developed the Social Dreaming Matrix that we used in the Working Group method. Anthony made several video-dialogues with him.

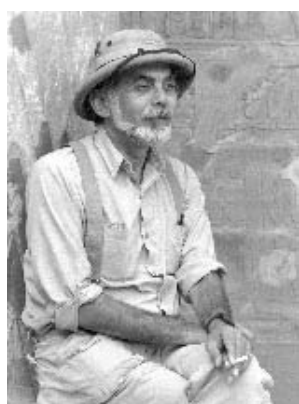


Robert Fripp leader of the group King Crimson developed an extraordinary training called 'Guitar Craft' that introduced hundreds of people to 'the work' by practical and artistic means. He brought his 'Soundscapes' to the first Baltimore seminar-dialogue and has remained a wonderful friend for many years.



**Warren Kenton** was a leading light of Kabbalah in the UK and someone we have known for almost 30 years. First trained in the Gurdjieff work he was sympathetic and helpful to

us.



**John Anthony West** was a leading Egyptologist and guided a DuVersity tour into the sacred sites of Egypt in 2000.

**Richard Heath** was our guide in the Enchanted Albion logosafari. Author of Matrix of Creation and Sacred Number, he worked with Anthony Blake and John Varney on Logovisual Technology.

**William Pensinger** was author (with his wife Nha Trang) of the outstanding novel Moon of Hoa Binh and many papers on the underlying deep structure of reality beyond and encompassing object and subject.



We should include all those who have contributed to our seminar-dialogues, first held at Jerry Toporovsky's Center for Holistic Health, not otherwise mentioned. These are:

Stanley Crouch jazz writer, novelist and script-writer.

Priestess Miriam head of the Voodoo Church in New Orleans.

Candice Peart biochemist and author of *Molecules of Emotion*.

Eliyahu McLean active in peace work in Israel.

Mae Wan Ho leading geneticist and author of *The Rainbow and the Worm*, which presents a new theory of life.

Jack de Johnette drummer extraordinary who works on using sound in healing with his wife Lydia.

Coleman Barks poet renowned for his versions of Rumi.

Jason Kheen expert in rave culture affiliated to Fraser Clarke pioneering leader of alternative culture in London, UK with whom Anthony video-dialogued in 2002.

In following on from the creative projects of Bennett, the DuVersity produced a series of yearly conferences beginning with *All and Everything* in 1995. In the end, though, I felt that experts in the various disciplines or systems seemed incapable of communicating with each other. This is brought out for me by the comments made by Anthony Judge on the conference of world religions held in Chicago in 1999. He said that the leaders brought their own clique and never really talked to each other. The declarations they released at the end were insipid and pointless.

Through the initiative of Karen, the DuVersity undertook a number of expeditions starting with one to Egypt under the guidance of John Anthony West. Three followed, one to the American Southwest under the guidance of the Shaman Joseph Rael. Then came one to Peru led by William Sullivan who had been a student at Sherborne on the fifth course and had been stimulated by the book *Hamlet's Mill* a copy of which I thrust into his hands.

Saturday, 21st June/ Solstice Ollantaytambo



Amongst the sites explored was the so-called Sacred Valley of the Incas that seems to have been worked to depict astronomical objects and knowledge on a very large scale. Among these objects is a pyramid of a form previously unknown

The last expedition was to Enchanted Albion, guided by Richard Heath, and took us through northern France and Britain, mainly to megalithic sites such as Carnak and the Orkneys. This itself was an echo of the trip I and

some other Bennett students had made in 1966 looking at chapter houses in France in relation to the design of the marvellous building, the Djameechoonatra, that Bennett and his colleagues had designed and built, but which was destroyed by Idries Shah after Coombe springs was given to him in 1966.



Richard Heath and stone circle in the Orkneys

In the realm of ideas, I launched a series of workshops from the year 2012 to address the principles of what Bennett called systematics. This led to practical design in both software and hardware to facilitate structural thinking that became called LogoVisual Technology (LVT). This began from the method of structural communication devised by John Bennett in the '60s. In those early days it even led to the invention of a teaching machine called the Systemaster. This technology

was developed before even pocket calculators were available and used electromechanical apparatus. Structural communication technique was used in some schools and organizations where it developed into using magnetic hexagons. At present Board members Daniel Proudfoot and Jason Joslyn are working on a version to be used as an App.

The equivalent to Bennett's psychological groups went on developing as experimental workshops with such titles as 'working group' and 'psyche integration'. I was looking for a truly integrated structure of methods, following Bennett's lifetime work, particularly his last schematic of the Sevenfold Work. The sevenfold structure we used was:

Inner exercises - Bennett

Movements — Gurdjieff

I.VT - Bennett at al

Tissue paper collage — Wallace

Social dreaming matrix— Lawrence

Dialogue (Median Group) - de Mare

ILM (Neural Education) - Matchett

An aim of this programme was to integrate the methodologies of the Fourth Way with elements from more mainstream psychology. I was very keen to acknowledge the original work of pioneers in group process such as Wilfred Bion and Foulkes from the Northfield Experiment and Patrick de Mare and Gordon Lawrence from Tavistock and other centres. They contributed very much that was not known or appreciated by most followers of Gurdjieff and Bennett. A colleague Dr. Russell Schriber wrote a significant book - Gurdjieff's Transformational Psychology, the art of compassionate self-study - on the need to supplement the Gurdjieff psychology with elements of contemporary psychotherapy in order to make it work.

We were then hit, as everyone was, by the advent of Covid which shut down most of our programs. This gradually led to the adoption of such systems as Zoom to run online sessions



where people could meet and talk together and even sometimes practice inner exercises. The DuVersity is fortunate in having members who are artists and creative in their own right. But, perhaps the main ingredient of our designs came from our growing experience of dialogue.

Dialogue is important because it points to a way that is not a continuation of authority-based systems based on teachings. My personal attitude is rather trenchant in regarding the death of authorities such as Gurdjieff and Bennett, as having a silver lining through leaving us all, as Gurdjieff said, 'in galoshes'. It gave the opportunity for something new to come into play. This happened to dovetail with what I learned from psychologist Gordon Lawrence who proposed a choice between the 'politics of salvation' and the 'politics of revelation' in the realm of conversation: in the first the group looking for answers outside of themselves {save us! save us!} while in the second the group looks for the meaning arising between its own members.

In speaking of the importance of artists, I also referred to Gurdjieff as an example. He was a superb writer, composer and creator of dances as well as a man capable of subtle improvisation in the moment which can be considered living theatre.

Our online evens began in 2020 and covered many themes, such as different worlds, hyperaxis, languages of function, being and will, hazard, the sacred rascoorano and the holy planet purgatory. These were not dealt with as expositions or lectures but in a way that encouraged participants to articulate their own concrete experience. We brought into the sessions as much music, poetry, drawing and dancing as we could manage.

#### SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THE DUVERSITY

When I first encountered Anthony Blake at a weekend seminar in Baltimore in the early nineties he lit a spark, opened a new way of thinking that for me was new and exciting. In that case it was in understanding and experiencing number, which led to my fascination with systematics. The light that spark lit has never gone out as I have continued working with him for over thirty years. Later seminars dealt with systematics, structured communication, dialog, group dynamics, creativity and historical understanding of The Work. He introduces the Gurdjieff-Bennett Work in refreshing new ways that keep it alive for me. He empowers individuals to venture into new and creative ways of thinking. He challenges the authority of dogma, encouraging and enabling one to experience and understand self and reality from endlessly varying perspectives. Finally, working with the DuVersity is always, for me, the highest form of fun!

Initially Taking advantage of the constraints of the Covid times the series of monthly on line events have made it possible for many people to work with Anthony and each other on a regular basis, and at a cost that can't be beat. It is such a gift. Thank you. Leslie Schwing

Anthony Blake never ceases to challenge my perception of reality.

I remember working on a program where one of my co-workers wanted to sit around all day and talk about books. He was fond of saying, "It's all one" and walking away from any conversation as if that proved his point. But he did tell me about a book by Ouspensky and I got a copy and it started a lifelong study of the Fourth Way. As I got deeper into the literature I wanted to find

someone who could teach the movements and knew the exercises, I wanted to go beyond the books and learn how to deepen awareness and felt like I had a golden thread and was winding it into a ball. Eventually I heard about Claymont and then heard that a Fourth Way teacher was actually coming to Nashville. I was delighted and spend a weekend at the Unitarian Church with Anthony Blake. I signed up with his organization and learned he was coming to America once or twice a year. I started saving some money and when he would show up I would try my best to attend and found it the perfect venue. I had read the books by Ouspensky and Gurdjieff and while, that was exciting stuff, it was dated, and here was somebody bringing these ideas into the contemporary world with insight and humor. I was drawn to it like iron to a magnet, like a bee to pollen. So here's a tip of the hat to Anthony Blake for all these years of exploration and adventure.

Michael White

DuVersity is a living experiment in motion,  
 full of hazard, not sure where it is going or what it is doing,  
 with a Motley crew daring to try and actually learn from time to time.  
 It is a place where I find comrades and where it feels, the Work lives,  
 not as some statue frozen in time but like life and intelligence,  
 on the frail edge of the universe seeking to evolve and respond to now.  
 It is where the myth of the leader crumbles into a new model of collective undertaking,  
 but where Tony has been essential to help us risk this kind of change.  
 I like it and the journey it affords. Peter Bassett

The DuVersity has been an invaluable resource for discovery, exploration and community of 4th way ideas for me over many years. Through DuVersity I've expanded my understanding on varying concepts from the in-depth readings, seminars and session topics which collectively blend art, writing, theater, music, dance, science and systems to cultivate practices relating each to the other. These artistic relationships give rise to a new metaphor for how we think about ourselves and others - intellectually, emotionally and societally now, and into the future pushing intergenerational intelligence. The process flips the narrative for change and transformation and finds its 'mind' in conversation with other minds, much like a cells adaptive collective process. Ultimately, DuVersity is about a place for the world to be itself. Francine Marchetti

My explorations in dance, my branching spiritual journey, and my personal life have been to me, since childhood, as a three-strand braid. To this very day I am surprised, in wonder even, when looking out, how many synchronous loopings of people, places, studies, and events have, over the years, woven together in astonishing patterns bringing me to this very moment of experience and understanding.

Top of my mind says, DU is a really good conversation with fellow travelers. I'm even grateful for the Zoom sessions! They have expanded my awareness of friends in a wider world. I treasure seeing faces, hearing words, questions, experiences, responses of kindred hearts and minds.

DuVersity pushes, stretches, allows my experience, my point of view at the table, bows my head to rest, listen, learn from others in dialogue. Anthony's design to involve the wider Arts in the ongoing study is a gift! For many of us, that is our book, our teacher, our guide. Thank you for inviting my dance into the conversation!  
Travis Jarell

DuVersity as an organization understands we know little of the human situation and we have a right to "... work out your own salvation with diligence" as is echoed in various traditions. We start from nothing but open-ness to the human condition using all we know and can do; discarding form and method that have lost meaning.

We are not on anyone's philosophic team nor do we promote uniformity of thought but in all things we lean toward "integration without rejection".

Each has a part to play in a personal as well as a collective development. DuVersity is a space for each to find, by our own lights, where we fit in this unfolding miracle of life. Daniel Proudfoot

## NEW PROJECTS

### Third Force Theatre

The roots of this lie within the report by Orage that Gurdjieff that his book *Beelzebub's Tales* was for the future and, in particular, for artists who might take ideas from it for their own work. I heard about this idea during the time I spent with John Bennett. I was attracted to the idea of engaging with Beelzebub not by trying to 'understand' it but by enacting it, and by creating stories of my own. It might then be possible to 'fathom the gist' of it in a third reading as he put it in his preface.

It was inevitable that such thoughts would have led to theatre and performance. Gurdjieff himself had depicted a Babylonian Society of Adherents of Legominism engaged in designing the arts as ways of transmitting real knowledge to future generations. In the chapter 'Art' he speaks of the Saturday night meetings which were actually just the practice we call improvisational theatre today. It so turned out that I had run a group in Kingston in 1970, where there were some students of Bennett left behind when he had gone to Sherborne, that was centred on role-playing. Looking at some documents lately I saw that I had been helped and influenced by visits from Keith Johnstone, a key representative of improvisational theatre in the UK and elsewhere. Sadly, by the time I realized this Keith had died (2023) and I could not get in touch with him. But, to my great fortune, I had been in active collaboration with Jessai Jayhmes, an actor and director, who first met me around 1980 and I met again just a few years ago.

It was wonderful to have the chance of participating in physical theatre and we realized this in his seminars we ran at Claymont and Camp Caravan. But this also did not exclude studies of classical dramatic structure and the possibilities of meta-theatre.

Gurdjieff's pupil Orage had argued for a formal theatre based on Gurdjieff's concept of the three brains. I quote the article he wrote in 1926 about this. In looking at this recently, he came to me that it might have been Orage who gave Gurdjieff the idea of improvisational theatre.

In conversation recently with a number of the intelligentsia (meaning no less, in America, than people interested in the Little Review) the topic perambulated round to the theatre. Wishing to make an experiment for my own curiosity, I asked everybody present to recall the occasions, within the previous twelve months, when he or she had been to a theatre for no other motive than to see a play for their own pleasure. In the confessional it turned out that nobody had once gone to a theatre for the sake of the play alone; there had always been auxiliary motives of an extraneous character, such as a dinner party, the obligation to write a notice, personal interest in a playwright or performer, and so on; and at least nine times out of ten this auxiliary motive was really the principal motive. In fact, but for the tradition of the theatre, the same motive would have taken them to any other place as readily as to a theatre.

As this had been my state, I was interested to have it shared by people worth respect; and my next question could now safely be put: "What is the kind of play that anybody present would like to see produced?" For it is obvious that unless either we can define the kind of play that would for its own sake interest us, or have the fortitude to wait for such a one to appear miraculously out of the blue, the theatre is not really for us, but only for our guests and hosts and unemployed associates. In short, it is not in any degree an art value, but only an entertainment—and rather dear at the inconvenience.

To my question, however, there was little positive response. (Why is it that people articulate on paper are so often dumb in original conversation?) I tried, in vain, to stimulate their interest in their own imagination. The drama, I said, began as a Monologue, became a Duologue, and is now a Triologue. Practically all modern plays consist of a triangle surrounded by minor geometrical figures. Is it inconceivable what the next evolutionary step must be?

A half-original suggestion was made that is just but only just worth recording. "It's quite true," the hominist said, "that every variety of the triangle has been staged. Come to that, most men have staged every sort of triangle in their personal experience, and the stage has nothing on them. But I would not mind seeing the triangle twisted occasionally to exhibit two men in conflict for the same woman. We see this triangle often enough in nature; but apparently it is not frequent in human nature. The theatrical convention, at least, is the dispute of two women about a man. When two men dispute over a woman—on the stage—it is usually a walk-over for one and the other permits himself to be walked over. I'm not suggesting that blood should be their argument; but I would like to see a battle of manly intelligences."

This idea is only half-original because, obviously, it does not give us a new initiative to drama comparable, let us say, to the substitution of three characters for two or two for one. It still leaves us with the eternal triangle. But there being no further suggestion, I was bound to produce my own—neither of them I avow, really my own, if only because there is nothing really one's own under the sun.

The first was suggested by a recollection. Several traveling theatrical companies found themselves marooned together over a certain Sunday on one of the desert islands called in America one-horse cities. To wile away the time, one of the party suggested that each should play a role he or she fancied, and get it professionally passed upon by the rest. To this was added the better suggestion that if one of the party would begin



improvising in his selected role, the rest should come in as the occasion offered and continue the original improvised plot in his own selected role and on his own invention. The moment must have been creative; or, let us say, the planets must have been auspicious. The play lasted three hours; everybody in the three companies, to the number of sixteen, took part in it; the construction of the play was technically excellent; and the plot was rounded off to a satisfying finale. In the recollection of the whole tribe, no play or playing had had half the “go” of this improvised master-piece. They returned to the stage and to us with a golden dream.

“Suppose a company were to promise improvisation—would you” (I asked my friends) “go to see it, not from any auxiliary motive principally, but from the principal motive of curiosity? Assume that the idea were taken up by competent players who would adventure their success on their ready wit—would you go, even alone?”

It is significant that every person present replied with an emphatic affirmative. Now then, Theatre! You know at least something which would really intrigue “us.”

The second suggestion, again, was inspired by a recollection, but this time of a Russian play, produced or not produced, I am not sure which. The idea is to exhibit on the stage human psychology as it really is; that is to say (remember I speak as an intelligent to the intelligent—none of your “of, by or from”)—as mechanically determined by the sum of our experiences, instinctively, emotionally and mentally. Each of us—even “us,” is a marionette of a body whose behavior dances to the pulls of circumstances upon its three main pivots. Our behavior, in fact, is the resultant of three pulls, which seldom coincide in direction. My idea is to stage the facts as follows: At the side of the stage a three-storied erection would be placed; and in each of its rooms, open to the audience, a character would appear and there remain throughout the play. The top storey would represent the mind, the second the emotions, and the bottom storey the instincts or physical appetites. On the stage itself, the leading role would be played by a character whose every speech, gesture and procedure would be the resultant of the conflicting advice offered him by the three players, representing his own three “voices.” He would have no “will” of his own; but his behavior would be dictated by the relative strengths of the three pulls as represented by the three players “in him.” There would, moreover, be room for much variety. It is clear that people differ not wholly but only in the distribution and relative development of their three chief functions. One, for instance, has the brain of a man, the emotions of a child, and the appetite of a savage. Another has the brain of a child, the emotions of a poet, and the appetites of a dog—and so on. The resultant behaviors as manifested by the living automaton on the stage itself would be highly entertaining, might be extremely instructive and ought to be truly illuminating.

I do not, of course, undertake to construct a play adapted to this method of presentation; but, as one whose interest is centered in human psychology, I do undertake to go to see such a play attempted.

Having thus delivered myself with the modesty proper to the original source of the provocation to the discussion, I waited for the verdict. Alas, all my friends were asleep but one, and she had not listened to a word. It is at her request that I repeat myself thus.

### Post Gurdjieff Beelzebub

In a collaboration with Jesai Jayhmes, Anthony ventured into the possibilities of rendering Gurdjieff’s Beelzebub’s Tales into performances. They formed a small group that met online with

readings under the tuition of Jesai. This segued into me writing new scripts based on Beelzebub, the first being The New Design on the further design of the spaceships Gurdjieff described in his book. Anthony was annoyed by the almost total absence of women in Gurdjieff's text, so he also invented Zeinab (the name taken from Gurdjieff's scenario for The Struggle of the Magicians) as the granddaughter of Beelzebub!

This led to writing a script about What happened in Purgatory. Zeinab and Hasein are depicted as in Purgatory itself. It was an exercise to see what could be said and began from the previous writing on the new design of spaceships which introduced Zeinab and placed her visiting her father, a research scientist based on Purgatory!



Zeinab played by Tabasheer Zutzi



Hasein played by Jesai Jayhmes



Beelzebub played by Anthony Blake

### Improvisational Theatre

In 2023 conditions opened up and became possible to have seminars 'in the flesh'. Two events happened, one at Claymont Court in West Virginia and the other at Camp Caravan in Massachusetts. It was through these workshops that we evolved the idea of a 'Third Force Theatre'.

The fourth way, the way articulated now more than a hundred years ago by Gurdjieff, goes beyond any set of practices. As he said, more than once, it arises according to need from time to time and goes beyond any known form. In spirit, it is always creative. It makes use of whatever is available in the time and place of its manifestation. Most people see the Gurdjieff work in terms of such things as the movements or inner exercises but it is far more. Gurdjieff himself showed how it could manifest within the creative arts. He himself was a writer, musician, teacher of dances and

could transmit teachings through communal meals and travels. He was a theatrical innovator, as in his project he called the Struggle of the Magicians, which led to major public demonstrations of the Movements in Paris and New York in the 1920s. In his book *Beelzebub's Tales* he depicted wise men using the arts to transmit ideas to future generations by what he called legominisms. In these stories, he represented the meaning of the word theatre to be 'reflector of reality'. The word itself comes from the old Greek word for 'seeing' as in *theoria*. As I have said, it is likely that Gurdjieff had picked up the idea of improvisational theatre from Orage who, as described in his paper we quoted earlier, had come across the method by accident.

As it generally known, the fourth way is intended to be practised in life. One of Gurdjieff's sayings, echoed by his pupil John Bennett, was: in life to play role outwardly but not identify inwardly. Some of his movements were designed to demonstrate this and many contrasted outward behaviour with inner state. This is the core of understanding acting, which begins by grasping that in life we are always acting anyway, but largely unconsciously. We don't get to see this just by wanting to or trying 'to be aware'. It is necessary to experiment. It's only by consciously playing a role that we can see the unconscious roles that make our lives mechanical. Attempts to be more aware are very limited in scope. We need to find creative ways of getting into another place of seeing by action, action that is not composed of routines.

Here I must comment on Gurdjieff's attitude towards the study of types. Two things were important. One was that such studies could not be a science, but should be an art. The second was that, in order to see one's own type, one had to put oneself into the role of another one.

Some of you think you can see types but they are not types at all that you see. In order to see types one must know one's own type and be able to 'depart' from it. ISOTM p. 247

There cannot be proper outward considering while a man is seated in his chief feature," said G. "For instance So-and-So" (he named one of our party) "His feature is that he is never at home. How can he consider anything, or anybody?"

I was astonished at the artistic finish of the feature that was represented by G. It was not psychology even, it was art.

And psychology ought to be art," G. replied, "psychology can never be simply a science." ISOTM p. 267

To do this, we need each other, the eyes and ears of our companions. It is now well attested in psychology that most of the time we do not know our own minds, though most of us believe we do. Looking inward in any obvious sense - 'trying' to see ourselves - is not enough, because such looking is itself conditioned. We cannot see ourselves just by wanting to. We need the eyes and ears of other people. And we need to reveal ourselves to them. We cannot expect to find some guru to act on us as an agent of 'real consciousness'. We need to find ways of cooperating with others to enable this to happen between us.

What I say will seem didactic. But the only way of discovering ourselves, of finding ourselves out, is by doing rather than thinking. It means, at least, acting in a way that is not part of our routine. So, if you feel like taking up the challenge, join us in this fourth way venture. Characters or protagonists in the drama of the fourth way, such as John Bennett, well understood that any practice tends, after a time, to become another conditioning. It always remains important to

break the mould. People may be astonished to know that, in his book *Transformation*, he claims that students of the work should not go on doing the movements after a few years or so!

Third Force Theatre is just a name. But, it might come to signify for you the intrinsic spirit of experiment and innovation which makes life real. Or, as John Bennett put it in his magnum opus, helps us realize our place in The Dramatic Universe. Things are not what they seem. Real achievement has to be hazardous. Creativity comes out of the void and not the known.

As the great bard said: the play's the thing. Can we wake up to the way our lives are scripted so that we remain blind? And do this in a way that is full of laughter and play? To grow up enough to be young again?



*Struggle of the Magicians* by Leslie Schwing

Based on the improvisations made during the seminar Fourth Way Theatrics April 27-30, 2023 held at Claymont Court, West Virginia.



## Higher Moving Centre

We had hoped to run an event-based on the idea of a higher moving centre. Gurdjieff had spoken of a higher emotional and a higher intellectual centre but not of a higher moving one. Simply from the point of view of symmetry, I thought it worth looking into the possibility.

I had formed the idea that the focus of spirituality had shifted over the last Epoch from 500 BC to the present day. Firstly, it was identified with the intellect, as we find in the Greeks such as Plato but extending into the Middle Ages in Europe. This attitude was evident in India as much as in Europe. Then about a thousand years ago, there seemed to be a shift towards the feeling centre. Bhakti yoga became prevalent – related to what Gurdjieff called the way of the monk – and was evident in the mystics of Christendom. But an even more extraordinary shift seemed to take place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (this was when Bennett claimed that the new Synergic Epoch began): a shift towards the physical body and its powers. In the West, dance became recognized as an esoteric form capable of leading the inner development of people. This brought us into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the emergence of new kinds of dance movement as it evident in Rudolf Steiner's Eurythmics, Laban and Gurdjieff's movements.

The critical thing was highlighted by Gurdjieff in his Russian days by his teaching about the moving centre. Ouspensky recognized this as a major split from the past and the Cartesian duality of body and mind. Body can be seen not just as a machine but as being intelligent, conscious and with a will of its own. In philosophy, there was a shift towards the concept of the embodied mind. Some scientists began to say that their insights into physical reality came from contact with their physical bodies. David Bohm, in particular, drew attention to proprioception, others to interoception and projiscience. Right from the start of his teaching, Gurdjieff spoke of the importance of bodily sensation.

Gurdjieff of course spoke of dances as encoding knowledge and claimed that, for example, as such ideas as the Enneagram required experience of the movements to be able to understand them. It was seen that there was a possible route to real understanding through Gurdjieff's idea of the necessity of a co-working of thinking, feeling and moving which had to begin with the moving centre, then to the feeling and then to the intellectual, reversing the historical path.

Our hope for an event to look into these possibilities was denied by the pandemic, but now there is hope that something of it may be revived in a seminar to be held next year on the meaning of the movements, to be facilitated by myself and pianist Elan Sicroff.

### THREE WAYS – THE ‘OCTAVES’ OF THE ENNEAGRAM

Anthony Blake

Extract from the forthcoming ‘Thoughts on the Enneagram’.

We have taken up and used Gurdjieff’s terminology of ‘octaves’ though with some reservations. These reservations mostly concern his identification of the ‘law of seven’ with a particular musical form. For some reason, he ignored the plurality of structures spanning the interval from a note to its higher form of double the frequency. He uses only the diatonic scale exemplified, for example, as the key of C major. When it comes to thinking in terms of three different octaves this runs into difficulties because the three have to be accommodated with each other and fit together. We could allow the first of the three to take the form of the standard diatonic octave, while dealing with the second as a pentatonic scale and the third a tritonic one (rarely used in recent times). But what is important is that we have a build up as we go round the circle.

This idea came out of the analysis done in the Russian period of Gurdjieff’s extraordinary model of eating, assimilation and transformation that encompassed the totality of human being. A key idea was that if a given process (in an ‘octave’) reached a certain level of energy it could take on another process. The first process could be like a ‘carrier wave’ for the second. The three processes had natures corresponding to food, air and impressions. The total transformation was like a relay race with the initiative or will passing from one to another of the three actions.

In the process of any event, the same event is happening in three different ways. This has been portrayed in Carlos Castaneda’s books where he introduces, gradually, the idea of a second and then a third attention. The very way in which we construe our world depends on the attention we are in.

The first octave is the way in which we ordinarily see our world and the sequence of events in it. This is the octave which is built into the way we are constructed and goes by itself. The first octave is something that we all have, no matter who we are and what we do. It is the basic form of being human in this time. This is what most people call ‘reality’.

When it comes to the second octave, we are in a predicament. We have to construct this octave for ourselves. The passions and energies of life take us only so far (to point 5). In order to live or exist in this octave, we have to make it happen with artifice or design. In terms of the Gurdjieff work, we have to separate ourselves from ourselves. We are concerned with going through experience in a way “otherwise” than that to which we have become accustomed. This is essential if we are going to be able to liberate our intelligence from mental conditioning.

There is a Zen saying: “First I thought that mountains were mountains, rivers were rivers, and trees were trees. Then I saw that mountains were not mountains, rivers were not rivers, and trees were not trees.” Finally, after enlightenment, the narrator adds, “Now I see that mountains are mountains, rivers are rivers, and trees are trees.” The strangeness of the second octave is to be superseded by the reconciliation of the third.

The integration of processes or octaves is not all ‘harmony’ in a sentimental sense. The second octave can embrace conflict and passions many people might regard as ‘negative’. Here is an example describing the management of the Medici String Quartet:

We see a story that’s full of unresolved tensions and people upset with each other. The music is exceedingly harmonious, but the process of making it could not be described as harmonious. There is something interesting in that. I think partly it is a result of striving for such extreme levels of performance.

As opposed to the reflexes that minimize the variation in processes, one of the truisms of innovation is that innovators create variation because they're striving for novelty. There are a lot of different strategies to create variation. One of them might be some degree of turmoil in the group. Throughout the case, we see Paul trying on different leadership hats. A lot of them don't fit, in his estimation. It's remarkable how much doesn't work given the superb quality of what emerges musically. One of the lessons you could draw from the case is that a really ugly process can produce great results sometimes. High Note: 'Managing the Medici String Quartet' by Martha Lagace.

It seems that we have to go through the second octave in order to be in a place where the third can begin. I remember the inspiring mathematician George Spencer Brown (1923 - 2016) who was an English polymath best known as the author of *Laws of Form*) once telling me: "When I do mathematics, I never think." He might have been echoing the words of Sri Aurobindo: 'What you call "thinking" that I never do. I see or I do not see'. Thinking is the very emblem of artifice—but unless one learns how to think, one is dumb and blind in the higher worlds. Or, in Gurdjieff's language, one turns into a "stupid saint."

The struggles with oneself, the turning upside down of one's conceptions—these artificial labours and exercises serve to bring us to the point where they are not needed.

In the "third attention" all that we need is at hand, and there is no longer any need to be divided. This exacts a severe price: we must be able to get out of the way. Such an outcome may seem to us impossible or an expression of some absurd self-denial. On the contrary, it is the root of understanding. A teacher of music spoke of the 'second naturalness' We begin with a natural talent but have to undergo years of training and use of techniques and practice under disciplines or teachers, which may take us further and further away from the music but then comes itself to dwell in us.

I take understanding to mean "standing under." I stand under what I understand so that it informs me. Gurdjieff called this "reason of understanding," and it is in utter contrast with "reason of knowing," which obtains in the first octave. Between the first and the third octaves we have to go through a revolution in ourselves. This is the task of the second octave. What is conscious has to be seen as unconscious, and vice versa. It is hardly surprising that we can lose ourselves in this process.

Without the grace of God we would be lost forever. As we struggle to transform, to understand, to come to be, there is constantly flowing through us of the Word of God. The Word moves in counterclockwise direction around the enneagram. It is the stream in which we can be transformed. But first we have to go against the stream.

Outer work and inner work are never enough. The outside and the inside are incomplete. As we enter into the third octave, all that we have been and done becomes God's work. To avoid spurious associations with such grandiose terms as "God," we can speak in terms of any situation of transformation. In fact, we must do this.

I like to illustrate the point by insisting that Bennett made a significant kind of error in his exposition of the enneagram of cooking: he spoke of it in terms of the kitchen. This was akin to talking about a commercial enterprise in terms of its production facility leaving financing and marketing out of the picture. I see the third octave as concerning manifestation in the larger world. This means, I reasoned, that it was truly independent of the other two octaves. A new octave comes into play at point 6, quite different from the one that comes in at point 3. Once one

starts thinking in terms of how a restaurant works, the issue becomes clear. The point of having a restaurant is to serve customers.

I like to picture the swing doors through which the waiters pass: they are making a transit between two different worlds. The kitchen can be a hell hole, but the dining room has to be calm and welcoming. To use another illustration, how often it is the case that the title under which a book is published is chosen by the publisher and not the author. Our friend William Sullivan wanted to call his book on the astro-archaeology of south America *The War With Time*, but had to let it be called 'Secrets of the Incas', rather as Ouspensky's book was to be called *Fragments of an Unknown Teaching* but come out as *In Search of the Miraculous*.

The ramifications of all this are legion. Another example comes to mind: this is the publication of the first Folio of Shakespeare's plays in 1623. This was the beginning of the emergence of the playwright as a genius of world literature.

## THE DUNHUANG LIBRARY CAVE AND THE BIRTH OF DZOGCHEN

J M White

### The Mogao Cave Complex

Around 1900 a Daoist priest named Wang Yuanlu was living in a cave complex on the southern border of China when he noticed that his cigarette smoke was drawn through one of the side walls of his cave. When he investigated, he discovered a hidden chamber in the passageway of the cave. The door to the side chamber had been filled in and plastered over and then murals painted on the plastered wall. He opened the chamber and discovered a small room full of old texts. Around the year 1020 CE this small side chamber in a cave complex just south of the famous Silk Road got filled with manuscripts and then closed off. This accidental find has been called the Dead Sea Scrolls of Buddhism and is one of the most important archaeological discoveries of the twentieth century. The room was crammed from floor to ceiling with tens of thousands of ancient texts. The texts are largely in Chinese and Tibetan but there are several other languages including Turkic and an ancient Persian script and others in Sogdian, Khotanese, Kuchean, Sanskrit, Uighur, and Hebrew. The oldest documents go back to the fourth century and the latest datable manuscript is from 1006.

The cave complex was extensive and included several hundred rooms that served as temples, shrines and meditation retreat spaces. These are not what we normally think of as caves, they are not natural openings into the earth but rather rooms that have been carved into the bedrock of the sandstone mountain. The chambers were carefully dug out, then the walls were covered with murals. Locally the caves were known as the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas because the ceilings in some of the rooms were filled with row upon row of images of the Buddha. There is also a very large face of the Buddha carved into the front of the cave complex. The chamber where the manuscripts were found is now known as Chamber 17 and is a part of Chamber 16 which appears to be a shrine used by a Buddhist monk or perhaps the reliquary of his ashes, although no remains were found in the chamber. Many of the rooms are filled with statuary and the walls covered with murals. It appears the cave complex was first occupied in the fourth century CE and was expanded



gradually with more and more chambers being excavated and put into use. The caves are now recognized as a World Heritage Site. Much of the artwork on the site is still intact and many of the statues are still in place. The art is recognized as one of the high points of Central Asian art.

The cave complex, known as the Mogao Caves, is about ten miles south of the city of Dunhuang. In 1907 the British archaeologist Marc Aurel Stein was making his way along the route of the Silk Road excavating the ancient cities that are now in ruins along the road. When he made his way to Dunhuang he heard about the caves to the south of town and went for a visit. He found a solitary caretaker of the cave complex and learned about the hidden room filled with ancient texts. The priest showed him the room and he took pictures of the site and negotiated the sale of a huge cache of several thousand manuscripts which he took back to the British Library. In the next decade expeditions from France, China, Russia and Japan all learned about the caves and were able to acquire more of the horde of manuscripts.

Dunhuang was under Tibetan control from 786 to 848. Dunhuang was a wealthy trading town near the junction of three different routes that were part of the Silk Road, it is located where the Gobi Desert meets the Himalayan Mountains in southern Mongolia and is at the eastern edge of what is known as the Hexi Corridor, a long valley that runs east/west in a border area that has changed governments many times as different countries gain power. Dunhuang was a major city on the Silk Road and had a large monastic community. It is now in the western part of Gansu province in China.

During the time of the Tibetan rule a Buddhist monk named Hongbian from a prominent local Chinese family became the head of one of the local monasteries. His family had a great deal of wealth, and they ordered the creation of new chambers in the cave complex. As a result, what we now know as chambers 16 and 17 were created out of the bedrock of the sandstone mountain. Chamber 16 was plastered, and murals were painted on the walls and ceilings and a small shrine in the back of the chamber was filled with statuary. Hongbian, like everyone else in Dunhuang at that time, wore Tibetan style clothes and spoke and wrote Tibetan along with his native Chinese. During the time he was there the Tibetan emperor ordered the local monks to make multiple copies of different Buddhist scriptures, he ordered so many that the monasteries in Dunhuang became virtual scriptoriums and the monks created hundreds of copies of the various texts. Many of these copies ended up stored in chamber 17 in the newly excavated cave site. The Tibetans were forced out in 848 but this seemed to have little effect on the local monastic communities. In 851, after the departure of the Tibetan armies, Hongbian became the head monk for the entire Hexi Corridor that included a number of different monasteries. When Hongbian died in 862 chamber 16 became a shrine that included a statue of Hongbian and an inscribed memorial stone that described his life. It appears that his personal library in both Chinese and Tibetan, including his correspondence, were stored in chamber 17. As time passed more and more texts and paintings were deposited in chamber 17 until the chamber was filled floor to ceiling. Then the chamber door was bricked in and the wall plastered over and new murals commissioned by Hongbian's family.

There are three main theories why Chamber 17 was filled with manuscripts and then sealed off from the world. First, they think the texts may have been the personal library of the monk who used that chamber. Second, since there are numerous scraps and pieces of texts included in the room there is a long-standing Buddhist tradition that any text that is a Buddhist script is an extension of the actual Buddha and must be treated with respect. Designated areas were set aside where these scraps and old texts were deposited and treated with reverence. Finally, around the time that the cave was sealed there were threats of a Muslim invasion from the west and the local

monasteries in Dunhuang moved their texts to the cave complex for safe keeping and sealed the books in to safeguard them. This is suggested because there are a large number of texts that have the seal of the Three Realms Monastery (founded 830) that was located nearby. While the Islamic invaders captured cities as far west as Khotan they never made it to Dunhuang. So, for whatever the reason, by 1020 the chamber was closed and remained unknown until around 1900 when it was rediscovered and unsealed.

### Early Dzogchen Texts in the Cave Library

The texts in the cave library represent some of the earliest known writings about the history of Dzogchen Buddhism in Tibet, as well as the early history of Chan Buddhism in China. While Buddhism first came to Tibet in the eighth century the tradition did not get firmly established until well into the eleventh century. Due to the political upheaval in Tibet during these centuries little has survived in the way of verifiable or datable texts from that time. Consequently, the texts preserved in the Dunhuang cave library, many in Tibetan from the eighth to the tenth centuries, are extraordinarily valuable resources. Scholars and translators working on these texts have been able to trace back the earliest datable use of the words Dzogchen and Atiyoga providing new light on the early history of these traditions.

The earliest datable use of the word Dzogchen is in the Guhyagarbha tantra. In Chapter 13 the term Dzogchen is used to describe the climax of the sexual yoga aspect of the visualization. It is considered the culmination of the perfection stage and was consequently called the Great Perfection. However, the word Dzogchen only appears four times in the entire text and it represents a part of the practice rather than a school of thought or a lineage.

The Mahayoga meditation instructions found among the Dunhuang manuscripts typically involve two main stages which are discussed in great detail in the commentaries to these texts. The two stages are called the development stage and the perfection stage. The development stage has three aspects; the first is the realization of emptiness, which then in the second stage becomes activated by compassion. This creates the third stage where a seed syllable appears, and the entire mandala visualization is generated out of the seed syllable. This marks the beginning of the perfection stage which has four parts which starts with the identification of the self with the deity, then the second stage involves recitation of the mantra, followed by the sexual practice and then, in the final stage, the visualization is dissolved.

These Mahayoga commentaries found in the library cave use the term Dzogchen (i.e., the great perfection) in relation to a phase of the perfection stage. The commentaries indicate that the great perfection is the climax of the perfection stage of the visualization practice. The language that these commentaries use to describe this phase of the perfection stage includes many of the terms that come to characterize Dzogchen. Phrases like primordial presence, intrinsic awareness and spontaneous accomplishment are used to describe this highest state of union. These terms are used in the description of the visualization and don't necessarily represent a separate lineage. Dzogchen, in these texts, is not a separate vehicle or school but rather the final stage of the visualization that involves deities in sexual union as a symbol of the experience of non-dual awareness. One commentary on the perfection stage of the visualization associates the word Dzogchen with the "bodhicitta substance" and calls it "the great perfection, the great self, the heart nectar". (P. 169, "The Early Days of the Great Perfection", by Sam van Schaik)

There are a number of texts in the cache of manuscripts that reflect a synchronism of Vajrayana Buddhism and Chinese Chan. According to the translators of these texts they, “combine these techniques in complex and innovative ways, with technical terminology that reveals an extensive knowledge of both traditions.” (p. 63, Silk Road) There are a group of texts from the library cave that use terminology from Chan Buddhism in the descriptions of the development stage. The authors of these texts were applying the terminology of Chan in an interpretation of Mahayoga practices and were bridging the two traditions. There are also texts that use Vajrayana terminology in the commentaries on Chan texts, so it appears that the lines of influence were moving in both directions.

By the time of the development of the mind series of Dzogchen texts in the tenth century there is no indication of any dependence on Mahayoga practices. In these mind series texts there are no references to the development or perfection stages which are transcended by the nonmeditation of the Great Perfection. Van Schaik believes that, “At some point the term rdzogs chen achieved an independence from the practices of Mahayoga.” (p. 175, “Early Days”.) The insights associated with the Great Perfection stage of the Mahayoga visualization somehow break free and stand alone as an avenue for direct access to the intrinsic awareness of Dzogchen. Then a body of literature, which becomes the mind series, began to build around these ideas. The realization gained in the Great Perfection stage of the Mahayoga practices then stands alone and the language used to describe the highest level of realization attained in the perfection stage becomes Dzogchen as a vehicle or lineage in itself.

By the tenth century there are references to a corpus of Dzogchen texts and writers such as Nub Sangye Yeshe were producing texts where the Great Perfection is applied directly to a state of realization that stands alone without the need for preliminary stages of development. This same evolution is seen in the use of the word Atiyoga which appears as early as the eighth century in Sanskrit Indic tantras. Here Anuyoga is associated with visualization practices that include sexual union with the deities and Atiyoga is the realization of the nature of reality that arises from this. This then evolves into the approach that is considered the penultimate and highest of all tantric practices based on nonduality and spontaneous realization after which other practices become unnecessary. The first datable record of the use of the word Atiyoga as a separate vehicle was established by Nub Sangye Yeshe in the late ninth or early tenth century.

By the tenth century the nine-vehicle system of Tibetan dharma was in place and Atiyoga was established as a separate vehicle in itself. However, it was not without controversy and was contested as late as the thirteenth century by other scholars. Nub Sangye Yeshe also began to quote from and list the names of writers that established a lineage of teachers. This list was compressed by later writers as the Great Perfection became a stand-alone tradition.

## Conclusions

Since Dzogchen has been mainly associated with the Nyingma school, scholars from other schools have cast aspersions on Dzogchen by claiming it was influenced by Chinese Chan Buddhism. Other scholars have thought that a syncretism of tantric Buddhism with the local non-dual traditions of Advaita Vendanta and Kashmiri Shaivism took place in the Swat Valley and gave birth to Dzogchen. Now the translations from the Dunhuang library cave are opening new avenues of research with texts that are datable to the eighth and ninth centuries. These texts are casting a new light on the earliest verifiable history of Dzogchen. This horde of texts comes from

an area that was influenced by multiple traditions and was a meeting ground for the tantric Buddhism of Tibet and the Chan Buddhism of China along with other traditions that are represented among the texts in the library cave. This confluence of literary and spiritual practices was an opportunity for separate traditions to influence one another and come together in new ways.

In the traditional lineage Dzogchen was founded by Garab Dorje. However, there are no historical records of his life or his teachings. The legends surrounding his life indicate he was born in the seventh century in what is now the Swat Valley of Afghanistan. His hagiography states that he received the Dzogchen teachings in a vision from Vajrasattva and passed them on to a series of disciples that included Manjushrimitra, Shri Singha, Vimalamitra, Jnanasutra, and Padmasambhava. The Tibetan translator Vairotsana was sent by the King of Tibet to find Buddhist scriptures and he eventually received the Dzogchen corpus from Shri Singha and translated it from its original Indic language into Tibetan where it was passed on to Nub Namkhai Nyingpo and Nub Sangye Yeshe among others. However, no extant Dzogchen texts in Indic languages have been recovered and the earliest datable texts that show Dzogchen as a separate vehicle are from the ninth and tenth centuries.

For a text to enter the Buddhist canon there has to be some direct relation to the Buddha or to a Buddha realm. Texts that have no direct lineage association are not included in the canonical literature. Hence, for the texts that make up the Atiyoga/Dzogchen corpus to gain this status they have to connect back to the Buddha or to a visionary experience of the Buddha realm. This connection has, of course, been established with the story of Garab Dorje.

An inherent conflict can easily develop between literary scholars and devotees of these traditions. There is a well-established lineage history in both China and Tibet that, when examined by literary historians, has little or no documentary evidence. As scholars try to trace it back to its roots there are no facts and no documents that can be historically verified. This can be a challenge as the devotees look historically naïve to the scholars while the devotees believe the scholars are missing the real point. However, the Dzogchen related texts from the cave library tell a very different story from the traditional account and provide datable evidence of the earliest known use of the terms Dzogchen and Atiyoga. This may, as more of these texts are translated and studied, bring about changes in the way scholars think about the origins of Dzogchen.

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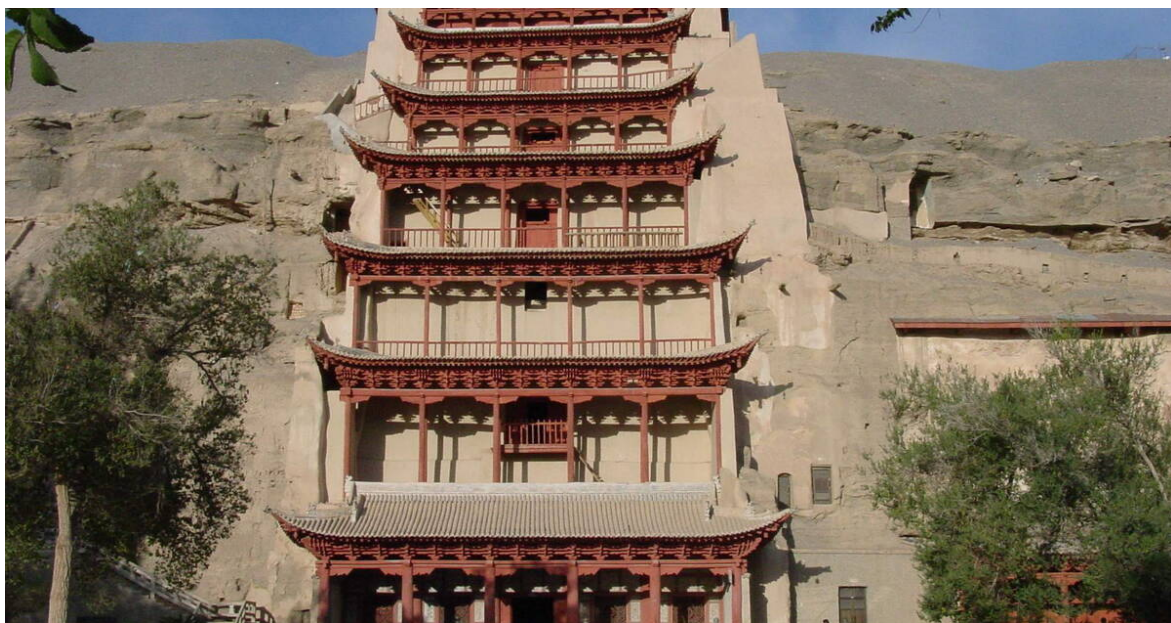
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# Illustrations



Map of the Silk Road



Exterior view of Mogao Cave site





Decorated Mogao Cave



Hongbian's Statue



Chamber 16 & 17. The Library Cave



Chamber 16 & 17. Hongbian's chamber - recent photo



## DZOGEN-CHEN, DIALOGUE, DAVID BOHM

Extract from an article in the collection of tributes to David Bohm, *Quantum Implications*.  
 “Vortices of Thought in the Implicate Order” by David Shainberg

People who use perversion to deal with the dilemma of the vortices of thought are forced to keep repeating the same behavior again and again. They have to keep repeating their efforts to relieve themselves of the tension because they do not understand the image-making process and the way they are still cutting themselves off from the enfolding and unfolding of the larger order.

Sometimes, however, the people who are trapped in the necessities of realizing their image understand the wider implications of their narrowed frame of mind. They know that they are fragments that have broken off from a relationship to something larger. They sense that their actions are always getting caught up in the image process and that they must somehow find a way to change the situation, but that it must be a way that doesn't get caught in the tangle of their own 'doing.' They see that the fixation must be dissolved, or they must be transformed by something that is larger than their self.

Some people will take a trip to the seashore, others to the mountain or to some other natural setting that enables them to see the difference between their fixation in the vortex and the flow of movement in nature. For people who live in cities, where the buildings and houses are all man-made and permanent, nature offers a contact with change and variety of movement that is more flexible and clearly flowing than is the explicate in the city. In the city the lines are mostly vertical and horizontal, while in nature there are curves, diagonals and other unusual shapes. In nature there is a direct sense of the cycles of organic growth- the flowers bloom; leaves change color and come out again in the spring- fish move in the pond; the variety of living processes shows the diversity of form in nature and the continual movement of its producing of forms. ....

There are many different ways in which human beings sense the limitations of their thought and manage to find connections to the implicate order beyond, but here I want to focus on two processes which seem to me to point at some of the essential ways the fixation in the vortex of the explicate in human relationship moves to the openness of relating that is possible in the implicate. These two activities are models for how that process works.

Perhaps a person has experienced moments when his mind is quiet. Perhaps he has been with another person in a particular way and knows that quiet of connection. Perhaps he reads a book about the ways to quiet his mind, but in one way or another he gets a whiff of the knowledge that he is trapped and that there may be a way to get beyond these limitations. Perhaps encouraged by someone who seems to him to be free, or as a result of other influences, he has decided to start watching his thoughts. There are many ways to do this in various techniques of meditation. As a model consider zazen, Zen meditation.

In Zen meditation a person is told to watch his breath with his thought. Attentive to that breathing, he is not trapped by thoughts or the vortex around them because the thinking just keeps coming and going and there is a flow of observations which seem to come without his holding to his self as the observer. In the midst of this insight a person finds that a quiet acceptance comes over him. He knows somehow, without being a he that knows, that the responses of thoughts, feelings, breathing are all that he has thought of as himself and that they are his self so much as the happening that is a continual event in nature. They simply appear. His body seems to appear continually as energy turned into matter which will disintegrate back into energy (nothingness) so he 'knows' he isn't his body. It is a mass, a presence in an unfolded order; the responses seem to originate in the domain of that order which is not graspable by any thought or image because they are all in a different realm. Yet they too seem to be part of that larger order,

which we call the implicate order. He feels that he is some-thing enfolded into the implicate order as part of the vast energy domain and has unfolded as a material form which is the explicit relationships he perceives. But then he knows too that his perception of thingness and the conceptualization of his folded-unfolded is itself part of the explicate order and he suspects any of his attempts at formulation. In the totality of his events in meditation the meditator breaks out of the fixations that had been happening within his thought and knows his relationship to the implicate order.

As he watches what happened with his breath the meditator is also becoming more aware that his thought process is quite fragmented and that it develops first one theme and then another. It creates scenarios with causes and effects and identifies with images of self that are agents of self in these scenarios. He sees too that, as these thoughts appear, there is a basic identity of the observer and he thinks of himself as this observer and that observer owns all the thoughts and feelings he observes. But then he wonders, if these thoughts come and go, seemingly without his thinking them what is this thought that he is the observer? Is that not just another thing that is coming and going? If that thought is also a coming going thought, who is he? Just another phenomenon playing across HIS brain? As he watches, indeed the observer appears to be just that, a thing, a conception, that is repeated from moment to moment and without that he is nothing. As that insight hits the meditator, he sees too that his breathing goes on without his 'doing' or 'thinking anything. It is a direct responsiveness in the world. It is.

Dogen-zenji became interested in Buddhism as a boy as he watched the smoke from an incense stick burning by his dead mother's body, and he felt the evanescence of our life. This feeling grew within him and finally resulted in his attainment of enlightenment and the development of his deep philosophy. When he saw the smoke from the incense stick and felt the evanescence of life, he felt very lonely. But that lonely feeling became stronger and stronger, and flowered into enlightenment when he was twenty eight years old. And at the moment of enlightenment he exclaimed, 'There is no body and no mind!' When he said 'no body and no mind,' all his being in that moment became a flashing into the vast phenomenal world, a flashing which included everything, which covered everything, and which had immense quality in it; all the phenomenal world was included within it, an absolute independent existence. That was his enlightenment. Starting from the lonely feeling of the evanescence of life, he attained the powerful experience of the quality of his being. He said 'I have dropped off mind and body.' Because you think you have body or mind, you have lonely feelings, but when you realize that everything is just a flashing into the vast universe, you become very strong, and your existence becomes very meaningful This was Dogen's enlightenment, and this is our practice. (Reference 9, page 103.)

When human beings come together, they have the opportunity for a group meditation on the way their common consciousness creates restrictions on the movements in the implicate order All of them are in the implicate order and appearing as explicate phenomena in as much as they are identified with their selves. As they are together, they can see this flow of the unfolding of the forms as manifests in their individual being. Often, however, when individuals come together in a group they try to justify their identities and they repeat themselves endlessly; they want the other to know who and what they are. They express and defend the opinions with which they came into the encounter. They often don't allow for those fixed positions to dissolve and therefore they do not allow for a mutual experiencing which might occur if they were to share with others what they experience in their presence. The vitality in human relationship is drained of its dramatic presence and it becomes a dulled encounter which the talk is meaningless drivel given over to continuing in the vortex of relationships which the fixed images have created.

In a true dialogue between people, however, a different ambience pertains. A true dialogue promotes trust between people. Where there is trust the individuals are more willing to see the frozen condition the relationships imposed by the conditions of thought. The members of a true dialogue pay attention to this fixation and its vortex and are aware of the limitations it imposes on the group communion. The dialogue seems to have originated in some awareness of the limitation imposed by these kinds of restriction on the relationship in the implicate order. So the members of the dialogue discover that their commitment is attentiveness to what consciousness is, rather than an attempt to continue the forms into which they have lapsed. As they are together they find that the other people in their group dialog are examples of what it means to be a human being like themselves. All of them have come into the dialogue because they sensed that they are trapped in a self-orientation and suspect that being with another who is equally caught up will give them a chance to see into self-deception. This face-off shows each person the fixation in the self that is characteristic of thought and consciousness in all of them. If they are all thinking of themselves as separate others, they are not different in that they are all doing that. Then they can all become aware that the particular opinions of each are focusses of relation and as focusses they are organizing forces, but if those loci became fixation points, they have blocked the contact between individuals and therefore prevented the group as a whole from knowing its relationship to the larger order in which humanity participates.

When one person holds that his perspective is the only one, he reflects the way another person thinks that he too holds the special perspective on reality. In a discussion where people reveal their beliefs that they each have the absolutely correct perspective there is a unique opportunity to discover the nature of the process in which such conviction takes place. Of course, such a group could freeze into opposition between opinions, but in a dialogue group, where people are attending to the movement of thought, it is possible to see how that certainty comes into being and get a glimpse of the rigidity of such frozen points. With that the group begins to expand its awareness and to look at how consciousness narrows down on particular structures and loses sight of how the foci emerge.

When the dialogue partners see that thought gets into a frozen state the insight dissolves the state and the oscillation around the vortex stops. Then they talk more freely in discussion with each other sharing and connecting in their relationships in a more vivid way; they relate in the freer way that ordering in the implicate order offers. In one instance one member of the group was expressing how deeply he felt that all relationships were lacking something. He said that he always felt that any two people are locked into their particular content and perspective. But as he talked about this, he noticeably loosened up and started smiling. He said that he had, as he talked, begun to feel that a connection was established with the group and that there was no lack in that moment. He said he knew that we all came out of the same perceptive events, the same window, and that made him aware of how he had become stuck in his ideas about each person only being his particular content. He somehow knew better about the way in which all of our perspectives were generated and connected to our common generativity. At that moment the dialogue fell into a flowing discussion in which there was a juxtaposition of different views. An individual could see that his ideas were but one perspective of the whole of any process. Each person knew that his perceptual activity was the movement which made a reality at every moment. We shared images, feelings and other not-quite-formed views and, as we tossed around some of the different ramifications of these images and feelings, new connections and references came forth. The discussion moved from talk about particulars to more general and even cosmic relationships and then circled back to the particular in an ever-widening circle of connections that linked to our personal past, present and future, as well as to the past, present and future of humankind.

In that movement of the implicate in the dialogue, each person discovers his connections to



the other people in the group and to other human beings in general. More accurately put, we should say that the dialogue is an active connecting in which relationships are made and dissolved and remade again in new forms each second. Then the person in the dialogue feels that being together with the group is a harmonious process and often begins to think how he could also be in other places in his life in a similar manner would he but pay attention to the blocks that occur in thought. Sometimes one person reminds another of himself in a more exciting way, this time the reminding is a resonance or a knowing that he is part of the movement of the one consciousness he shares with everyone in the group. He discovers that he shares images and feelings that the other is having but is not talking about and that shows him that he is registering responses of other people that the other people may not have articulated to him. Perhaps they don't even realize they are having such feelings until he speaks of them. But from this resonating he senses their connection in an ambient movement which is finding forms they share in making. They know they are people who make connection to all parts of the explicate order and, as people who connect, they are part of the implicate order as well. The dialogue is a dramatic example of the way human life expresses the unfolding of the implicate order into explicate forms. From the perspective of a brain scientist, Mackay writes:

Perhaps the most characteristic conscious human activity is that reciprocal interaction with others which we call dialogue. I am not now referring to the non-committal alternating monologue that sometimes passes for dialogue in our sophisticated society, but the deep-going relationship of mutual vulnerability through which another in a special way becomes 'Thou' to me and I to him. The distinction between the two seems to have an illuminating parallel at the level of information-flow analysis. As long as someone communicating with another is able to shield his own evaluative system from the address of the other, he can in principle treat the other as an object, a manipulandum, open in principle to full scientific specification like another physical object. Once the barriers to fully reciprocal communication are down, however, a specially interesting configuration becomes possible, in which the information-flow structure that constitutes each supervisory system interpenetrates the other, and the lines of flow from each return by way of the other, so that the two become one system for purposes of causal analysis.

In this relationship, each conscious agent becomes indeterminate for the other ... as well as for himself. Each is mysterious to the other, not merely in the weak sense that the other cannot gain the necessary completely determining information, but in the strong sense that no such information exists, either for him or for his interlocutor, until after the event. There are 'interaction terms,' as a physicist would say, in the joint state-equation, which prevent it from a uniquely determinate solution for either, even if the physical systems concerned were as mechanistic as pre-Heisenberg physics pictured them.

One of the central features of dialogue is that it makes apparent that discussion between human beings is an important part of the natural order of life on earth. Human response and articulation of that response, feedback of reactions to (that response and the clarifying of the relationships between different responses, are the way human beings participate in the flow of the implicate order. The dialogue unfolds the different forms that are established in the interaction between people and these forms are enfolded back into different meanings of their relationships to other people. The movement itself is the articulation of the implicate order in the human domain.

Perhaps what we are also revealing here is that points of order or centres of organization are inherent to the implicate order as it unfolds into the explicate. These points always create

something of a vortex around them. As they provide full interactions and further relationships in that flow. Perhaps some of more restrictive than others. Lower animals do not have as wide a relationship in the implicate order as the human being, with his extensively connected human brain. The fixed images in consciousness, however, are themselves only relatively fixed points as there are numerous relationships intertwining an unfolding from them, even if they do form vortex. Even in their condition the human brain is more extensively related than a paramecium. Any form, any organization, is always changing and is in relationships that bring about movements and change. Certainly throughout our universe these relatively fixed points are interactions that allow for dissolution and transformation from focus to focus. In meditation and dialogue human beings become aware of their larger relationship to the implicate order and it enables them to see the limitations of the point of fixation. In that awareness they outgrow the restrictions in their relationship in the implicate order and extend their participation in that greater order.

## THE COHERENCE OF THE INCOHERENT

Anthony Blake

On dialogue October 2023

Many people, when they first encounter dialogue, are surprised and sometimes repelled by its apparent lack of order. There is said to be no one in charge, no leader or even facilitator. Usually, in human affairs, people look to a leader to provide direction and gather the forces of many individuals into a common cause. There is widespread experience of people coming together and creating only confusion and discord between them. The role of a leader is then attractive. An effective leader can keep a group or community together for some time, as Tito did in Yugoslavia, but when he leaves or dies it becomes obvious that the unity of the group had been just a façade.

The role of a leader can take many forms. One dimension is that of a guru, or spiritual teacher. Then obedience becomes an issue. Not only that, the coming together of the group in the first place may depend on the guru's exclusive decision of who is in or who is out. It is he or she who decides why the people of the group should be together and what their purpose is.

The concept of purpose brings up another aspect of the coherence of the group. What has brought these people together? What do they want to achieve, if anything? In a modest way we have the widely used practice of setting an agenda. This is to limit and to fixate what the group will think about, discuss and make decisions concerning. Business meetings usually take this form. It raises the question of who creates the agenda? There are sometimes quite complex procedures for deciding which items should be on the table. But the simple fact is that the agenda is designed to articulate what the group is meeting to accomplish before it actually meets. It is easy to see that the two questions of "who is in charge?" And "why are we here?" are co-joined.

But I want to bring out one particular feature of the sort of arrangements that precede in groups and meetings – whether they are social, political, managerial, technical, religious, artistic, commercial, et cetera – that all have the same basic structure of time. They start from a given state and this aim to move towards a future - and hopefully better - state. It follows the elementary model of intentional action, apparently working together to fulfill a common aim.

This goal-oriented character has sometimes been correlated with a masculine approach. It is seen as a character of moving from a given state to some future and supposedly better state, wherein some things are left behind – such as uncertainty and differences of opinion. We talk of ‘getting somewhere’.

I can look on this in a certain, loaded way as striving to escape the present moment into an idealized future state. But now I want to reflect on the concept of a masculine approach and consider a feminine one in which there can be a coming together that stays within the present moment. Typically, this is regarded as being concerned with the relationships between the people present. There’s always some taste of what the novelist Doris Lessing, called the substance of we-feeling. I will return to this idea and explain it further later on. For the moment I want to return to where I began, with people encountering dialogue for the first time, who are trying to make sense of it.

Now I will speak about equality, which might be correlated with the idea of democracy and the prospect of finding, discussing or creating a common voice. Mutual equality is sometimes not explicit in the introduction of dialogue, but it is noticed that there cannot be dialogue in a group in which one member can control or dominate over another. In its ideal sense, this means ‘being on the level’ as Patrick De Mare (one of my mentors in respect of dialogue) used to put it. This is not something that is required to be in place at the beginning of dialogue, but rather something that might emerge from it. It is not only because the group may or may not embody equality but that we will not know what it means until it is realized in practice. The inherent purpose of dialogue is, according to Patrick DeMar, the realization of koinonia or ‘impersonal fellowship.’

Koinonia (/ˌkɔɪnoʊˈniːə/)[1] is a transliterated form of the Greek word κοινωνία, which refers to concepts such as fellowship, joint participation, partnership, the share which one has in anything, a gift jointly contributed, a collection, a contribution. In the Politics of Aristotle it is used to mean a community of any size from a single family to a polis. As a polis, it is the Greek for republic or commonwealth. In later Christianity it identifies the idealized state of fellowship and unity that should exist within the Christian church, the Body of Christ.

The term communion, derived from Latin *communio* ('sharing in common'),[3] is related. The term "Holy Communion" normally refers to the Christian rite also called the Eucharist. Wikipedia

Equality should not be identified with conformity.

Here I go off on yet another tangent which concerns what we believe to be ‘agreement’. I remember talking with a Palestinian (who was attending Peace Studies in London!) after we had participated in a dialogue group, that he said to me: “The more people believe in the same thing, the more likely they are to kill each other!”

I come to the deeper rationale of having a group at all. There is of course the degenerate and retrograde phenomena of: producing formulas of agreement that have no substance; sharing in collective delusions; exercising group in-thinking and the like, such things that can give an outer appearance of agreement but have no substance.

People can come together to agree on some set of principles that the usually turn out to be nothing but a matter of empty platitudes. My old friend Anthony Judge, commenting on a Congress of world religions held in Chicago, said that the delegates never really talked to each other and ended by signing documents so innocuous that they were not worth anything.

Perhaps the main requirement of dialogue is diversity, the very opposite to sameness. As a young man I had the burning question of why are there other people? Over the years it turned out that the provisional answer that came was: because they don't think the same way I do!

Of course, the more divergent that people are – a polarised view of diversity – the harder it must be for them to reach some state of mutual equality and harmony. I use the word 'harmony' to link with the metaphors of music. One of my favourite phrases is discordant harmony, taken from Plotinus, to emphasize that harmony does not have to mean what is in musical terms sometimes called 'easy listening'. As a general rule it is recognized that dissonance is needed to bring out the qualities of consonance (the 'nice' intervals). The 20<sup>th</sup> century composer Schoenberg often spoke of the liberation of dissonance occurring at the beginning of the twentieth century.

It might seem an obvious and seemingly trivial thing to recognize and embrace the fact that people are different. In my experience of dialogue I have found however that people do not actually sense and feel and see that it is true. Patrick De Mare used to shock people of his profession by talking about hate as fundamental to dialogue. He was using the term rather as in psychoanalysis in a technical sense as the frustration of the libido. In an unstructured group, members compete for meaning space and thwart each other's line of thought. For the most part, I would say also that people behave in groups in such a way as to avoid confrontation with the fact of an energy of difference. So we seek patterns of behaviour which minimize the chances of being exposed to difference.

So far, my discourse may have danced around the theme of the coherence in incoherence, but not addressed it directly. How can a group with no leader, no agenda, with people of varying beliefs create a harmony between them that is creative and not simply a matter of social conformity? To put it simply: how can they create meaning from their differences? I like to say that this would be an example of turning life into art. We can only get out of the mechanicality of everyday life and its habits by going through the energy of real difference which might jolt us out of our sleep and bring us into new thinking

But I must also change tack and consider the mysteries of language and speech. To state the obvious, dialogue is a matter of people talking together. It is not meditating together, dancing together or singing together! Many spiritually minded people regard speaking together with disfavour because they have been taught – rather as in the saying 'speech is silver but silence is golden' – to disparage talking as both an immersion in lower worlds and as something incapable of expressing any higher truths. Yes, using words is difficult but silence is largely just avoidance. It is well known in terms of ordinary psychology how much trouble and misery is perpetuated because people cannot bring themselves to speak about what is really going on between them. In this way traumas are transmitted and reenacted generation after generation. I often think of Ubaydullāh Ahrar who dismissed what most people call silence as worse than any noise of words.

Let me now move to the act of speaking. Here, immediately, is the threat of delusion because, for the most part, we are portraying speaking in terms of I speak just as we also say I think. It would

be more realistic perhaps to speak of 'think-I' and 'speak-I'. Of course, spiritual literature goes on about getting free of the ego and such, but the experience of what I will call truly free speech - which is not to be considered just in political terms - is the concrete reality of it.

I want to add that it is of major importance to find one's own voice. It is widely recognized that very many people have no voice because they belong to an oppressed group and are silenced in a political, sexist, hierarchical or economic way. Many have in their life experience never having been listened to. Here is for me an important thing about dialogue: the responses of the people in it to what others are saying. It is sometimes said that in listening to others in the context of any real dialogue that we should not react but simply experience what they say. Often people in a group will admit that they are mostly occupied with their own thoughts and hardly listen to what other people are saying, being concerned to ready themselves to speak about their own ideas - often with overtones of being right, or sincere, or intelligent and suchlike.

Many years ago, when I was convening a group exploring theatrical techniques, I spoke with Keith Johnstone who became a renowned authority on improvisation and visited the group in 1971 to show us such techniques. He told me an astonishing thing about the way actors operate with their inner talking while on the stage performing with other actors. He said that, when an actor is waiting to deliver his own lines, he does not rehearse them in his mind while the other actor is speaking but directs his thoughts to voice what the other actor is saying. This was a major revelation for me. It then seemed obvious that if the actor is rehearsing his or her own lines mentally, they cannot be present to the action - the action being that which is between the actors. From time to time when I am in the dialogue I use this practice of giving over my thoughts to what the other people are saying as if it were my thinking as a way of bringing myself into the region of experience in which we are ontologically together but may not know it.

I jump back into the theme of language and speaking. This is usually regarded as a personal matter, but there is another perception in which we can see language as not personal at all but essentially something that belongs to what can be called a field of intelligence of a community. I like the idea expressed by Vico in his philosophy regarding language as itself intelligent rather than people! In certain respects, it parallels the saying of John Bennett that intelligence is like a substance which sometimes comes into us and sometimes does not; but Bennett did not make the connection with language and speaking. For me that came while participating in one of his most amazing seminars he conducted at his place of operations in Coombe Springs, called A Spiritual Psychology. In the course of this seminar which went through the various levels of being possible for human being and came to what he called the true self, I suddenly had to ask whether this was where all us humans were equal. He said no, but that we are only truly equal in terms of will. This was astonishing. But I transposed what he said to think of speech as something in essence shared by everybody and that by looking beyond the obvious differences in language of meticulousness intelligibility, conviction and so on people differ widely but, so I felt, that it is to speak which is the defining act of being human.

Once when gets the idea that it is language itself that can speak in us, much changes. I would formally express this in the following terms: when language speaks there is revelation; but when someone speaks there is only opinion. I call to mind words from Heraclitus and St John.

Heraclitus complained that most people failed to comprehend the logos (Greek: "reason"), the universal principle through which all things are interrelated and all

natural events occur, and thus lived like dreamers with a false view of the world. A significant manifestation of the logos, Heraclitus claimed, is the underlying connection between opposites. . . His understanding of the relation of opposites to each other enabled him to overcome the chaotic and divergent nature of the world, and he asserted that the world exists as a coherent system in which a change in one direction is ultimately balanced by a corresponding change in another. Between all things there is a hidden connection, so that those that are apparently “tending apart” are actually “being brought together.” Encyclopedia Britannica

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made, and without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. (Genesis 1:1-2; Hebrews 11:1-3)

What I am describing here is something that can be prepared for by imagining it is so. It is usually the case that we need to have some idea which prepares us to be able to recognize a significant kind of experience. The practice of it demands such things as entertaining the idea that other people are expressions of something like one's 'larger mind'. And what they say is not different in being from what oneself can say. What matters so as to get the taste – the sense and meaning – of the truth of free speech.

It is not a matter of trying to force oneself to see things in this way, it is more a matter of seeing that it is already in that way. If one tries to force oneself this only exaggerates one's ego and sense of separateness. It is not a matter of something higher in the sense of being beyond us but rather in the sense of something 'buried' in our actual experience now. It is not something to be discussed, explained, remembered, et cetera – note just the very thing that I am doing now – because it belongs to another world, conveying different laws from those of the objects and desires of our common experience.

This is one reason why I loved Bohm pointing out that the word dialogue comes from DIA through and LOGOS, meaning. The word then says through meaning and is a Way. I associate it with the Asiatic term TAO. We are not to think about TAO but go on its path and experience the Way by stepping along it.

Using the word 'free' – like 'real' or 'true' and so on – can be spurned but I want to embrace it and make a link to the idea of free association as used in psychoanalytic practice. It is an extraordinary concept elusive in practice. It involves allowing something said to invoke something else to be said often without knowing why. Knowing why in this context will amount to using old connections and it is useless because it makes no new connections. The point of free association is to reveal new connections which can change our thinking. The idea of making free associations has been parodied in popular culture. But the essence of it is spontaneity and the unexpected. To draw on the authority of Bohm again, it can be said to arise from what he calls the implicate order, the patterning that plays behind the obvious world of space and time he calls the explicate order.

I will cite two other authorities – Gordon Lawrence and Soren Kierkegaard. The latter is renowned for saying that we live life forwards but understand it backwards. In free association people can

speak one after another without any obvious rationale, and then we can reflect on them and bring out a new thought. This was the approach used by Gordon Lawrence in his method of the Social Dreaming Matrix. To get an explanation of this method one needs to read his books or watch video conversations I recorded with him.\* For the moment it is enough to say that it came from a mixture of influences including reports on the apparent suppression of dreaming in the time of the rise of the Nazis, the dreamtime of the aborigines, switching interpretation of dreams in terms of individuals to their meanings for the community involved, and also Foulkes' idea of the matrix which he postulated as the patterns of connections which lie behind any group which meets that may or may not be downloaded so to say during its sessions. Lawrence thought that any group that met would bring their dreams with them, dreams that would never under ordinary circumstances be spoken about. In the dreaming matrix somebody speaks of a dream they had and then another person responds with his or her own dream. They also are encouraged to express free associations to the dreams reported. The threads may interact with each other and build new thinking.

\*See my conversation with him on You Tube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9eyZSvfShKo&t=2245s> and Social Dreaming @Work , edited by Gordon Lawrence

This is much as it is in dialogue. Patrick de Mare, in his theoretical expositions, supposed that a dialogue group could build its own culture and, by doing so, be enabled to see into the cultures in which they live – which Patrick called having ‘outsight’. What I want to emphasize is the significance of the possible arising of impressions arising in people spontaneously. The idea of a method proposes that we have to add procedures to turn the impressions and their connections into conceptual forms. I believe that this may not be necessary. The impressions that arise and are shared by people are already intrinsically connected and meaningful.

There was an important study made some decades ago in New York of dialogue group sessions were recorded and transcribed. A member of this group described how he often felt the discourse to be disjointed and incoherent, with important ideas abandoned or ignored and no integration taking place but, when he came to study the transcriptions, he concluded that in spite of appearances every idea was in effect considered and processed. His account highlighted the stark difference between the present moment of a participant in the group, who is only able to respond to immediate content on the one hand, and on the other, the present moment of the whole group for the whole session (and maybe sessions extending over years).

I am reminded of Gurdjieff's declaration, in the first chapter of his book *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* in which he declares that the true consciousness of people is really what they call the ‘subconsciousness’. He goes on to claim that his book can speak to this unconsciousness, which can be taken to imply that the reader may not feel that he is aware of it but it works in him, in his being, just the same. Just to provide a bridging concept, I speculate that the dialogue process might enable a channel or ‘isthmus’ to grow connecting the subconscious intelligence with our ordinary minds. I might add that, in reality, this supposed subconscious intelligence is far more coherent than our ordinary mentation is. I remember John Bennett to her once remarking on the idea of the creation arising out of chaos, that this chaos was in fact an overabundance of orders of multiple kinds. We usually live in a rather abstract and impoverished world which can only exist by shutting out the real wonders of the universe. As the poet Francis Thompson *In No Strange Land* expressed it:

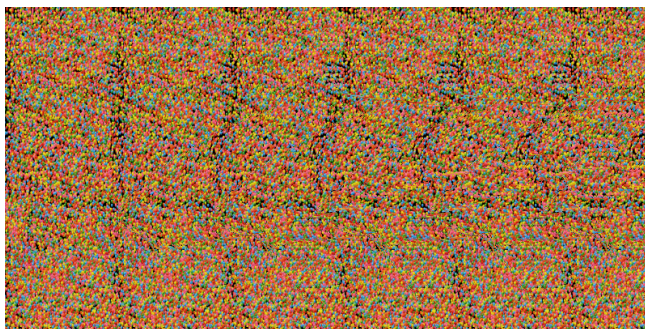


'Tis ye, 'tis your estrangèd faces,  
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

I am going along with a picture that is emerging for me of the incoherence of dialogue that might count in some way as a coherence. I am trying to shift expectations about what coherence should look like. I have been struck by some very recent examples of coherence emerging from what appears to be incoherence. There is a way of looking at dialogue as if it might be a series of poorly connected ramblings. This connects for me with how certain books of the Old Testament were regarded hundreds of years ago as incoherent and almost illiterate. A prime example was considered to be the book of Numbers. It just did not seem to make much sense. It seemed to have no rhyme nor reason. That is, until scholars discovered a pattern that revealed its inherent order and meaning. This pattern became known as ring composition. I have written about this in various places but the essential idea is to see the text as if it were in a circle, so that the end joins into the beginning. Also, that the circle of the text is to be read as in two halves in such a way that the elements of the first and second parts of the text 'speak' to or with each other.

The details can be found in *Thinking in Circles* by Mary Douglas. In this book she describes how this pattern of ring composition can render intelligible a large number of ancient texts. The range now considered by scholars stretches from the Epic of Gilgamesh to *Tristram Shandy*. It includes the Quran and Sufi literature. A key idea that Douglas dwells on is that, contrary to the usual way we are used to reading stories and explanations, the meaning is in the middle. We are used to the most important element being either at the beginning or at the end but never in the middle. We are used to coming to a conclusion and arriving at the end of our search.

There is a more physical example of a text or picture of being divided into two in such a way that when they combine a third dimension emerges. This is the case with what are called autostereograms. What appears to be just a random collection of coloured points, looked at in a certain way, results in the perception of a three-dimensional image that comes out of or into the paper on which it is printed. In another mode, we can see a repeated image of a common recognizable objects but, seen in a certain way that picks out their inner connection, the three-dimensional shape comes into manifestation.



Thus, you can find examples of how a linear sequence, one thing after another, can first appear as random and incoherent but then be seen to contain a coherent form. The information is there but it has to be seen. Can this have any bearing on what happens in a dialogue? That is to say, is there a way of seeing which can render meaningful an apparent scatter of remarks?

Let me add that I accept the idea that when we read a text we do not only proceed word after word in a forward going line but in other ways that see words, phrases, passages in gestalts of meaning; and there is always a kind of reading going on which is of the whole that enables us to make sense of what is being said though we may not be aware of it.

I cannot claim any proof of such speculation, but it is appealing to me. Many people have some thought or belief in the workings of a higher intelligence behind our minds, though not in them. It has been thought that the unconscious sends messages into our minds that are somehow coded and have to be decoded. One form of such a belief is inherent in the Social Dreaming matrix of Gordon Lawrence, in which it is presumed that our dreams contain such potential meanings. As I said, his method concerned the experience generated in the group or community rather than in separate individuals.

I reflect on the example of radio astronomy. This involves large dishes that pick up signals from outer space. It is important to note that way this is done involves distributing radio telescopes across large areas of land coupled electronically so that they are combined as if into one gigantic dish. I make a further jump to the mystical teaching stories of Idries Shah, in particular to a part of the tale called The Three Dervishes. One of the dervishes discovers a mirror hanging from a thread in a well (the unconscious) made of the myriad of fragments of awareness from the billions of humans on the planet: the combination of all this assemblage of fragments can just make it possible to catch a glimpse of the deeper reality.

We have the situation in dialogue of people coming together and generating speech acts, one after another. The critical question is: do these in some way add up to a deep or higher meaning? But how can such an adding up be done? Also, people might want to arrive at some speech act that embodies or articulates a deep meaning, but it cannot be just one more speech act in a linear sequence. The important and incredible thing is that it embraces and brings together all the speech acts.

Bennett postulated a principle of integration without rejection which is quite contrary to our usual ways of thinking. We tend to assume that there are good ideas and bad ones and seek to eliminate the bad ones and, further, arrive at the best one, forgetting all the others. The promise in dialogue is that everything that is said can be included in one meaning. But I have not shown any means by which such integration, such as a reading of the whole in which all the speech acts it contains can come together. Does this just happen by itself? Does it speak to some agency in ourselves that is not at all a personal ability but a 'way of being' that enables the message to be read?

I propose such a faculty to be present in us in a way that we can come to understand; but it is not there just as some other idea. It has been noted that when an act of understanding has come to fruition it moves from the realm of theory or good idea to a kind of presence of intelligence that dwells in us without us having to think about it. It is as if a new idea or insight comes out of our unconscious into formulation and then is reabsorbed back into the given from which we can then assume to start. I would say that this is when knowledge has become part of our being.

## SOME THOUGHTS OF WILLIAM PENSINGER

Whitehead said: "Clear-sighted men of the sort who are so clearly wrong, now proclaim that the secrets of the physical universe were finally disclosed. If only you ignored everything which refused to come into line, your powers of explanation were unlimited." (Science and the Modern World, p. 95.)

And today, too, we are not on the verge of discovering the 'secret of the universe'; we are on the verge of discovering how profoundly ignorant of the universe we actually are. The inane arrogance of many contemporary scientists is simply beyond belief! There are more strange reentries and non-orientabilities in the Is-ness than has yet even begun to be imagined. All those things that are commonly rejected as impossible, are not only true, but true with a vengeance presently unimaginable; their manifestation is yoked to collective states, and no matter how resolutely they are denied, they are there, nonetheless.

Godel's theorem, gravitational collapse, non-locality and indeterminacy are not simply big ripples in the history of mathematics and physics, they are not even simply physics degree-zero, they are the end of a whole era of human civilization. Relativity and quantum physics were not the beginning of something new; they were the end of something old. They did not simply, in Gertrude Stein's phrase, "Kill the 19th century dead!", they are in die process of killing the present era of known human history. In retrospect they will not be viewed as codifications, but as agents of deautomatization on a grand scale.

What a farce the scientific paper is; you never know what the author actually is thinking. In their publications, scientists inevitably pretend to research and theoretical methodologies they never in fact adhere to. If people actually followed these methodologies, they'd never learn anything! All the real connections of thought that guide the scientist's explorations and trigger new approaches are left completely out of the discussion. It is the deleted part that the scientific colleague needs to know! Think of how the advance of human knowledge is retarded by this silly game. And make no mistake, this manner of communicating scientific information is undoubtedly a game, a Wittgensteinian language-game that merely explores the logical consistency of a cultural fabrication, a given house-of-fantasy. And this continues when binary logical consistency has for forty years been demonstrated necessarily incomplete! People go on as if Kurt Godel's work had never been produced, as if his demonstrations did not make their ideas (in so far as they do not directly relate to the construction of technological artifacts) worth nothing more than a pile of sand sifting through their fingers. If the object of science is simply to build technologies, then fine, good enough. But if the purpose of scientific activity is to tell us real things about ourselves and the world in which we live, then this gamesmanship is very far from the mark.

Let me praise autosensory observation once again. Here is a quote from Aurobindo: "Meditation is the easiest process for the human mind, but the narrowest in its results; contemplation, more difficult, greater; self-observation and liberation from the chains of thought the most difficult of all, but the widest and greatest in its fruits." Self-observation is extremely subtle; this subtlety is the reason why people will try it for awhile and give it up, having gotten no benefit. Its main mode of action is undoubtedly Heisenberg's indeterminacy principle: you cannot observe something without altering what you observe. Self-observation intervenes most directly, I believe, into the quantum biochemistry of brain processes. What the reentry, or reversion of attention catexes back upon themselves represents, is a quintessential quantum mechanical measurement

situation. Something collapses: perhaps the wave function of phasic activation, perhaps something more esoteric. The methods of the structural introspectionists were rejected, in part, because, it was said, the mind cannot observe its own functioning without producing alterations in that functioning. We now know that the same can be said for any observer-state/object-system interaction. And, furthermore, that this is the very heart of Samkhya yoga: the contraposing of Purusa and Prakrti!

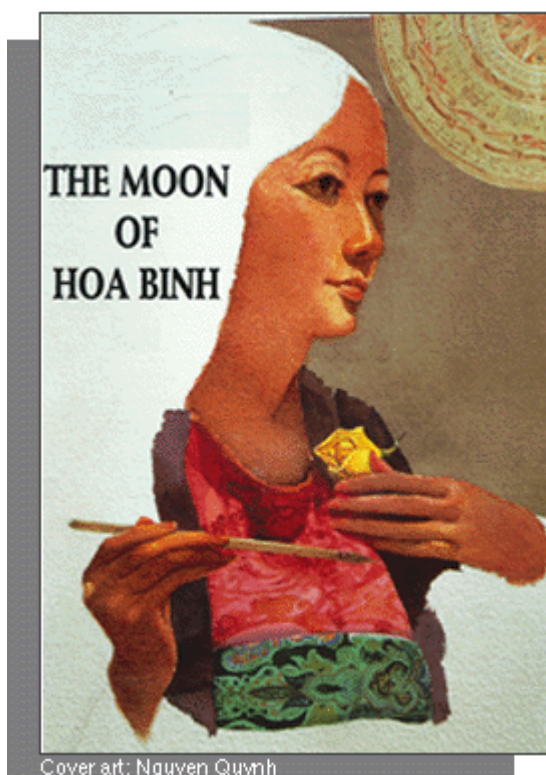
If one observes one's thoughts, they will go through a whole series of subtle changes, and if one observes them long enough, in the proper way, with a sufficient degree of intense developing concentration, they will stop. There is no getting around it. Certainly, thoughts will not stop in a month, or a year, nor probably even with five years of effort, but if one spends as much time and energy as it takes to get a university education and a Ph.D. in quantum physics, then, surely, one will be able to stop thoughts. And since one has observed the whole process of subtle change, one is intimately familiar with it, has a voluntary relation to it: there is flexibility. As outer circumstances alter, one can make the necessary subtle inner shift to put the mind in just the right place. But it is hard, and the results do not come quickly, as with meditation, nor are they at first easily recognized.

The hysteric multiple-personality's 'loss of time' through sequential cycling of split-off autonomous complexes has a curious parallel in the quantum theory: thermodynamic constraints apparently dictate that the various branches of the wave function cannot be 'aware' of one another; the branches decompose through collapse sequentially in linear-time, but can have no cross-temporal bridges. In voluntary dissociation, however, no time is lost and the partly

autonomous complexes are 'stacked\* and mutually interactive through time-slow-down. Is hysteria a dissociation locked into a linear-time-bound-closed-system where there is no free energy exchange of the multivalue? In voluntary dissociation, do relativistic factors intervene to modify the thermodynamic constraints in such a fashion as to 'cross-time' the wave functional branches of each partly autonomous complex? (Dirac's 'cross-over time'? Also known under the name Maharloka — with a little creative interpretation, of course. Kumar Kishore Mandal, A Comparative Study of The Concepts of Space and Time in Indian Thought. And Sir John Woodroffe, The World as Power.-) Maybe it is all a phasing problem in the hyper-time. Could thermodynamic constraints of the 2nd Law simply be 'hyper-temporal dysphasia'?

The Moon of Hoa Binh by CONG HUYEN TON NU  
NHA TRANG & WILLIAM L. PENSINGER

<https://www.second-sites.com/moonhoabinh/>



Cover art: Nguyen Quynh

## EDWARD MATCHETT



Edward “Ted” Matchett (1929–1998) was a pioneer in the field of industrial design and in the wider create-the-new arena.

Ted was a design engineer who transcended the confines of industrial design to develop methods of creativity of astonishing spiritual genius.

He started out as a design engineer at Rolls-Royce—aircraft engines, not automobiles—in Derby, UK, later becoming a teacher of design.

From 1966 to 1970, he conducted an investigation into the creative process, sponsored by the Science Research Council of Great Britain. The aim of this research was to identify practical and workable means of injecting a new order of “creativity, professionalism and achievement” into product design and development.

professionalism and achievement” into product design and development.

Matchett established his company, Matchett Training and Consultancy Services, in 1970 “to take people to the highest level of professionalism and original thinking”, and to do this in a systematic way. His work was usually carried out on the client’s premises and often in a carefully constructed environment that he called a “logosphere of meaning”.

### Matchett’s concepts and methods

Matchett’s concepts and methods were informed by his extensive and thoroughgoing studies, coupled with 40 years of continuous first-hand experience as a manager, teacher, consultant, coach and adviser. His approach was deployed on many hundreds of practical industrial projects in R&D laboratories and product design offices, and at what is now Cranfield University.

The underlying discipline employed by Matchett during the earlier part of his professional life was Fundamental Design Method, on which he began work in 1958. Matchett asserted that “the most advanced form of FDM lifts a mind into ‘meta-control’, making it possible to produce the quality and quantity of thoughts and actions that are normally produced only by a person of genius.”

Later, in the late 1960s, his focus moved to a more mystical body of work he named Sophiagenics. He described this as “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”. (Source of quoted passage: Sophiagenics, on the DuVersity website.)

The “two spirits” described by Matchett in the following passages correlate strongly with Napoleon Hill’s creative imagination and synthetic imagination distinctions. This is unlikely to be a coincidence as he would have studied Hill’s writings during the course of his research.

## Matchett's Credo

The great gulf that divides mankind is not political. It is not the gulf between religions, between religion and science, between science and art. It is not the gulf between rich and poor, between the privileged and the underprivileged. Not the gulf between the practical and the theorist, between those who would work and those who would dream. It is not the gulf between management and those that are managed, between the possessive and the philanthropist, between the saints and the sinners. All of these things are important, yet none so important as men often suppose. They are all streams that flow towards the same sea. All would meet and be reconciled except for one division that is greater by far than these — a division that is far more fundamental. It is the split between those persons who would hang on to old forms and those who wish to see new ones.

Two spirits are at work in the world. It is they who are the cause of the great divide. One would drive the world along at an ever-increasing rate, one would have the world stay precisely where it is. One has its foot hard down on the accelerator, the other is trying hard to apply the brake. One has his eyes fixed firmly on the future, the other has his eyes fixed firmly on the past (he does not realize that the ground that he thinks he is standing on disappeared many years ago).

What is it that has to be preserved? Every form that still equates to needs. What is it that has to be built in addition? New forms that equate to needs that either were not present earlier or that have not been satisfied. What does this have to do with the person who is doing the creating? Everything! At every moment, within himself, the same ceaseless battle must go on. He must destroy every form (ideas, beliefs, visions, attitudes, values etc.) that is no longer needed. He must preserve every form that still equates to needs. He must build new forms within (new ideas, new beliefs, new visions, new attitudes, new values etc.) that equate to needs that either were not present earlier or that have not yet been satisfied. To the extent that he does this within he will be able to do it without. Neither more nor less; it is all very precise. Edward Matchett, legacy website, now defunct

Either knowingly or unwittingly, Edward Matchett is referencing the Trimurti, the trinity of supreme divinity in Hinduism in which the cosmic functions of creation, maintenance, and destruction are personified as a triad of deities, typically Brahma the creator, Vishnu the preserver, and Shiva the destroyer.

The three functions are sometimes presented as:

Generator (in the V-Spec graphic below: Create new value),

Operator (Preserve existing value), and

Destroyer (Sacrifice value for the good of the whole and mitigate or compensate for loss)

... providing the clever but misleading acronym GOD.

Edward Matchett: create-the-new pioneer: <https://newcreate.org/edward-matchett/>



## PUBLICATIONS – New and Forthcoming

The Fourth Way a hazardous path – a personal story by Anthony Blake In kindle

The three series of writings All and Everything are now available as audio books read by Anthony Blake

Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson

Meetings with Remarkable Men

Life is Real, Then, only When 'I Am'

Also The Psychological Lectures by Ouspensky

In preparation

Further Thoughts on the Enneagram

Researches: Compilation of Articles by Anthony Blake

The Systematics Code

## **SEMINAR Meaning of the Movements April 16-19 Claymont, 2024**

Facilitated by Elan Sicroff, Deborah Rose Longo and Anthony Blake

**An open enquiry into what we do not know or understand.**



**An impromptu performance of the Canon of Seven on the top of Silbury Hill by Sherborne students**



## RETURN FROM A JOURNEY



*Rubén Yessayan* is to issue two CDs of his playing of Gurdjieff/de Hartmann music

MUSIC BY G.I. GURDJIEFF AND THOMAS DE HARTMANN

PART I - IN SEARCH OF DISTANT LANDS

PART II - IN SEARCH OF THE CREATIVE

PART III – IN SEARCH OF THE MIRACULOUS

From the CD notes

Return from a Journey arises with time as a necessary project in my career, after a few years of collaboration as a pianist with exceptional people involved in the Work of G. I. Gurdjieff. Until that moment, I must confess I had never heard anything about this character or his ideas, and to be honest, once I started working on the music it didn't seem to me to be anything special. With time, I understood that as a classical pianist and musician I had developed certain prejudices that didn't allow me to "see" this music and the system of thought it belongs to with an unprejudiced and honest perspective. It was as if somehow you had to earn your right to perceive this music both emotionally and intellectually, to make yourself available so that it may unveil its secrets. I like to think that with time I earned this music's trust and was finally allowed to engage in its many marvels, so now it is my turn to give something back to it after all the many wonderful lessons it has taught me, and all the extraordinary human beings that have been introduced into my life as a result. This musical work is a humble tribute to all of them.

### Last Words

The subject of dialogue is dialogue

The subject of mediation is meditation

The subject of music is music

And so it goes . . .