

Part 1.

All and Everything is the overall title we give to Gurdjieff's writing – Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson, Meetings with Remarkable Men and the Third series, Life is Real only Then When I am. Although it is not included according to Mr. Gurdjieff's instructions, we should also include The Herald of Coming Good which was published and then withdrawn, although we still have access to it. But as we know very well, All and Everything is actually not everything and so we must affirm the other elements of what Gurdjieff created and passed on to us. Obviously there is his music, played by Gurdjieff on his harmonium, arranged and written down by Thomas de Hartmann, and played by generations of musicians past, present and hopefully future. Then we have the Movements and sacred dances, which for some of us are the all-important element and the main focus of work.

The psychological exercises are less tangible and although some were presented in writing in the Third Series, while others from the Prieuré were compiled into a book by A.R. Orage, - for the most part these exercises and internal practices are passed from a teacher to a pupil by direct contact and are largely inaccessible and in some cases controversial.

Practical work, which of course every living being has to do in some form or another, can be harnessed as a powerful tool for developing group consciousness, and was used extensively by Gurdjieff in the Caucasus groups and at the Prieuré. There is no question in my mind that this plays an essential part in the overall work. Working with our hands gives opportunities to work intentionally with the material world, working with the soil helps literally to ground us and remind us of our origins.

Then we become even more controversial with the teachings which Gurdjieff passed on in conjunction with large amounts of alcohol, and only preserved by some orally transmitted and wholly unreliable anecdotes.

Gurdjieff also taught by the example in his own life – controversial because while he helped many people in all manner of ways, some other things he was seen to do might seem like a very dubious example such as his notorious driving, sexual behaviour, heavy consumption of alcohol and cigarettes - and by sharing stories etc. However that may be, there is no question that Gurdjieff created a mystique about himself, partly by revealing himself to so many people in so many different ways, so that the only way anybody could have a clear image of him is to consult and compare notes with others.

Then of course there is dear old Mulla Nassr Eddin, the personification of Practical Wisdom (ma'arifat) and the many clues Gurdjieff gives us in all parts of his writings prefixed by the name of Mulla Nassr Eddin. Aside from anything else, Mulla Nassr Eddin is a constant reminder to us use common sense and to not take everything frightfully seriously.

Here I said "Etc. Etc." – which is by no means intended to be disparaging or dismissive and under this heading I would include all of the books written by other people describing their personal experiences with Gurdjieff, their summaries of his teaching, and all the things people claim that they heard Gurdjieff say, and that are now cited as direct quotes – even some books such as Kathryn Hulme's Undiscovered Country in which Gurdjieff has little more than a walk-on part. Also the various teachings of the myriad

schools and sub-groups. So we include all of these things into a single whole. By the time of Gurdjieff's death, the totality of this material was collectively known as the System, a term which gained currency in the Ouspensky groups, notwithstanding that the members of those groups were prohibited from mentioning Gurdjieff's name. Bennett commented that in fact a system was the last thing you could really describe it as, and indeed all indications are that Gurdjieff deliberately blew up the railroad tracks connecting all the elements into a clear path. This was not always the case as the early paper "Glimpses of Truth" refers specifically to 'systems' which apparently appealed to Ouspensky and others at that time.

When we engage with the text of Beelzebub's Tales, we see that the whole of the above fits within the definition of the word "legominism".

"This word Legominism", replied Beelzebub "is given to one of the means existing there of transmitting from generation to generation information about certain events of long-past ages, through just those three-brained beings who are thought worthy to be and are called initiates."

This is Gurdjieff's description of Legominism given on Page 349. I would draw your attention in particular to the two words "information" and "initiates" particularly the word "initiate" which leads us indirectly to the notion that there are both those who are initiated and those who are not. Although we may find the word to be readily useable in our everyday vocabulary, we have to ask what exactly does Gurdjieff mean in this context? We can find explanations in two quite different contexts, the first of which chronologically is contained in the monograph "Glimpses of Truth", where he says *"There is only self-initiation. One can show and direct but not initiate."* Later among the myriad references to initiates and initiations in Beelzebub, one stands out, immediately following the definition of Legominism. Both references point us towards work as the precondition. It should be pointed out that the commands, counsels and sayings of Ashieta Shiemash were engraved on marble tablets, yet these are separate from the Legominism itself and there is no description of what form this takes or recording medium used except that it consists of words.

I also want to point out to you that there are right here two possible alternative interpretations, of this paragraph, the first of which is that information was lost and then partially rediscovered, as illustrated by the Sufi analogy of the river which crosses the desert by evaporating and then condensing and reforming as rain on the further border. The second interpretation is that information exists which was never before accessible but which is only now becoming available, always by those who have worked to become initiates.

And so we have the distinction between initiates and non-initiates, and this leads us to consider, not only that here there are two possible modes of perception, but also that this is just one of many divisions into two of the different modes of existence, a leitmotif running through Beelzebub's tales.

Foolasnitamnian and Itoklanoz are the terms given respectively to the principle of being-existence proper to the existence of all three-brained beings on any planet; and the actualization of Nature Herself in one-brained and two-brained beings. Chapters 25-28 present a detailed description firstly of the mode of existence according to the principle of Divine Conscience, and secondly to its antithesis, the absence of conscience, or Hasnamuss – of which I would like to say more later. Conscience and Hasnamuss are embodied in the two protagonists of these chapters – the very saintly Ashieta Shiemash and the eternal Hasnamuss individual Lentrohamsanin.

Essence and personality, a pair which is given so much emphasis in the Ouspensky tradition, actually are not presented as a pair in Beelzebub, but innumerable references exist for example to the essence-loving Ashieta Sheimash etc. while the personality is dismissed as manifesting non-responsibly etc.

The two directions of creation are defined as Involution – top down; – and Evolution – bottom up.

and also the two clear instances Gurdjieff gives of a polarity between different modes of thought. So to summarise what we have considered so far – the Gurdjieff work, taken as a whole, can be described according to Gurdjieff's own definition as a Legominism, and as such, for us to make use of it, requires initiation. So all of the above definitions can be seen as aspects of either the initiate, or of the non-initiate.

On the assumption that if I was an initiate, I would know about it, I am going to assume that I am not such a being, and so concern myself with the process of acquiring such an initiation so that my preoccupation with the Gurdjieff work will not be all in vain.

That last is what I want to focus on now, using the enneagram model. Gurdjieff was vague about the origins of the enneagram, and in the absence of any record or trace of it from any other source whatsoever, we must entertain the possibility that nobody formulated it before him thus, and that this is actually Gurdjieff's own invention. Although recent claims have been made that the Sarmoung monastery is in existence in the Himalayas even at the present time, there is nothing to confirm that this is the source of the Enneagram symbol - as Bennett frequently speculated. What neither Gurdjieff - nor any other qualified authority, Sarmoung or otherwise – did not do, is to set strict rules or even guidelines for the use of the Enneagram symbol, and therefore we must conclude that any interpretation placed upon it is quite as valid as any other.

I am going to confine myself to what we actually know and can demonstrate, which is simply that the enneagram is a graphic symbol made up of a circle, a triangle and a six-pointed figure twisted – all superimposed on one another. Even without any numeration, the triangle can be used to represent the Law of Three referred to in Beelzebub as Triamazikamno, but when we place numbers around the nine points beginning with zero at the apex, we discover that the resulting sequence of six numbers has followed the sequence which results when any whole number is divided by seven, and so we are guided to the Law of Seven, referred to in Beelzebub as Heptaparaparshinokh.

I don't think anybody could dispute the statement that no sevenths of nothing is nothing. This is our starting point and if it appears to be a meaningless statement, it is actually not so as I will explain shortly.

But a seventh part of one can be written in decimal notation.

.142857

Mathematicians will immediately throw up their hands in horror that I have not placed a dot above the last digit, to indicate that this sequence is infinitely recurrent. Blame it on my primitive keyboard skills. That's my last word on that subject.

.285714 Two seventh parts

.428571 Three seventh parts

.571428 Four seventh parts

.714285 Five seventh parts

.857142 six seventh parts

And seven seventh parts makes one.

So I don't think anybody would argue with the statement that the number 0 represents nothing at all, in which case the number 1 can be taken as a symbol of wholeness, or Aleph.

Actually in chapter 14 of ISOTM – which is the only account of the enneagram published during Gurdjieff's lifetime (or rather with his approval – it wasn't published until after he had gone) - 7/7 is described as .9 recurring – which is exactly what you will see if you divide the number 1 by seven and then multiply the result by 7. This seems like a silly quibble, unless you consider the implication that perfect wholeness is never to be achieved in this way.

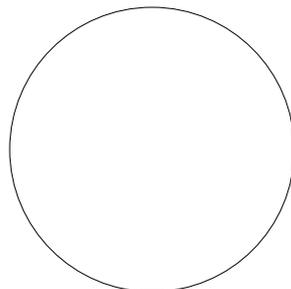
But for our purposes, we can be satisfied with the image of an object cut into seven equal pieces which when recombined, form a single whole object. So if the seven stages are a progression from zero to one...



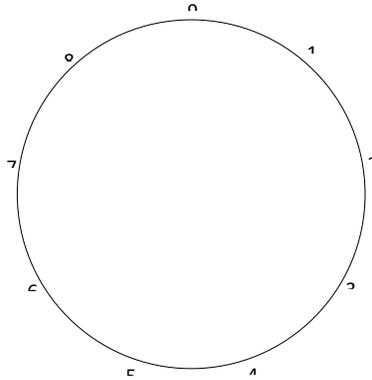
... we can see this as a progression from nothingness to wholeness, and also as a transformation. A number of the Movements make use of the multiplication and can be seen as a transformation from one condition to another, or a movement to a different level of being.

... and as Creation (cf. Genesis 1) Here we can consider what the implications are of the word creation. Creation is the act of bringing into being, something that has not previously been. This can be either form or formless. If we apply the term to thought or thinking, we have the notion of bringing something into being, a thought that has never previously existed, and we call this an idea, an object definable only by itself. And in the absence of any other instance anywhere in any school of thought of which I am aware (which admittedly is not saying very much) I repeat my assertion that the Enneagram, made up of a combination of a representation of the law of three and the law of seven, is unique to Gurdjieff and will not be found anywhere before he presented it for posterity.

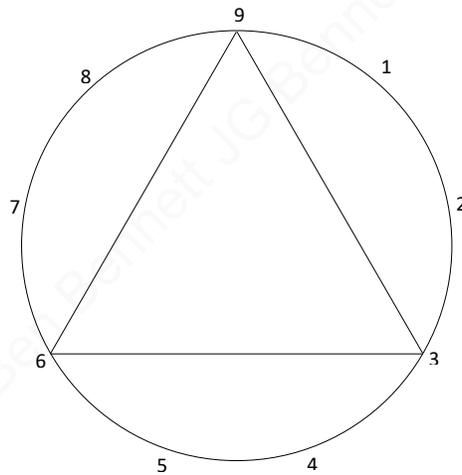
So to draw our enneagram – we begin with the circle. Also a symbol of a whole, and in some systems a symbol of feminine principle.



... and we divide it into equal segments with the first nine digits equally spaced clockwise.

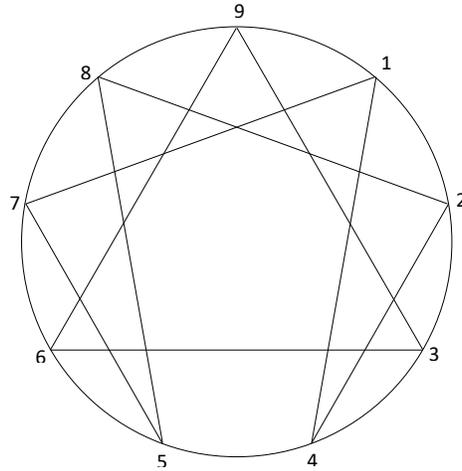


To represent our law of three, we form a triangle by drawing lines from 0 – 3, from 3 – 6, and six - nine to create an equilateral triangle. This symbolizes our Law of Three, Holy Affirming, Holy Denying Holy Reconciling - and tangentially, a symbol of the male principle. Incidentally of course we are now referencing the many instances of religious systems based on three. The clearest example of these is embodied by the Hindu figures Brahma the Creator, Shiva the Destroyer and Vishnu the Preserver. We also have – obviously the Christian Father, Son, Holy Ghost. – In Islam – Allah, Mohmmad, Koran; in Buddhism – Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. There is a parallel in Chinese folk religion but I forget the words



and can't pronounce them correctly anyway.

Then we begin to trace the path of our continuously recurring 1/7th parts

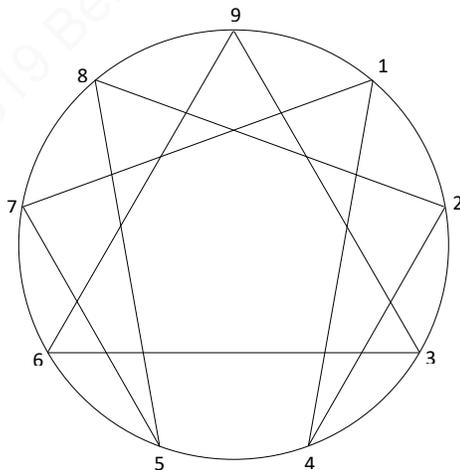


Now I want to draw once again on the monograph named Glimpses of Truth. I know that the provenance of this papers is unclear, but even if Gurdjieff is not the author, he clearly approved its content, or oversaw its author.

“Thanks to this work, to your own work, you will be able to reach a much deeper understanding of this teaching. You will ‘initiate’ yourself.”

I want to draw attention particularly to the three words that I have underlined, and I am going to put these forward as three elements of a triad, being three independent but mutually significant terms. The relative positions at this stage is random, but will become significant when we combine the triad with our sevenfold progression.

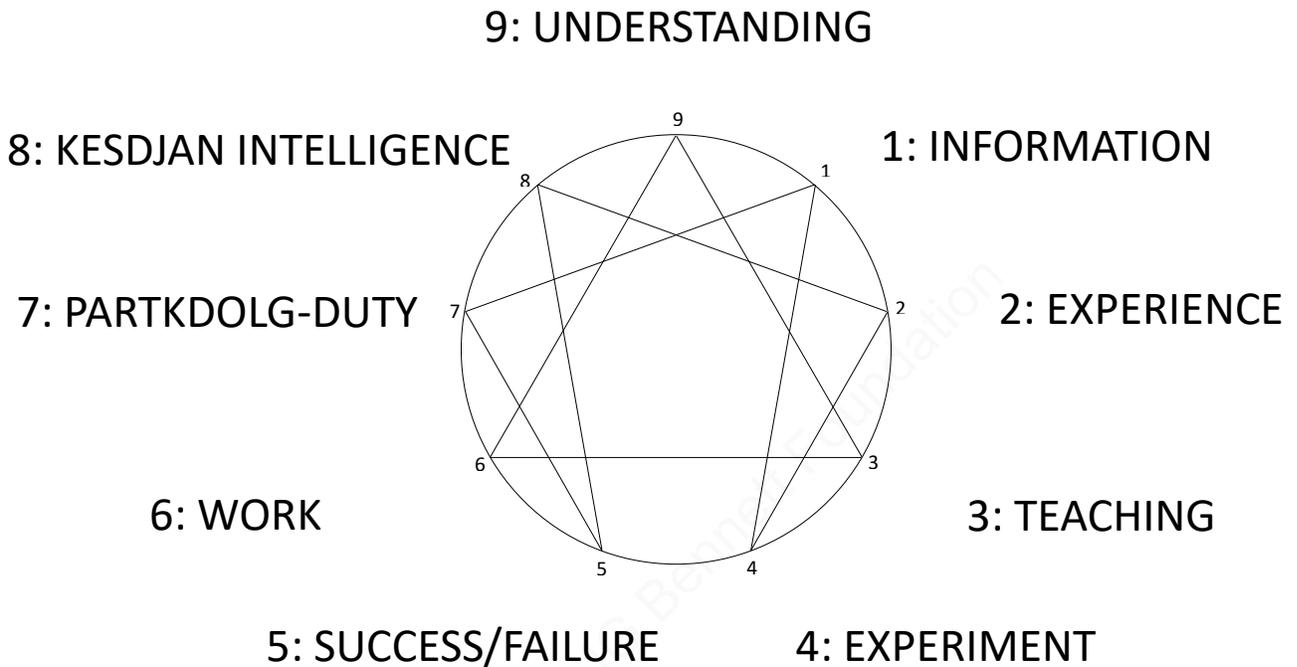
9: UNDERSTANDING



6: WORK

3: TEACHING

The order of the numbers arranged around the circumference of the circle remind us of a clockface and that, unlike the eternal law of three, the law of seven is a movement in time. Now I am going to propose some terms for the remaining six points around the circle.



I've called the first point information as the first stage in progression from the zero of total ignorance to gathering the raw material for our search. This might be reading listening to music or stories watching the movements demonstrated, asking questions etc.

But as long as we are alive we are also accumulating (2.) experience and this combines with our accrued knowledge, evaluated by our ordinary processes of learning.

And so we come to (3.) the teaching stage, when deliberate input comes from outside giving us something we cannot gain for ourselves. This is the first point at which a deliberate force comes into our process over which we have no control, but which is essential to the completion of the process. A teacher is somebody who has already travelled the path and is able to look back and to give directions to what we ourselves cannot yet see.

From the teaching stage we move to (4.) relative independence. We are on our own resources and are faced with the challenge of using what we have received and been given, of making experiments to find for ourselves what works and what does not.

I've called this fifth point Success or failure – terms which may seem offensive to you, but let me explain my reasoning. This is the big dilemma. We have made something for ourselves. Are we satisfied with this? Can we say that we know all that we need to know? Is it enough? Do we say "I now know!" Or do we say rather, "I don't know and I wish to know more." This is the place of maximum hazard. There are two

possibilities – our work appears to have paid off and we achieved the goals which seemed desirable when we set out. We gain approval for our work. People listen to us because we are able to impress them with our success. In the Buddhist teaching of the Six Worldly Realms, this probably corresponds to the realm of the demigods. The other possibility is that we will have failed to achieve anything, our efforts appear to be wasted, we have nothing to show for them. Worse still, we may be ruined, in the eyes of our fellows, in our own eyes or in the world at large. This is a crossroads. There is no going back from this point. We may try to wriggle out of it, like the Squirming Idiot – “I not idiot! M. Gurdjieff is idiot!” This is sometimes connected with Harnel Aoot. In Sufism it is called Fana – destruction. Everything in us fights to resist humiliation. “Our gorge rises.” Or we can respond positively and experience this poverty as a blessing. There is a saying “He who has not found poverty is poor indeed.” “Blessed are the poor in spirit” can be rephrased as “blessed are those who have seen that they have no spiritual possessions.” This is the threshold of the work but we may not be able to recognise it as long as we see ourselves in terms of success and failure.

At point 6, we confront the work actively, and learn the great lesson from our failure. By definition, until this point has been reached, it is not possible to say that we have worked. From this point on we become active. There is balance between the centres and we have the beginning of the ability to make creative decisions and to initiate actions without dependence upon outside circumstances. The Bhagavadgita says: “He who regards pain and pleasure alike, who dwells in his own self, who looks upon a clod, a stone, a piece of gold as of equal worth, who remains the same amidst the pleasant and the unpleasant things, who is firm of mind, who regards both praise and blame as one.” Gita 14:24. I want to say something especially about this last one, because it made a big impression since I first heard it at the age of ten. What is more beneficial to us: praise or blame? Our ordinary impulse is to avoid blame and court praise, but in this path, praise is pure poison which if drunk will lead us back to M. Self-Love and Mme. Vanity, while blame provides the heat for the crucible. When we cross this threshold we take our first active step on the path.

This is the point at which we must undertake the sacrifice of actively being passive: If any man shall strike thee on they right cheek turn to him the other also. Unless we intentionally give ourselves away to others, we cannot pass further. There is a conundrum also here. We can undertake a kind of pseudo-Being Partkdolg duty, which is like saying, I am putting up with the unpleasant manifestations of others because this is my work, and in this way I shall become a more advanced person. When St. Paul quotes Leviticus and says “Vengeance is mine! I will repay says the Lord” this is tantamount to saying that I shall get the last laugh because God will punish the bad guys. When he goes on to say ‘Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head he reiterates the message that giving is transactional. I want to put forward the message of sacrifice deriving from nothing but goodwill, and the ability to be content with nothing. Partkdolg duty can only be in relation to other people, and the chapters India and Tibet give a very clear warning to the danger of misinterpreting the words of Saint Buddha.

And so I want to bring up this passage from Form and Sequence.

“Your weeping gives me the assurance also that in your future responsible existence there will also be in your common presence those being-data which are the foundation of the essence of every bearer of Divine Reason and which are even formulated by our COMMON FATHER in words placed over the chief entrance of the holy planet Purgatory decreeing the following:

‘ONLY-HE-MAY-ENTER-HERE-WHO-PUTS-HIMSELF-IN-THE-POSITION-OF-THE-OTHER-RESULTS-OF-MY-LABORS’”

In other words, Purgatory – or the purgative condition – is not open to everybody: “only he may enter here” - but the right of entry must be earned. Suffering in this sense is a privilege which must be won. What does it mean “to put oneself in the position of another”? This implies more than “walk a mile in his moccasins” and suggests the willingness to place oneself under the burden of another. To do so presupposes certain conditions must be met. One must have sufficient resources both inward and outward to be of service to other beings, as well as the sensitivity to detect pain and suffering in others.

Here it is expedient to take note of another passage, from these sardonic last words of the Prologue chapter of the Third Series.

“Such is the nature of man,

That for your first gift – he prostrates himself;

For your second – he kisses your hand;

For the third – fawns;

For the fourth - he nods his head once;

For the fifth - becomes too familiar;

For the sixth – insults you;

And for the seventh – sues you because he was not given enough.”

Another seven-stage transformation. What is obvious from this is that the donor does not cease to give but continues to give as the recipient changes from appreciation and gratitude to hostility. This is the echo of Matthew 5:14. Here is another division into two modes – the giver of gifts and the ungrateful receiver.

“If any man would go with thee to law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” The spirit of generosity is not conditional upon the reaction of the recipient. But this is more than mere generosity. This is the technique while serving others, of making use of other people’s behaviour to help us strip away the baggage of Kundabuffer, which he calls elsewhere M. Self-love and Mme. Vanity. As we free ourselves from Kundabuffer we acquire the ability to see reality as it is, and not distorted, upside down.

The next passage from Form and Sequence is one that I personally find almost incomprehensible.

“Well then, my boy, in order that the mentioned Zernofookalnian-friction should be obtained in beings, and that at the same time the crystallizations of the new perceptions should proceed for the Reason-of-understanding, I—already knowing very well what are called the “laws-of-the-fixing-and-unfixing-of-ideas-in-localizations,’ the details of which laws, to mention it, by the way, I learned also, thanks to the three-brained beings who have taken your fancy, during my sojourn among them as “professional hypnotist’—had in view during my tales, among many other necessary principles in respect of the current perception of new information through guidance without, always to keep also to the same inevitable rule, so that the gradualness of the enlarging of, as is said, the ‘quintessence of the information’ should proceed in you with the entire absence of the being-impulses of ‘indignation’, ‘offense’, vexation’ and so forth.”

For me, this is a frequent occurrence when reading Beelzebub. Gurdjieff's paragraphs are often lengthy and replete with sub-clauses and sub-sub-clauses, which appear to be concealing something, or burying a dog deeper. Accordingly, I separated the primary statement of the paragraph from all the secondary and tertiary statements, and the result was...

I had in view during my tales always to keep to the rule that the gradualness of the enlarging of the 'quintessence of the information' should proceed in you with the entire absence of the being-impulses of 'indignation', 'offense', vexation' and so forth.

From this I underline the following words...

the entire absence of the being-impulses of 'indignation', 'offense', vexation

... which appear to point once again to the principle of giving up all desire that other people should behave, act or indeed be differently, and to accept all manifestations coming from others beings, which are our primary source of indignation, offense and vexation.

Secondly attention is drawn to the words that are underlined here, the connection between reaching the quintessence, and the absence of negative feelings connected with other beings, although the role of others is implicit and not stated.

I've called this eighth point Kesdjian intelligence, which is really the secret sauce in all of this. The actual mechanism of objective reason is not contained within the intellect as we might ordinarily suppose, or within any other of our ordinary perceptions. But the kesdjan body is not subject to the same restrictions.

Let's just review what we know about that. The word itself is translated by some authorities as meaning the vessel of the soul. However, in the Armenian language - which Gurdjieff on p. 12 says "I preferred to all the others I spoke, even to my native language" which he later identifies as Greek, - the word djan is commonly used and can be translated equally as both body and soul. Olga de Hartmann in her husband's book mentions Gurdjieff greeting her affectionately with the words "good morning djan". Djan is a non-specific term of endearment. For example as an English person might greet his friend as Hello Tony, mate... an Armenian man might say Tony-djan. The prefix kes meaning half, kesdjan is both half-body and half-soul. This can be seen as a function which exists in all three-brained beings in vestigial form. But with our work and particularly Partkdolg-duty it grows and develops in us.

Gurdjieff at certain points connects the kesdjan body with the term astral body, which was so popular with the spiritualist movements of the early 20th century. This is quite significant because according to popular mythology, the astral body is capable of movement outside the physical body - or exosomatosis. When the kesdjan body is sufficiently developed it acquires its own reasoning powers and perceptions which are unconfined to the physical and temporal location of the physical body. The implications of this are obviously that there can be direct communication between two beings one or both of whom may not be in physical existence. We could also connect this property to what we commonly describe as Intuition. This is a very vaguely and imprecisely used term, but our common usages fall roughly into two - there is the intuition analogous to seeing a column of figures and knowing the sum without recourse to a calculator or mental arithmetic. The second is knowing the sum with seeing the figures at all. All of this can be described as receiving information other than through our ordinary senses and perceptions. We know things with a certainty which we cannot explain. We even externalize explanations, for example saying that the Tarot cards told us, or the I Ching, or tea-leaves. Having met people in my life who appeared

to be able to do magic, I prefer to think of this as a property of the kesdjan body, which develops in us only through work – conscious labour and intentional suffering, being-partkdolg-duty. In other words, don't try to overthink Beelzebub's Tales, but trust the work.

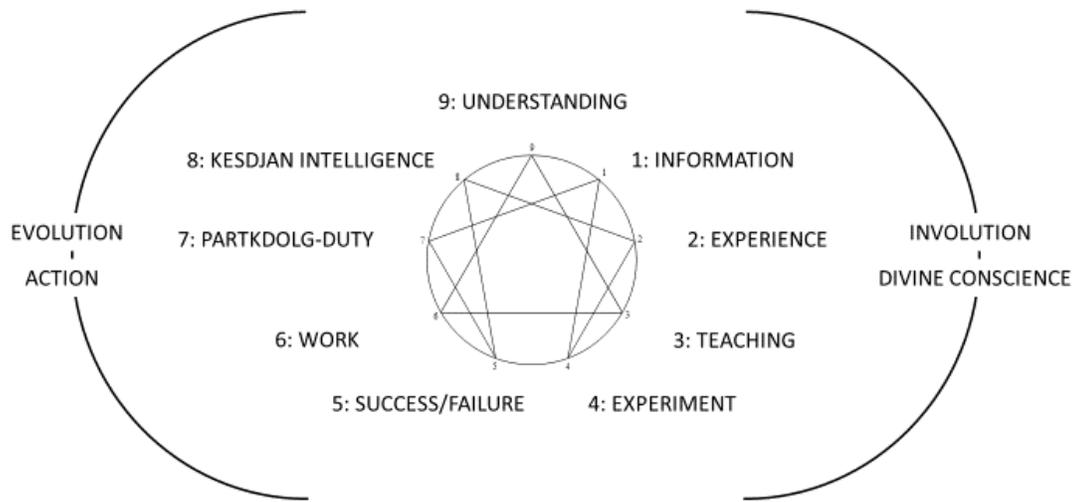
When we come to the last point at 9, we are concerned with the fully developed faculties of understanding according to the description given in Form and Sequence. The quintessence of the information is dependent not upon our ordinary centres, but bypasses the intellect to engage directly with our being. This is self-initiation. The process of objective reason is now beginning and we are able to see things as they really are, unfettered by distortions of Kundabuffer. Chapter 47 The Inevitable Results of Impartial Mentation give a picture of different stages of the development of reason, and the part played by other beings similar to ourselves. This chapter also specifically refers to "degrees of reason".

This may seem like science fiction, but consider this: one of the sets blinkers which prevent us from seeing clearly, is in the form of our own inhibitions, and one of the early lessons we commonly encounter from teachers and peers is that to claim any sort of achievement or insight is an indication to having failed to learn the fundamental tenet of our work: "Man cannot do!" To make any kind of statement that cannot be supported with empirical evidence lays us open to the charge of using our imagination, or of unscientific thinking. But I will give an example. In his 1920 lectures on Agriculture, Rudolph Steiner states that when a plant grows, the parts above the surface of the soil are directly influenced by the planetary bodies of our solar system, while the parts below the surface – the roots etc. – are conditioned by forces outside of our solar system. There is absolutely no possibility of proving or disproving such a statement, and if we accept it, it is a mark of the respect and authority which Steiner's name accrued from his many good works.

There is another point which I want to make here, which is that the first words of the chapter Impartial Mentation are "Beelzebub intended to say more" following on presumably from the closing words of Form and Sequence. This is the only instance I have found in which the narration describes Beelzebub's intentions, except those stated by himself. Beelzebub is Gurdjieff's own creation in this account, but it is very often been my experience that people in dialogue or correspondence begin a sentence with the words "Gurdjieff thought...", "Gurdjieff believed..." or "Gurdjieff intended..." and such statements are usually indefensible and imply that the speaker was able to read Gurdjieff's mind – always a dodgy proposition.

So back to the overview of this particular enneagram, I want to draw attention to the different qualities of the two sides by drawing brackets thus and thus...

And I am going to place the two terms here... and here. If this impulse draws us to being Partkdolg-duty it can be represented as involutory, or from the top downwards. But our own initiated work of striving for the higher nature is by definition evolutionary.



Now, Ouspensky uses the terms “magnetic centre” for the force which attracts us initially to the work. It is very unlikely that a person sees the path before him and decides to take it, but something in us is giving us indications of what is right for us and what is not right for us. I am going to use the term defined in Organization for Man’s Existence – “Divine Conscience”, and suggest that the word divine implies that it is actually the voice of God in us. We can see it in this sense as a force acting within us but coming from outside. So the points on the right side of our enneagram are coming into us from outside, while the left side is characterized by actions originating within ourselves. The right side can be described as “going with the flow”, while the whole of the left side of figure requires work.

Now we also refer back to the fundamental triad 0 – 3, 3 – 6, 6 – 9 represented by the three segments in the outer part of the circle and place the three forces of the Triamazikamno around them thus:

0 – 3: Holy Denying; 3 – 6: Holy Reconciling; 6 – 9: Holy Affirming

Naturally any of these three forces can be placed in any of the positions, which will give a different dynamic for each of the six possible combinations, but I have two reasons for choosing this particular triad, which is that it clarifies that the active part of the work is in 6 – 9, which develops from the identity which we concentrate in 3 – 6, which in turn reconciles what we have received with what we create. I’ll refer later on to my second reason.

This process is one of Initiation as defined by Gurdjieff. We can also see that the first segment corresponds to our first reading of All & Everything, “at least as you have already become mechanized to read all your contemporary books and newspapers, the second for the welfare of your neighbour, and only thirdly to try to fathom the gist of my writings.”

Part 2

“To know means to know all.
Not to know all means not to know.
It is possible to know all, and, indeed,
to know all it is needful to know very little.
But in order to know this very little, it is
necessary first to know pretty much.”

(Bennett, “Dramatic Universe” Vol. 1, quoting Ouspensky, quoting Gurdjieff)

All of the foregoing is of course pure supposition. But if it has any validity, we must ask ourselves what exactly is the information from the Legominism that is transmitted to initiates? The very fact that Gurdjieff announces from Chapter 2 that this is an account of life on earth seen from the outside, suggests to us that what is about to be described is not accessible from the perspective of our ordinary human condition.

I heard somewhere that Albert Einstein once said that any theory that cannot be explained to a ten-year-old child is probably worthless. I would paraphrase this statement by saying that none of the above amounts to a hill of beans if it is not of practical value to the Fourth Way work of facilitating the transition from an old world to a new situation.

I need hardly mention in the present company that there is by no means consensus as to what is the purpose of the Fourth Way and indeed that is partly why we are all gathered here. The other side of the question of what is the Fourth Way, is why does it exist at all, and why should we bother with it? I asked my mother this question many years ago over a drink, and I think she thought I was having a go at her, or suggesting that her work was pointless. Her answer was simply that she felt she must do it. Since I was at that time heavily involved with conventional psychology, I construed this as some kind of super-ego nonsense, but afterwards I realized that what she was actually saying was that her conscience directed her.

I would like to draw friends attention to two references in the literature to the Three Lines of Work. The first is from Maurice Nicoll.

“There are three lines of Work. The first line of Work is work on yourself in connection with what the Work teaches. The second line of Work is work in conjunction with other people who are in this work. The third line of Work is work in relation to what the work is aiming at.”

(Commentaries p. 779, September 22, 1945)

The second is from Bennett:

“The first line of work is to move from the sleeping state to the waking state. The second line is to move from the waking state to the active state. The third is to become active in relation to the cosmic purpose.”

(Three Lines of Work. January 1973)

As we consider these two definitions we can see that the vast majority of the work that we do, with what is written etc. is concerned with what is referred to in both cases as the first line— i.e. waking up. We can

see that when the term “transformation” is used, it refers almost exclusively to the first line of work. This is as it should be, and the three lines form a progression from that first line. Conscious Labour – intentional and goal-directed action is contained in the second line and intentional suffering is connected with the third line of work.

Why is Intentional Suffering connected to the third line of work? What is it to do with either “what the Work is aiming at?” or with the Cosmic Purpose? Because it is the foundation of sacrifice, of giving one’s resources - what is inside oneself – to what is outside of ourselves. But we still come back to the question of why? We can see that around us there is this marvelous world and above us a universe stretching away forever, but we are still unable to answer the question of what is it all for?

Gurdjieff addressed two questions: firstly, what is the cosmic purpose? And secondly, what is humanity’s role in it? “What is the sense and significance of life in general and of human life in particular?” The fundamental premise of Beelzebub is that the world we live in and these two questions cannot be understood from the ordinary human standpoint, but that even so, it is possible for human beings to fulfill their cosmic role if they are guided by Divine Conscience. The third striving is concerned with “knowing ever more and more concerning the Laws of World-creation and World-maintenance”. Why? Because without this striving, we are simply going through meaningless motions.

I work for The Home Depot. My job is to visit people in their homes and discuss their needs for various in-home services. In the course of this I meet ten or fifteen individuals and families in their homes each week, and over a couple of hours, I glean some information about them so that I can help to meet their requirements. I meet ordinary men and women, whose primary concern is to feed their families, pay their taxes and get on with their lives. This is really summed up by the description of the first striving – to have everything satisfying and really necessary for their planetary body. Of course, the bugbear is that almost all of us are affected by Kundabuffer, by vanity and self-grasping, and as such a person, I make quite unreasonable demands for myself for more than is really necessary. The statement in Beelzebub’s Fifth Flight is that the four sources of action are: digestion, mother-in-law, John Thomas and cash.

But how can we judge so? The very first and entry level teaching in this tradition is that man is asleep. Is it really reasonable to state that the world is going to hell in a hand-basket because Man is asleep; because man is mechanical? If the human race is faced with a great task, the heavy lifting is left to the vast majority of men and woman whose primary task is connected with day to day concerns. But in a passive, sleep state, nothing can be done, not even to awaken of one’s own accord. If the Fourth Way is to serve its role as compensating action, what are we to do? By definition this is impossible for a person in the Itoklanoz mode who has not the same possibilities as the three-brained beings and who are therefore unable to actualize in their presences the said Partkdolg-duty. If there is a systemic failure, it is the failure of those who have seen the requirements of the fourth way, but fail to act upon them.

This is the Terror of the Situation – that the three sacred ways known as Faith, Hope and Love are not enough and have become corrupted, distorted and degraded as a result of Kundabuffer. This whole chapter 26 is a conundrum. Having announced this a legominism which by definition is only transmitted to initiates, the account is apparently spelled out in plain terms. I say apparently. What follows is of course, the Organization for Man’s Existence chapter, and the description of the remarkable work program which begins with Poundolero and Sensimiriniko, and which appears to be a kind of self-levelling social engineering pyramid scheme. The true and practical work is contained in the struggle in us for the non-desires to predominate over the desires.

Whichever account you subscribe to concerning the year of Gurdjieff's birth, all are agreed that the whole of his lifetime was contained within the 100 year period between 1850 and 1950, when there was almost continuous and high volume reciprocal destruction, greater than at any similar period in human history. From 1950 onwards human destructiveness changed from mutual destruction to destruction of the environment, which will inevitably result in human self-destruction, uncannily reminiscent of the alleged address of Chief Seattle sometime in the 1850s. It is no part of my intention to segue into discussion of the present external world crisis, but rather it is my intention to address the question of what I can personally do in terms of the three lines of work.

Bennett undertook three writing tasks in the last five years of his life: the first was to update his autobiographical story *Witness*. I have made a careful comparison of the final version of *Witness* with the original 1960 version, and I established that as well as appending three chapters which serve to describe in abbreviated form the years from 1960 to 1972, Bennett cut about 20 pages from the earlier version, almost all of them concerned with *Subud*. This is a story in itself, which is not relevant to the present study, and so I will pass on to the other writing projects which are now published as two books entitled *Gurdjieff Making a New World*, and *The Masters of Wisdom*. Bennett began to write with the intention of presenting a book to be entitled *Gurdjieff and the Masters of Wisdom*, and his apparent reasons for separating the two titles is another story which will be discussed elsewhere.

I want to briefly to end this account with a mention of his book *Gurdjieff: Making a New World*, and to mention that the book should be read as though the two halves of the title – *Gurdjieff* and *Making a New World* – are given equal billing. This is a book that is as much about Gurdjieff's vision of a new world and how it will come into being, as it is about the man himself. I will also say that Bennett makes clear at the end of the account, that he abandoned his earlier attempts, as in his main work *The Dramatic Universe*, to explain every last detail. My conviction after several careful readings is that Bennett wrote his book to give clues to understanding Gurdjieff's legominism, and that this understanding is based on the apparently unconnected work of sacrificing one's own needs to the needs of others and of the world. The emphasis placed upon the Fourth Way is as a compensatory action whose role is intensified at times of *Solioonensius*, or times of accelerated change.

We have the phenomenon of life. I have found that a useful exercise is to try to form a picture of life as whole. We frequently refer to life in ordinary conversation and in almost every case we qualify the word with a prefix such as "my" life, "human" life, life on earth etc. What is not so easy to see life as a whole, objective and unqualified. "What is the sense and significance of life on Earth in general and of human life in particular?" As human beings, we are faced with a great choice – whether to be passive and go with the flow, or to be active and against the current, to be evolutionary, to be *Itoklanoz* or to be *Foolasnitamnian*. Now the great cycle of life requires a work on earth which has not been done before and may not even have been possible before.

The second line of work pre-supposes the first. To be effective, we must first be. This is a conundrum, and we would possibly be more likely to state it as "we must first have Being". I maintain that this in itself is misleading and brings us back to the trap of spiritual materialism, as though Being is some kind of chimerical quality, a commodity which we must have lots of. The challenge is, having once seen our inner emptiness, to give up all desire that that emptiness should be filled. I would say that people who set themselves a Fourth Way task have a challenge firstly to discover how to act as a true human being, that is, one who is able to act consciously and on his own initiative, and having once begun to be able to act

intentionally to undertake work on behalf of others, who may not have made this choice. This work begins paradoxically with giving up the wish that other people should be in any way different to what they are, or to act differently to what they do.

Part 3.

A man came to the home of Mulla Nassr Eddin, bringing with him a duck as a gift. The Mulla dressed and cooked the duck, and the two men sat down to eat a meal together, after which the man left. The following day, a second man presented himself at the Mulla's door, and introduced himself as a friend of the visitor from the previous day. As is customary in Eastern countries, an unexpected guest must be offered hospitality, and so the Mulla invited the man in and served him a meal of soup made from the remains of the duck brought by the first visitor. The next day a third man arrived and introduced himself as the friend of the friend of the original visitor. Once again, the unexpected guest was invited in and fed, once again on soup made from the remains of the remains of the duck. And so it continued for several days, and the Mulla continued each day to make soup from the remains of the duck, until the day came when the unexpected guest arrived, saying he was the friend [relative/pupil/neighbour etc.] of the friend of the friend of the friend of the original duck-bearing visitor. The Mulla produced a bowl of clear water, saying it was the soup of the soup of the soup of the soup of the bones of the original duck.

The first triad is Giver (visitor) – Gift (duck) – Receiver (Mulla/host). The second triad is Host – Meal – Taker. As long as we wish to receive sustenance, we must bring the raw ingredients which can be transformed into a meal. One who wishes to contribute to this great transformative meal which we call the Work, must bring something new and sustaining. If we are unable to bring something new, then in its place we must be prepared to bring our work.

The task of humanity is to sustain the world, and the task of the Fourth Way is to give direction to the underlying belief system which guides humanity in all major steps of evolution. The most basic raw material of our work is in our relationships with other people, and we can set ourselves the very simple task of abandoning any wish that other people should be, behave, or act differently. When we neglect this task, we are implicitly demanding that other people should change themselves while we ourselves do not. Any time we observe that we are feeling resentful, indignant or vexed at other people, this can be a reminder, the fuel to bring our attention back to our own work. This is really a fundamental precondition for any kind of work.

The second task is encapsulated perfectly in St. Matthew 5:43-4: "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.'" In the increasingly polarizing modern world, it is easy to identify those whom we consider enemies – people who seem to be devoting themselves to destroying what we believe in. Can we do as Bennett suggests and "love our enemies in a robust way, not in a weak way"? Can we pray for the welfare of those who seem to be against us in every way? What does it mean to pray for our enemies? It seems unlikely that a Divine Force will listen to our prayer, and confer a blessing upon this other remote individual or group of individuals, but rather if there is any benefit, it will be in a realignment of my personal hostilities, that sending a genuine wish for the welfare of those who are opposed to me, I will bring about a realignment of my own inward state

There is another story of Mulla Nassr Eddin who was one day seen by his neighbour to be sprinkling bread-crumbs on the ground around his house. When asked to explain his behaviour, the Mulla answered that

this was to keep away the tigers. When it was pointed out to the Mulla that in point of fact there were no tigers anywhere near, the Mulla answered that this fact only went to demonstrate the effectiveness of his work. In the year before his death in 1974, Bennett was asked to explain what was the purpose of his experimental academy at Sherborne House, and his answer, echoing the Mulla was that this work was necessary in order that the world should avoid the catastrophes which seemed likely to engulf the world in the next twenty to thirty years. This remark of Bennett's is often held up as an example of his absurd paranoia and total failure to correctly foresee future events. However that may be, one interpretation of the Mulla story is that it may be the small, apparently insignificant actions that have a disproportionate effect on great events. Another way of saying this is that any attempt at Scenario planning is bound to be misleading, if it does not take into account the action of intelligences beyond humanity, which includes human intelligence beyond the ordinary mode.

Above all, the greatest task of all is to renounce any negative feelings towards the evolution of the world, and that requires us to engender and maintain in ourselves a constant objective Hope.