

Exploring Gurdjieff's Teaching of The Fourth Way—The Way of Transformation in Ordinary Life \$7.50

Gurdjieff



WORKING WITH
THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS
—2011 AD

Letters to TGJ

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More Than a Dancer's Intelligence

I've read, more than once, the idea in the review of *The Reality of Being* (TGJ #54) that Mr. Gurdjieff says of Mme de Salzmann, "She—is intelligent," placed within the context of her being a dancer. Yes, she was quite accomplished and was one of his leading dancers. But if we consider how Gurdjieff defines intelligence: "Intelligence means he who directs his body. If the body directs, you are a nullity, a peasant—if you direct your body you are intelligent"—isn't he speaking about a kind of directing that is broader than dance? In other words, could he be saying that even at that young age Mme de Salzmann had *something* stronger already crystallized, able to direct the mechanical impulses of the body. And, by extension, a certain power of presence over the emotional activity which occurs and is fielded *also in the body*?

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Cover:

Foreground—Selection from *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, 12th-century icon (St. Catherine's Monastery, Sinai Peninsula, Egypt) showing monks ascending, and falling from, the ladder to Jesus.

Background—*The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things*, Hieronymus Bosch, ca. 1500. The sins are arranged in a circle around the central image of Christ who, emerging from his tomb, sees everything. Four smaller circles depict the death of the sinner, judgment, Hell, and glory.

So doesn't his definition perhaps indicate a certain maturity of being? Or, are we to take the implied view, that Gurdjieff's definition of intelligence is restricted to a facility and development of body-dance without which *intelligence* doesn't manifest? If we take the deeper view, then Gurdjieff's definition of intelligence reveals something quite extraordinary about Mme de Salzmann, which given the editorial committee's obvious aim is not mentioned.

Having been struck deeply by the book, I found the writing not circular, which remains on its own plane, but spiral, which creates dimensionality (as we see also with the structure of *All and Everything* and *Search*). Yes, there may seem to be repetition, but only if it's not recognized that a new context has been entered when the "same" material reappears. That said, I do agree that it seems odd to state, as the committee does, that Mme de Salzmann's intent was to "help complete Gurdjieff's writing..." One would hope this was an editorial emotional-leap and not in fact how Mme de Salzmann viewed her own notebooks and writings. Why the committee chose also to print what appears to be quite intimate and substantive detail is a true puzzle, since in all genuine esoteric traditions such material is restricted to initiates. Yes, she may have been writing a book as they state, but what she intended to include will always remain a question.

It is with mixed feelings that I received this book. To have served and have been in Gurdjieff's presence for so long is a test of high degree which few could live consciously. Yet, in that same breath, it was after all Mme de Salzmann who directed the revision of Gurdjieff's *First Series, Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, first begun strangely in 1957, not 10 years after Mr. Gurdjieff's death. Commas, phrase hyphens, word replacements and so on were some of the types of edits made, which often entirely change and color the breath and sense of Gurdjieff's voice and the influence of his *legominism*. So, it is within this conflicted place that I am both grateful and saddened by *The Reality of Being*. Grateful for the intimate contact, but saddened by the committee's apparent gesture to position the book in a way that cunningly suggests an incompleteness of the Teaching and thereby

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Sayings of Substance

These Pyramids and Sphinx [begun during Beelzebub's fourth descent, but by the time of his sixth descent] were the sole, chance, poor surviving remains of those magnificent constructions which were erected by the generations of the most great Akhaldans and by the Great Ancestors of the beings of this said Egypt.



Tahrir square, Cairo, April 8, 2011

These terrifying processes proceeded on this same Egypt so often, in consequence of the fact that this part of the surface of your planet [Egypt], during the course of long periods of time, found itself in relation to the common-cosmic Harmonious-Movement in the position of what is called the 'center-of-gravity-radiations,' and that is why the influence of the cosmic law Solioonensius often acted on the presence of the three-brained beings breeding there, and often brought forth in them such an abnormality... under the influence of the action of Solioonensius, instead of the desire and striving for a speedier self-perfection a something began to arise such as they themselves characterize by the words 'need of freedom,' which chiefly serves the cause of the arising there of these same grievous processes of theirs similar to this last 'Bolshevism'... that feeling which arises from the action of Solioonensius strengthens in them the need for some or other general change in the conditions of their ordinary external being-existence.

'Egyptian priests,' descendants of just those learned members of the society Akhaldan [the word meant 'The striving to become aware of the sense and aim of the Being of beings'] who had chanced to escape, and who had been the first to populate that country.

The highest school existing on Earth at that time was found [in Egypt, first named 'Sakronakari'], and which was called the 'School of Materializing-Thought.'

—G. I. Gurdjieff

Gurdjieff said he was initiated three times into the ancient Egyptian mysteries.

Chief Feature in each one of us is a key to our actions and manifestations. . . . It tips the scales. Always the same motive moves Chief Feature. It is like a bias in bowling, which prevents the ball going straight. It is something mechanical and imaginary. . . . It arises from one or more of the seven deadly sins.

—G. I. Gurdjieff

WHO TODAY THINKS OF THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS? OF SALVATION? Rather quaint, no? Interestingly though, according to polls, most Westerners believe they are going to survive bodily death because... well, you know, they just are. But in ages past, going back to the beginning of recorded history, that of the ancient Egyptians five thousand years ago, salvation, or the afterlife, was their primary concern. For the ancient Greeks the emphasis was on living a virtuous life. For Christians, it was living a religious life, one rooted in God, not sin. And, given that the West has been primarily Christian, this was the dominant paradigm underlying how life was lived and judged. Today, sin and salvation are of concern only to fundamentalists who tend to use these as sticks to beat on each other and the world at large rather than to really explore them. For the pseudospirituals that abound, ignorantly in thrall of false notions of 'individualism,' throwbacks to New Age hippies of yore, who eclectically dip into this teaching and that to fashion their own spiritual mélange seeded with chakra-talk and ego antics under the guise of enlightenment and nondualism . . . the ideas of sin and salvation are, well, so yesterday. And as the new Technological world-time we are now entering so redefines human identity and reorganizes and reshapes our lives, such notions look headed for the societal dust heap. It

is vitally important, therefore, for those serious spiritual seekers and students to understand the place of sin and salvation in both exoteric and esoteric Christianity.

Origin of the Seven Deadly Sins

Exoterically, the concept of the seven deadly sins dates to the monk Evagrius Ponticus (346–399 AD), a highly esteemed Christian scholar and ascetic of the 4th century. Evagrius fled the temptations of Constantinople, which included gluttony, lust (his

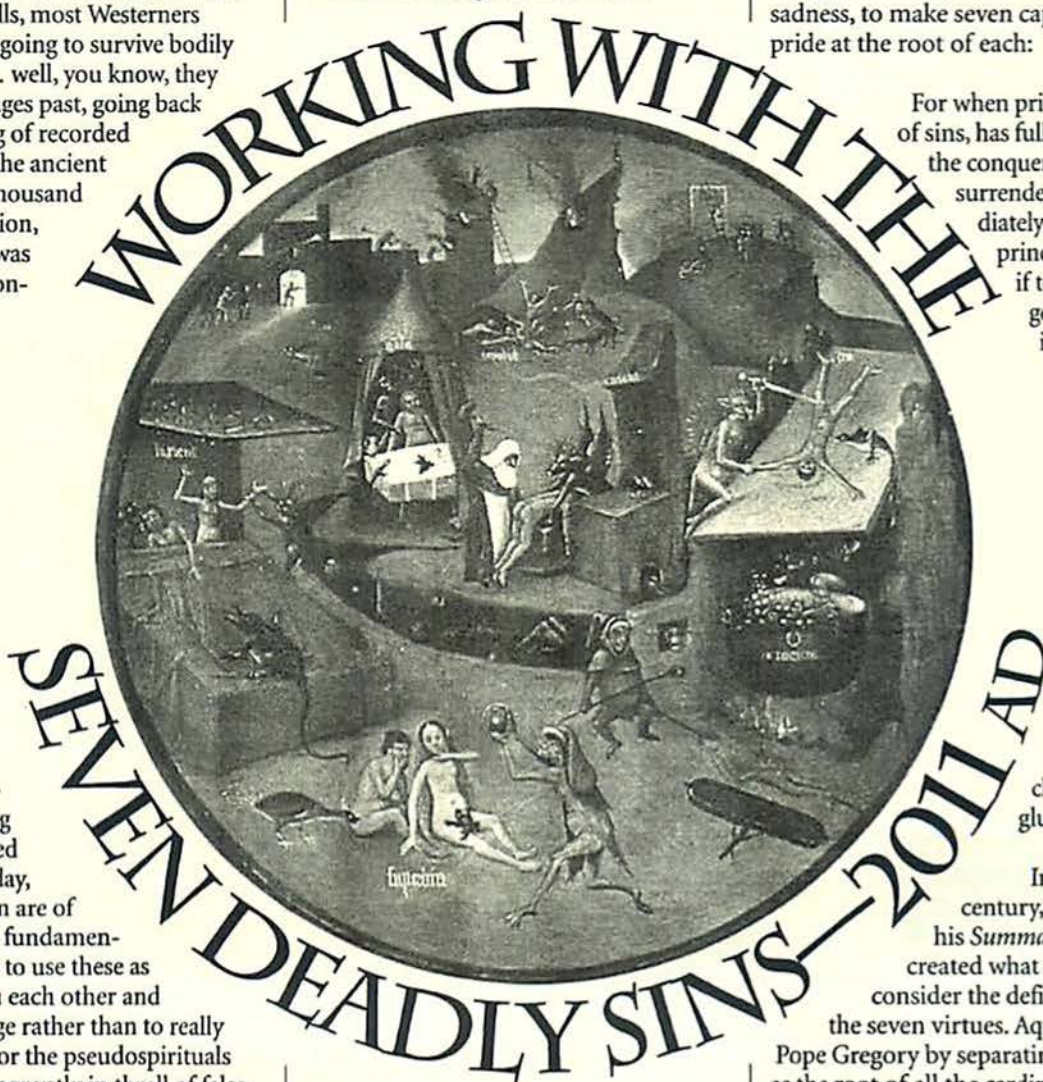
John Cassian (ca. 360–445 AD), a student of Evagrius and later canonized a saint, incorporated Evagrius' teachings on the eight evil thoughts, originally written in Greek, into the Latin monastic tradition of Roman Catholicism. However, it was Pope Gregory I (540–604 AD) in his widely disseminated *Moralia in Job* (Morals on the Book of Job) who first made pride the root of the seven capital sins. Gregory added vainglory and envy, and merged *acedia*, spiritual lethargy, with sadness, to make seven capital sins, with pride at the root of each:

For when pride, the queen of sins, has fully possessed the conquered heart, she surrenders it immediately to seven principle sins, as if to some of her generals, to lay it waste. . . . For pride is the root of all evil . . . but seven principle vices, as its first progeny, no doubt spring from this poisonous root: namely vainglory, envy, anger, melancholy, avarice, gluttony and lust.

In the 13th century, Aquinas, in his *Summa Theologica*, created what many consider the definitive list of the seven virtues. Aquinas followed

Pope Gregory by separating out pride as the root of all the cardinal sins, and then listed them as vainglory, envy, sloth, avarice, wrath, lust and gluttony. This list was in use for centuries before Christian theology distinguished between moral and venial sins and applied the label "deadly" to the list.

Hell, one of the Last Things from The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things by Hieronymus Bosch, ca. 1500. Demons torment sinners according to their sins. For gluttony, a sinner is fed the food of hell. Misers are boiled in a pot of gold.



infatuation with a married woman) and greed, and fled to a monastery in Jerusalem. Eventually he fled to Egypt, where he became an anchorite and one of the ascetic Desert Fathers. Some of the written works of Evagrius are included in the *Philokalia*. In his writings, he identified the eight "evil thoughts" that challenged monastic asceticism. They were gluttony, lust, avarice, sorrow/despair, wrath, *acedia* or spiritual sloth, vainglory, hubris/pride.

As one religious scholar has noted, the existence of different versions of the seven sins and their differing order was due in part to different opinions about the theological and psychological importance of each one. In an ascetic and monastic environment, gluttony and lust were more threatening than pride. In the ordered medieval society the exaggerated individualism of pride—the rebellion against authority and God—was most dangerous. In the later Middle Ages, with the increase in commerce, merchants and money, avarice was treated as the worst of the seven.

Catholic Teaching on the Seven Deadly Sins

The current Catholic Catechism deals with the Seven Deadly Sins in one paragraph. It states at Paragraph 1866:

Vices can be classified according to the virtues they oppose, or also be linked to the *capital sins* which Christian experience has distinguished, following St. John Cassian and St. Gregory the Great. They are called 'capital' because they engender other sins, other vices. They are pride, avarice, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony, and sloth or *acedia*.

However, the Catholic Encyclopedia provides a detailed history and definition for each of the seven deadly sins, which is incorporated into the discussion of each sin below.

Pride/Vainglory

Pride is defined as "the excessive love of one's own excellence, for which Satan is damned," and goes on to say that vainglory, ambition and presumption are commonly enumerated as the offspring of pride because they all serve its aims. Aquinas, citing Pope Gregory, labeled pride the "Queen of All Vices," and described it as: "That frame of mind in which a man, through the love of his own worth, aims to withdraw himself from subjection to Almighty God, and sets at naught the commands of superiors."

Pride is a species of contempt of God and of those who bear His commission. Regarded in this way, it is a mortal sin of a most heinous sort. Indeed, St. Thomas rates it in this sense as one of the blackest sins. "By

it the creature refuses to stay within his essential orbit; he turns his back upon God, not through weakness or ignorance, but solely because in his self-exaltation he is minded not to submit. His attitude has something Satanic in it, and is probably not often verified in human beings." In contrast, the Encyclopedia identifies a "less atrocious" kind of pride which implies that one makes "much of oneself unduly and without sufficient warrant, without however, any disposition to cast off the dominion of the Creator."

These definitions illustrate the distinction between pride and vainglory. Pride is the desire for preeminence, for superiority above all others. In Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Satan is too proud to pay homage to God and leads a rebellion of angels, the "blackest of sins" that Aquinas describes. Vainglory is the desire for recognition and approval, deserved or undeserved. Gregory referred to vainglory as pride's "immediate offspring." The further offspring of vainglory include hypocrisy, boastfulness and "love of novelties" (the newest things).

Spiritual pride and vainglory are of special concern. Aquinas quotes John Chrysostom as saying, "while others find their abodes even in the servants of the devil, vainglory finds a place even in the servants of Christ." Cassian compares vainglory to an onion, for one peels away one layer of vainglory, only to find that achievement becoming the fodder for further temptation to the same sin. Evagrius, seeing deeply into the dilemma, declared, "It is difficult to escape vainglory, for what you do to rid yourself of it becomes for you a new source of vainglory."

Dante's definition of pride was "love of self perverted to hatred and contempt of one's neighbor." In Dante's *Purgatorio*, penitents guilty of pride are forced to walk with stone slabs on their backs to induce feelings of humility.

Envy

In the Bible, Cain kills his brother Abel out of jealousy when God accepts Abel's offering but not Cain's. Envy, the second deadly sin, is synonymous with such jealousy. It is defined in the Catholic Encyclopedia as "a sorrow which one entertains at another's well-being because of a view that one's own excellence is in consequence lessened. Its distinctive malice comes from the opposition it implies to the supreme

virtue of charity.... The envious man tortures himself without cause, morbidly holding as he does, the success of another to constitute an evil for himself." Aquinas defined envy as "sorrow for another's good," and listed among its progeny hatred, detraction, rejoicing over the misfortunes of one's fellow, and whispering. (II-II:36). St. Basil, an early Church father, wrote a lengthy treatise on envy, in which he stated:

As vultures are attracted to ill-smelling places and fly past meadow and pleasant, fragrant regions; as flies pass by healthy flesh and swarm early to a wound, so the envious avert their gaze from brightness in life and the loftiness of good actions and fix their attention to rottenness.

Dante described envy as "a desire to deprive other men of theirs." Dante's punishment for the envious was to have their eyes sewn shut in the way a falconer sews shut the eyes of a falcon—because they have gained sinful pleasure from seeing others brought low.

Wrath

Wrath is the desire for vengeance. The Catholic Encyclopedia states that the "ethical rating" of wrath depends upon "the quality of the vengeance and the quantity of the passion. When these are in conformity with the prescriptions of balanced reason, anger is not a sin. It is rather a praiseworthy thing and justifiable with a proper zeal. It becomes sinful when it is sought to wreak vengeance upon one who has not deserved it, or to a greater extent than it has been deserved, or in conflict with the dispositions of law, or from an improper motive."

Aquinas distinguishes between anger justified as a response to injustice, and the sin of wrath, which is anger in its excessive, misdirected form. Some early Church fathers, on the other hand, argued that anger is rarely if ever justified. Cassian compared wrath to blindness, stating, "Anger does not produce God's righteousness, and likely not anything righteous at all. Anger can only be directed at our own sin, and perhaps the evil demons that incite it to us, never at a human being. Love of neighbor

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J. G. Bennett & the Inner Barrier Part II

JANUARY 1924. LONDON. SEVEN MONTHS AFTER LEAVING THE PRIEURÉ Bennett attends the meeting Ouspensky has called of people who have attended his lectures. "I have asked you to come," Ouspensky explains, "because I must tell you that I have decided to break off all relations with Mr. Gurdjieff." He tells people that if they wish to work with him they must agree not to communicate with Gurdjieff. Bennett agrees and joins Ouspensky's group.

Spring 1928. Athens. Bennett, accused of bribing an official to fabricate title deeds relating to an Imperial Ottoman property in which he has a concessionary interest, is imprisoned in Athens' central jail. Bennett soon receives a telegram:

Sympathy to Bennett under ninety-six laws.

—P. D. Ouspensky

Bennett drinks iodine to fake appendicitis and is taken to a municipal nursing home. Later, speaking Greek in his defense, Bennett is acquitted with costs awarded against the government. That autumn when he returns to London, Ouspensky refuses all communication.

Apparently when the Greek police searched his flat in Athens they found several letters from Ouspensky. As the name was Russian, they thought he might be a Communist. This information was forwarded to the Home Office in London, which called Ouspensky in and questioned him about his political leanings. But this Bennett learns only much later.

Cut off from his teacher, Bennett forms his own study group. But, feeling it is "not right for me to set myself up as an expositor of Gurdjieff's System without permission either from him or Ouspensky," Bennett sends Ouspensky a full transcript of each meeting. Bennett says, "I wrote to say that if he disapproved he had only to tell me and I would stop." Of course to do so, Ouspensky would be communicating with Bennett, something he said he would not do.

October 1930. Warwick Gardens, London. Since leaving Gurdjieff six years before, Ouspensky has been working in strict secrecy with 40 or 50 pupils. He now decides to expand his work and invites Bennett to return. Ouspensky



J. G. Bennett

tells Bennett:

I waited for all these years [to expand the work] because I wanted to see what Mr. Gurdjieff would do. His work has not given the results he hoped for. I am still as certain as ever that there is a Great Source from which our System has come. Mr. Gurdjieff must have had a contact with that Source, but I do not believe that it was a complete contact. Something is missing, and he has not been able to find it. If we cannot find it through him, then our only hope is to have a direct contact with the Source.... Our only hope is that the Source will seek us out. That is why I am giving these lectures in London.

Very soon, Ouspensky gives Bennett the responsibility during meetings of reading his lectures aloud in Ouspensky's presence.

September 9, 1931. London. Ouspensky tells Maurice Nicoll, his closest pupil and friend, "Nicoll, you had better go away..." he paused and completed his sentence with "... go away and teach the System." At about this time Ouspensky begins to make use of his senior students, Bennett and others such as Dr. Francis Roles, deputizing them to answer basic questions and to do readings.

Late 1933. Gaddesden, Kent. Ouspensky has begun sitting up half the night drinking claret and reminiscing to Bennett and some others about his early days in Russia. One late evening Bennett suddenly finds himself "quite outside myself" hearing his own voice and watching his own thoughts. "I saw myself as completely artificial," he relates, "neither my thoughts nor my words were my own. 'I'—whoever at that moment 'I' might be—was a completely indifferent spectator of the performance."

Bennett tells Ouspensky that now he knows what self-observation is.

Replies Ouspensky: "If only you can remember what you have just seen you will be able to work. But you must understand that no one can help you in this. If you do not see for yourself, it is impossible for anyone else to show you."

The conversation turns to Ouspensky's theory of Eternal Recurrence. Bennett is of two minds about it. He believes it contains an important element of truth but does not think it literally true.



Lyne Place where Ouspensky lived and held meetings

"You are like Madame [Ouspensky]," Ouspensky tells him. "Both of you have young souls. You have not the experience of living many times on this earth."

August 1936. Lyne Place. Though Bennett had joined Ouspensky's group, with Ouspensky's permission he still maintained his own groups. Mme Ouspensky sent for him and told him privately, "Try to be yourself. Why do you imitate Mr. Ouspensky in everything? You even copy his mistakes in speaking English." He tells her he is afraid of saying the wrong thing, that he could not trust himself. She tells him, "There is only one way to learn what you can trust in yourself, and that is by your own actions proceeding from your own intention. . . . You have in you the possibility of being of great value to the Work, but for that you must prepare yourself and gain your own experience."

1936. London. Bennett's relationship with Ouspensky changes. Though he regularly goes to meetings, Bennett says, "I was no longer in his confidence." He gives no reasons as to why.

January 4, 1941. Lyne Place. Mme Ouspensky embarks for America. Ouspensky is soon to follow. He believes it will soon be impossible to continue his teaching in England, that Germany will win the war and this will be a prelude to Communism sweeping over Europe. Learning of Ouspensky's plan, Bennett meets with him. He asks Ouspensky three questions:

"Is my lack of progress due to lack of effort, or wrong effort, or is it due in part to there being some method or technique we do not know, and have yet to find?"

"It has nothing to do with methods," Ouspensky tells him. "Your trouble is that you always make false starts. All your work consists of false

starts. And if you keep returning to the starting point, how can you hope to make progress?"

Bennett then asks: "How do I stand in relation to your group here?"

"I can only consider the work at Lyne," says Ouspensky. "The rest, so far as I am concerned, is dissolved. I have given my instructions for continuing the work at Lyne as long as possible. You and your wife can, of course, remain in contact with the work there."

"Have you any objection," inquires Bennett, "to my trying to write out the System as far as I can remember it?"

Answers Ouspensky: "In my opinion, writing is not useful. Mental recapitulation is better. In any case, the System cannot be written in ordinary form. If you do write, it can only be to convince yourself that it is impossible."

January 29, 1941. Liverpool. Ouspensky leaves Dr. Francis Roles, an early student and a noted authority on tuberculosis, in charge of his groups and embarks for America aboard the



P. D. Ouspensky near the end of his life

SS *Georgic*, the same ship that Madame had taken.

For Bennett, Ouspensky's leaving is more than a physical separation. "It is not a sharp break," he says, "or any diminution in my respect and deep gratitude towards him. He has taught me everything, and the contact with his work has had the supreme advantage for me of teaching me my own weakness and foolishness."

Nevertheless, Bennett resolves that he must in the future work independently and sets himself the task of writing all that he can remember of Gurdjieff's System.

May 1942. London. After Ouspensky's departure, Bennett decides to organize the teaching around the triads. He drafts a new chapter of his forthcoming book every week. He reads it to his group of 30 to 40 people, then revises it in light of their questions and remarks. Bennett later publishes this as the second in his four-volume *The Dramatic Universe*.

Hearing of what Bennett is doing, Ouspensky sends a message reminding him that no one is permitted to write anything about the System without Ouspensky's permission.

Spring 1945. London. Bennett begins public lectures on Gurdjieff's System. Bennett receives a letter from Ouspensky's solicitor which demands he return all of Ouspensky's material, including his lectures. At the same time Ouspensky instructs his pupils to break all relations with Bennett and not to communicate with him on any subject. From a letter to a third party, Bennett learns Ouspensky calls him "a charlatan and a thief."

Much like Ouspensky when he broke with Gurdjieff in 1924, Bennett convenes a group meeting and reads

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Sri Aurobindo

The Man & His Teachings

Part II

ARRIVING SECRETLY AT THE FRENCH COLONY OF PONDICHERRY ON April 4, 1910, Aurobindo entered an intense period of spiritual seclusion. He said:

I need some place of refuge, in which I can complete my Yoga unassailed and build up other souls around me. I am developing the necessary powers for bringing down the spiritual on the material plane, and I am now able to put myself into men and change them, removing the darkness and bringing light, giving them a new heart and a new mind. I have also been given the power to read men's characters and hearts, even their thoughts, but this power is not yet absolutely complete. The power of guiding action by the mere exercise of will is also developing.

As Aurobindo's presence in Pondicherry became public knowledge, he was besieged by would-be devotees arriving from all over India, but he refused to meet anyone without a special purpose, and so discouraged visitors. Although many nationalist revolutionaries continued to write for guidance and articles on politics, he told them he had entered retirement from all political activities, claiming that Sri Krishna had taken the responsibility of freeing India, and that all must act from a firm status in yoga.

Although he dropped all public participation in political activity, for several years he did continue some private communication with the revolutionary forces he had led. His letters included allusions to "Tantric books," "Tantric kriyas," and the like, used as code words for revolutionary actions, assassination attempts, and equipment such as revolvers. So even in retirement he continued as a major influence on the freedom movement. For years, Aurobindo and the five other refugee nationalists living in a house with him remained on British surveillance lists, followed whenever they left—which little affected Aurobindo as he rarely went out.



Sri Aurobindo, 1911

All Life Is Yoga

The early Pondicherry years were marked by great economic hardship and consequent austerities, living within the means provided by occasional gifts and loans from friends. As Aurobindo's motto was "All life is Yoga," then his yoga of spiritual practice had nothing to do with what one ate, drank or inhaled, so part of the meager household budget went to meat, fish, wine and cigars. It was a period rich with "experiments in consciousness," including séances, automatic writing, and intensive fasting in order to, explained Aurobindo, "draw the energy from the vital plane instead of depending upon physical substance." This related to the first stage of what he would call Integral Yoga and the fundamental task of silence of the mind. As to his writing, where it issued from, he said, "Since 1908 when I got the silence, I never think with my head or brain—it is always in the wideness generally above the head that the thoughts occur." His book *Yogic Sadhan* was entirely written in this way, and much of his later voluminous writing can be traced to his instruction on automatic writing: "Be passive. Blind the intelligence to what is being written. It does not matter if there is a knowledge of what is coming, but there must be no activity of the intelligence, no idea, no criticism of the intellectual sense, simply a passive acceptance."

Although Aurobindo planned to live in Pondicherry for only a year or two—the time he felt he needed to finish his *sadhana* [spiritual discipline]—he remained there for the rest of his life, rarely venturing outside his residence. He spent nearly all his time in his room, in concentration, meditating, writing, and exercised by walking back and forth for many hours each day. He wrote poetry and plays, as well as engaging in philological research to discover the "true law, origins and embryology of the Aryan tongues." This study led him to the Vedas, where he was surprised to discover a concealed system of psychological meanings that confirmed his yogic experiences. Copious volumes of scholarly work followed, focusing on the Vedas and linguistics; his interpretations helped to deliver those ancient

texts from learned oblivion and to make the wisdom of the Vedas accessible to the West.

To Turn to the Divine Is the Only Truth in Life

On his birthday August 15, 1912, Aurobindo received a prolonged realization and dwelling within *parabrahman* for many hours—a state he describes as “the supreme Reality with the static and dynamic Brahman as its two aspects.” The static (passive) Brahman he had realized first in 1908, while meditating with the yogi Vishnu Lele. A few months later in Alipore jail realization of the active Brahman, or cosmic consciousness, followed. The *parabrahman* realization was the third of what he saw as the “four great realizations on which his Yoga and his spiritual philosophy are founded.” It prepared the way for the final realization of “the Supermind.”

The *parabrahman*, as great as it was, Aurobindo saw as still being subjective in that, “egoism is dead for all in me except—the physical self which awaits one farther realization . . .” Nevertheless, its realization conferred “the essential knowledge or *Shakti* [power],” and directed his future sadhana toward the four parts of his work in life:

1) To re-explain the *Sanatana Dharma* [eternal law of being] to the human intellect in all its parts and from a new standpoint—proving that India is the center of the religious life of the world and its destined savior;

2) To establish a Yogic Sadhana which will not only liberate the soul, but prepare a perfect humanity and help in the restoration of the *Satya Yuga* [Age of Truth];

3) To work for the restoration of India to her proper place in the world by means of Yoga applied to human means and instruments; and

4) A perfect humanity being intended to remodel society so as to be fit to contain that perfection.

Aurobindo observed that people who followed the traditional paths of yoga—which aim at absorption in the Absolute and generally hold a negative attitude toward the world of the senses and empirical life—tended “to draw away from the common existence and lose their hold upon it.” His own path he saw as aiming instead at reuniting “God and Nature in a liberated and perfected human life,” in an unorthodox “theory and system of yoga which I have

formed” that was “not the conventional method of Patanjali [author of the *Yoga Sutras*], but the natural method.”

Thus, in his yoga, even the material nature is viewed as a lower form of the true reality, whereby *mukti* [liberation] is attained—not through transcending the body senses in rising above the limitations of body, life and mind on some lofty summit, absorbed in Brahman, or *nirvana*—but through an active participation in the creative joy of the Divine in a whole “embodied life,” here and now, and the collective liberation of mankind.

Sanskrit Formulas

Aurobindo’s system came to him in a series of Sanskrit formulas or mantras during his first years in Pondicherry, and he chronicled them in November 1913 as a “program” or “map” of his entire sadhana. With seven main formulas, each with four main elements, the system was named *sapta chatusthaya*, meaning the seven quaternaries, and as he called it, the “yoga of self-perfection.” His system, much like traditional tantric yoga, confronts the workings of Nature and its difficulties head-on until each imperfection is conquered, purifying the Nature of all negative, egoic action, through a perfect equality, peace and happiness. It gives special importance to *Shakti*—the power needed to transform oneself and the world to the fields of higher knowledge, will and certain powers called *siddhis*. A divinizing of the law of the body then arises, so that “the system is more able to hold consistently and vividly the settled perception of the One in all thing and beings,” in growing rapture of the Unity, to see the Master.

Between 1912 and 1920 Aurobindo kept regular diaries detailing the daily progress of his yoga, through use of special terminology, abbreviations, symbols and markings, which are known collectively as *Record of Yoga*, including a few entries in 1911 and 1927. This is a first-hand account of the growth of spiritual faculties of an advanced yogin, documenting his experiences during or immediately after their occurrence, and giving a sense of presence to his work. It provides insight into the multitude of events, inner and outer; fulfillment or frustration in the development of the *sapta chatusthaya*s; tracking the struggles and sufferings toward perfection of higher planes of consciousness as perceived directly by

a spiritual master, as Aurobindo himself writes “more scrupulously than any scientist [writes of] his theory or his method on the physical plane.”

Asked about his ability to overcome the difficulties of his yoga, he replied: “A perfect yoga requires perfect balance. That was the thing that saved me—the perfect balance. First I believed that nothing was impossible and at the same time I could question everything.” However, faith in the rapidity and fulfillment of his work was at times shaken. He noted that only the stage of “perfection in yoga will in this life be entirely accomplished,” but concluded that the higher *Amrita* [immortality] in which all limitation is removed and Death entirely ceases might not come to pass.

Integral Yoga— Synthesis or Eclecticism?

His Integral Yoga became a synthesis of all the main yogas and of their philosophies, endeavoring to integrate their most valuable parts into one system. It is regarded as a notable achievement in large part due to the unification into one system of several religious, philosophical and scientific approaches, aspiring toward the spiritualization and divinization of man and humanity.

Critics see his Integral Yoga as “a sort of eclecticism that pervades especially the techniques,” giving exercises taken from other yogas and various “mystic ways” and hardly any of its own, so that none of its prescriptions are considered new. Biographer Peter Heehs, for example, says Aurobindo’s yoga “gives remarkably little of what is promised in the prospectus: ‘practical methods of inner culture and self-development.’ It occasionally offers a technique of thought control or a tip about the development of intuition, but there is little how-to advice. It explains the principles of yoga, but requires the reader to provide the link between principle and practice.”

In a broader sense, Aurobindo saw that the technology and social organization that had made Europe and the United States the masters of the material world, had also enslaved them to their “machinery”—mechanical control of physical nature and society. As a result, the West had become impoverished both aesthetically and spiritually. He believed he could reawaken India to “guide the

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IN SEARCH OF THE SOUL

PART XIII

SIKHISM



SIKHISM TEACHES THAT ONE'S *HAUMAI* CONTROLS ALL ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING one's so-called "good" deeds; it determines the pattern of one's life and leads inevitably to the wheel of transmigration—the cycle of birth and death.

Haumai cannot be translated into a single English word—it includes egoism, pride, passion and self-centeredness, which are the essential foundations for a dualistic perspective. The aims of Sikhism include freeing the adherent from *haumai*, which keeps one's attention absorbed in what is impermanent, and to reveal to the mind and heart the path leading to the liberation of the soul.

The sacred text of Sikhism, the *Adi Granth*, portrays the person whose life is saturated by *haumai*:

In *haumai* he comes and in *haumai* he goes;

In *haumai* he is born and in *haumai* he dies;

In *haumai* he gives and in *haumai* he takes;

In *haumai* he acquires and in *haumai* he casts away;

In *haumai* he is truthful and in *haumai* he lies;

In *haumai* he pays regard sometimes to virtue and sometimes to evil.

Haumai is God created. According to Sikhism, God created the world with individuation, the part separated from the whole. The capacity to withstand both the suffering of separation from God and the physical challenges of the material world are not possible without *haumai*. It is the basis of one's ego-centered consciousness expressed in five primary vices: lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride. Yet, this separating element, with its vices, carries within it the cure. "If the angle of vision is changed, the many become one and the partition or wall of falsehood disappears."

Thus, one who is able to understand and become free from *haumai* sees his or her true nature. "One who understands himself, meets with the Lord and never dies again." This freedom may culminate in the destruction of self/ego and the merging of one's

Aatma (soul) into *ParAatma* (Universal Soul)—all of which can only be achieved through complete dedication to the Guru's teachings. "By the Guru's grace one perceives the Self and so dies even while remaining alive"; in this context, the word "Guru" is God manifest as the Word. It is the Sikh path toward the soul's liberation, including the obstacles and its culmination, that will be explored in this article.

Sikhism is the most recent to emerge of the world's five largest religions; with 25 million followers it ranks behind Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. Like all but Hinduism, it has a known founder, Guru Nanak Dev. He was born in 1469 in Punjab,

Above. The Harmandir Sahib, more commonly known as the Golden Temple, in Amritsar, Punjab, is the holiest shrine in Sikhism and a major pilgrimage destination for Sikhs from all over the world. Construction began in 1574, overseen by the fourth and fifth Sikh Gurus, was completed in 1601 and substantially rebuilt after it was sacked in the 1760s.

the cradle of Indian civilization. The major faiths of the region at the time of Nanak's birth were Hinduism and Islam. Nanak did not develop Sikhism as an effort to reconcile or synthesize these two religions, as is sometimes popularly stated. Nanak rejected the formalism that both presented, as well as their reliance on external authorities and outward response. In addition, he rejected the caste system of Hinduism and its polytheistic approach.

Nanak's teaching bore many similarities to and was undoubtedly influenced by the experiential emphasis of the *sants* (poet-teachers) of the Hindu *bhakti* (devotional) movement popular in northern India at the time, and specifically as taught by the Indian mystic and poet Kabir (ca. 1440–1518 CE). As Nanak's and Kabir's lives overlapped, it is possible, but by no means certain, that they met, and that Nanak studied under Kabir, many of whose hymns are included in the *Adi Granth*. The *sants* taught that God is one and the only reality, all else is illusion, and the best way to serve God is through absolute submission to His will (*hakam*). Meditation and the singing of hymns under the guidance of a Guru were the *Sant* methods of approaching God. Nanak incorporated many of these elements into Sikhism.

Guru Nanak's life

As with many historical religious figures, separating fact from fiction is difficult. What is known is that Nanak was born on April 15, 1469, into a respected Hindu family in the Western Punjab village of Talwandi. His father was an accountant in the employment of the local Muslim authorities. Nanak likely received regular schooling, as his compositions in the *Adi Granth* clearly demonstrate his literacy. Nanak was married as a teenager and his wife eventually bore two sons. He worked in the town of Sultanpur for the town governor. It appears that during these years he became increasingly restless, seeking out holy men, *faqirs* and *sadhuis* (ascetics). At about the age of 30, he had a mystical experience and a sense of the divine call.

Many of the accounts of Nanak's life in the traditional biographies, *janam-sakhis*, are not generally accepted as historical fact. They began as an oral tradition and by the time they were written down were saddled with the

inevitable embellishments that result from the imagination of devout followers. Nevertheless, the story of his illumination provides an interesting perspective concerning the basis of his teaching. When he was around 30 he went bathing in the river Bein, near his hometown, and failed to return. His clothes were found by the riverbank, and it was assumed that he had drowned. His employer had the river dragged in search of his body, but to no avail. Three days later Nanak reappeared. He remained silent until the following day, when he stated: "There is neither Hindu nor Mussulman, so whose path shall I follow? I shall follow God's path. God is neither Hindu nor Mussulman and the path which I follow is God's."

Regardless of the truth of the account, it demonstrates the Sikh belief in a single path to salvation. Nanak rejected the caste system of Hinduism, proclaiming that liberation was available to all. He also proclaimed equality between man and woman and that liberation was available to both. He rejected the monastic approach to life and austere aesthetic practices, advocating that one live the life of a householder, marry and remain engaged in beneficent activity, while being absorbed in devotion to God.

Following his illumination, Nanak traveled for approximately 20 years throughout India and perhaps beyond. He visited many Muslim and Hindu centers during this time. Around 1520, at the age of 50, he ceased his travels when a wealthy follower donated land on the Ravi, one of the five rivers of the Punjab. There Nanak established the village of Kartarpur, where he remained for the rest of his life, attracting many disciples. Before he died Nanak appointed one of his disciples, Lahina, as his successor, in preference to either of his sons, and renamed him Angad. Nanak died in 1539, leaving 974 hymns and a religion not fully developed, but with a successor to whom the community was obedient.

The decision by Nanak to appoint a successor initiated a line of 10 successively appointed Gurus who helped establish and maintain the Sikh faith. Sikhs believe in the unity of the 10 Gurus, that a single soul existed in the bodies of the 10 Gurus. The fifth Guru, Arjan Dev Ji, created the first compilation of the *Adi Granth* in 1604. The

tenth and last Sikh Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, added further holy *shabads* (hymns) to it between 1704 and 1706. Before his death in 1708, Guru Gobind Singh affirmed the *Adi Granth* as the perpetual Guru of the Sikhs, ending the practice of appointing Gurus. The *Adi Granth* then became known as the *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. This is the living source of Sikhism.

The Nature of God

To understand the nature of the soul's liberation in Sikhism one must understand the Sikh view of the nature of God. The opening lines of the *Adi Granth* composed by Nanak and called the *Mul Mantra*, contain the basic creedal statement of Sikhism. It proclaims the oneness and immanence of God:

This Being is One. He is eternal. He is immanent in all things and the Sustainer of all things. He is the Creator of all things. He is immanent in His creation. He is without fear and without enmity. This Being is not subject to time. He is beyond birth and death. He is himself responsible for His own manifestation. (He is known) by the Guru's grace.

In Sikhism, God in his primal aspect is pure Being without quality; Guru Nanak sometimes referred to God as *Sat* or truth, as *Ek On Kar*, "The Sole One," or as *Akal Purakh*, "Timeless Being," all of which signify God as the eternal changeless reality. In this aspect God is beyond the range of human comprehension. It is not possible to describe His qualities for He is without form and cannot be represented. *Nirguna*, the word for the absolute and universal God, is denoted in the passages describing Him by what He is not, such as being without fear or enmity. However, God is both unmanifest, *nirguna*, and manifest, *saguna*. God endows Himself with attributes so as to bring Himself within the compass of humanity's capacity to understand, so that one might know him in his manifest aspect and, through knowing Him, enter into a relationship with Him. Through the unfolding of the three *gunas*, the vital qualities or constituent cosmic substances that determine the nature of all that exists, God makes himself manifest, but does

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THE ART OF LOVE

PART II

BY MARGARET ANDERSON

Following Isak Dinesen's idea of working with sorrow—All sorrows can be borne if you can put them into a story, or tell a story about them—Margaret Anderson writes about Georgette Leblanc.

We had a tombstone made of white marble—a small, simple slab—and on it put a fragment of a poem Georgette had written a month before her death:

*Mon dieu, je ne suis qu'une chose
Qui repose
Entre vos mains*

And on the eighth of February, Georgette's birthday, Solita sent us her poem:

Élégie pour Georgette

Beneath this obligated mound
The small bones lie all derelict
The heart's high cone and core
extinct
The emptied universal head
The drained thalassic eyes.

Each day she searched the sky
for signs
What will this new day bring to me?
What chronicle of joy or pain?
Oh, lovely life, don't pass me by
Or any mystery.

Step gently here, and gently kneel
Delicate dust retains her clouds
Of visions, a mirage, and spring
Perpetual of rain and roses—
God and the lamb beside.

Conversation at midnight June 1942

Eight months after Georgette's death, when Americans who had stayed on in France were threatened with concentration camps, Monique decided that I must leave for America.

... From Cannes into Spain, where I had my first cup of coffee in three years; on to Madrid, where I had just time for

an hour in the Prado; then to Lisbonne, where I went to the best hotel and ordered two side-cars, and afterward strolled through the streets, stopping to gaze at shops filled with foods I'd forgotten the look of. And one night I saw Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*.

Then I was on the "S.S. Drottningholm," bound for New York—where I didn't know what threatened. . . .

The second day at sea I was sitting on the promenade deck, trying to forget where I was and where I was going, see-



*Dorothy Caruso, widow of Enrico Caruso, became Anderson's companion after Leblanc's death and describes her latter-day acquaintance with Gurdjieff in her autobiography, *A Personal History*. After Gurdjieff's death Anderson and Caruso moved back to the United States, where Caruso died of cancer in 1955.*

ing only the grave I was leaving behind. The sun was bright and at the open end of the promenade I saw a tall woman in blue—that summer blue of Cannes, always worn with a touch of red—leave her chair and walk across the deck. Her hair was gold, her eyes were bluer than her dress. . . . eyes of a visionary or a mystic, I thought. She held her head high, looking at the horizon, seeing no one.

At dinner I asked my table

companions who she was. They were surprised that I didn't know. "Dorothy Caruso," they said. "She's been talking to us in the salon all afternoon, telling stories about Caruso that made us weep."

A *femme du monde* with visionary eyes? Incongruous, impossible, I thought.

The next day I saw her again. She was sitting at a table with three men. They were talking, she was listening . . . listening with a special quality of attention. In her absorptions she stroked her hair back from her forehead, slowly and rhythmically.

The next day she saw me sitting in the salon and introduced herself. "I hear you published the *Little Review*," she said. "My daughter Jacqueline writes poetry, and I wondered if you'd be kind enough to give her some criticism."

"Of course," I said, "gladly. But perhaps she won't like my verdict. I'm supposed to be such a drastic critic. Is her poetry good?"

"I think so, perhaps. I don't know. But criticism might help her."

The poetry wasn't very good, and I was pleased when my reservations were accepted impersonally.

The next day . . . "What do you consider the important thing in the education of children?"

"I don't know anything about children," I said. "Great poetry, great prose, science. . . ."

Twenty-four hours from New York. We sit on the boat deck at midnight. The ship was dark, the sea and sky were dark, the night was silent except for the soft beat of engines and the wash of receding waves. I don't know why—except that her eyes were so questioning and so still—but I began to talk about Gurdjieff. I tried, in a vague abstract way, to give an idea of his theory and his teaching, his conception of the possible evolution of humanity—all that had been the basis of our lives since 1924.

At two o'clock we said goodnight. I went to my cabin. "I wonder why I talked about Gurdjieff?" I asked myself. "Nothing will come of it, and in the morning all will have been forgotten."

But at eight o'clock the next morning someone knocked at my cabin door. "I just want to know if you'll go on talking today," Dorothy Caruso said. "I must hear more about Gurdjieff."

We became friends.

(Later she told me that, after saying

goodnight, she had found Gloria and Jackie waiting for her. "I told them that I had been hearing things that could change our lives." [Her daughters, Gloria Caruso and Jacqueline Ingram, daughter of a second marriage.]

The Rose-Stone House

New York City, Fourth of July 1942

An unfamiliar place—hard and garish and gigantic after twenty years in the gentle countryside of France. We were overwhelmed.

"What shall we do?" Dorothy said. "I'd better take a skyscraper for your friends and mine and the children's."

Then we realized that neither of us had many friends left in New York. Some had died, some had fallen away because of different ways of life; some had lost all interest for us, or we for them. I had a small group of real friends—those who had been with Gurdjieff during the years in France and who were now in New York. They became Dorothy's friends too.

And then we found a house—237 East 61st Street. We called it the rose-stone house. There were plane trees in front of it and a garden behind. In the dining room, which opened on the garden, stood the long fourteenth-century Florentine table at which Dorothy and Caruso used to sit, examining his coin and stamp collections on the nights when he wasn't singing.

We went on talking. We talked about our memories of Enrico and Georgette. There is always a vitality in talk about great existences; all lesser talk becomes pallid: like dinner-table talk, which I no longer have to listen to: the social anecdote offered over and over, its raconteurs forgetting how many times they have repeated it; or talk about art objects in apartments overflowing with their accumulation,

so that there remains no space for personal existence in rooms overwhelmed with African sculpture; no place where the eyes can rest because they are always confronted with some masterpiece for an hour's loose and arty dissertation. This wasn't our way. We couldn't spend our time in private museums or public persiflage.

We talked of Italy, of France; not only of their monuments and treasures but of the impressions made on us by living for years in their landscapes and civilizations.

"Italy is a rigid country," Dorothy

long time ago."

"Hasn't anyone ever told you to write?"

"No."

"Haven't you known any writer?"

"Yes . . . Wells, Somerset Maugham, Alexander Wollcott, Janet Flanner, Michael Arlen, Louis Bromfield . . ."

"Didn't they notice your talk?"

"I didn't talk, I listened to them."

They were writers—I admired them."

"You talk in images," I said—

"the language of the emotion. No one encouraged you to talk after Caruso died. No one needed your thought or

your emotions. In self-defense you made yourself into a *femme du monde*. That wasn't interesting. You don't have to go on being that. You're a born writer."

Her father was a writer. Her grandfather too, who was also a friend of Poe.

She was the last great friendship of my life, and she died in 1955. She was sixty-two—young, lovely, handsome and strong and I couldn't believe she would die.

Les Routes du Ciel

Someone said to me the other day, "I can't even imagine what it would be like to have such friends as you've had."

My two great friends had many qualities in common. Both had the kind of creative imagina-

tion that brings ideas to life, and the special talent of thoughtfulness that promises the expansion of an idea as the days pass. Dorothy gave the impression of never speaking without first having thought; Georgette gave the impression of having instantly created. Even in the dispersions of social badinage Dorothy always managed to say only the reflective thing. In this, Georgette was unlike her: how often she used to say that the unreality of salon talk offered her an irresistible toboggan-slide into almost any irresponsible utterance.



Caruso's wedding party on the roof of the Knickerbocker Hotel (New York), August 20, 1918. Center left: Dorothy Caruso; Center right: Enrico Caruso

said. "Immovable. Nothing moves. It's a background. In the great pictures it's the background that counts—the figures bend, not the landscape. Cypress trees—no shadows, no leaf patterns. Italy is a distant country. It's not three-dimensional, it's a silhouette. You're always looking from a distance. Italy is lovely from train windows."

"You talk like a painter, or a writer," I said. "Haven't you ever written anything?"

"No—just some little poems . . . a

Photo—G. Bain Collection of the Library of Congress

The Art of Love

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Solita Solano, Margaret's friend and member of the Rope

Both had the most remarkable visual memory and the ability to suggest on paper, in a few swift lines, the very essence of a human being—as did Jane and Janet.

"What is his wife like?" someone asked Georgette. "She is a comma," she said. One day, watching Nancy Cunard's beautiful walk, Dorothy said, "She is like a tree walking," and describing a certain man she said, "His eyes stood motionless, as if he were looking at me through his thoughts." Once on a promenade, two friends of Georgette's—one very tall, one very short—were walking ahead of her: "*Un franc cinquante*," she said. And once when she was desperately ill at the American Hospital of Paris, there were large oxygen tanks lurking somewhere in the room, like monstrous, misshapen beasts. The doctor was half lifting her in the bed when she said suddenly, barely able to speak but noticing the tanks, "*J'estime beaucoup les éléphants!*"

Georgette was the born artist whose every word, gesture and act bore the wise—or fatal—artist's signature. Dorothy was a born writer who didn't know it and didn't begin to write (seriously) until she was fifty.

Both had a simplicity, by which I mean a kind of essentiality. Both had few "manifestations"—gestures without meaning. Both were unselfconscious, "natural." Neither ever "put on an act" in her daily life, though both could play a flawless public role—Dorothy because

she had learned she had to, Georgette because she sometimes wanted to. Neither had a trace of that indiscriminating, sentimental, pretentious, portentous, arty nature that is so quiveringly embarrassing. Both had the kindest kind of mockery, but Georgette's self-mockery was the more inclusive. Both, more often than not, put others' needs above their own. Both had an indestructible valor and courage, and both faced death as a role to be played in a way that would save those they loved from despair.

Both had the same sinister *mala-die*, the same humiliating operation. Both were condemned long in advance, and neither showed that she knew it, though afterward, in Dorothy's diary, I found these words: "I've been feeling so badly—partly from my back, partly my arm, and mostly my head. Couldn't find the future any more—it was all hidden in a fog—and I began to realize that the past was fading too. Frightening this: to have only the present left, and that limited by aches, and illness, and that question, that awful question . . ."

In the weeks before death both used the same phrase over and over. One said, "*C'est trop beau*," the other, "It's too beautiful." Every time I came into a room Dorothy said, "I'm so glad to see you." Georgette said, "*Mon chef d'oeuvre, merci pour ton existence*." Dorothy said, "So many leaves are falling this year," and "Living here like this with you is like living in heaven."

Sometimes now at night, when I'm afraid of being too sad to sleep, I repeat a poem that Georgette wrote to me long ago. "Remember," I say to myself, "remember that this poem was written to you. Is it possible?"

*Vous m'avez emmenée si loin
Sur les routes du ciel
Qu'à mon dernier matin
Mon sourire dira:
"Ne vous inquiétez pas—
Je connais le chemin."*

*(You have led me so far
Along the roads of heaven
That on my last morning
My smile will say:
"You must not be afraid—
I know the way.")*

Solita thinks the translation should be less "bare." Like this:

*So far have you led me
By all of heaven's ways
That on my final morning
My smile will say:
"Have no fear for me—
I know so well the way."*

Which one do I prefer? "By all of heaven's ways" is beautiful, but . . . As to the last line, I like the everyday simplicity of "I know the way." It is a conversation.

I think continually of those who were truly great, those who impress their image upon you forever and inspire you with a deathless love. And you continue to make discoveries about them that bring revelations you hadn't expected. I once wrote to Solita about one of mine:

As I told you long ago, it was only after Georgette's death that I suddenly thought one day: She loved me too. I had always been so absorbed in my love for her, in my gratitude for having found her, that I hadn't had time to think of any particular reason why she should love me.

Now I know why. I really know now, because of what has happened to me. I have a broken heart, that's what's the matter, that's all there is to it. The meaning of the old phrase is clear to me now.

But why is my heart broken? And



Margaret Anderson in later life

does what has happened justify me in talking of heartbreak? I think so. And this is why:

Whatever state or degree of "being" Georgette and Dorothy possessed, their being was to me a vital life background. Not only because we had a super-communication, but because their existences were affirmative in relation to mine, never negative, never depressing in that awful atmosphere of the lukewarm. They went on with things. They made something of whatever it was that my "being" offered. They invited my being, they encouraged my life. They had some quality that makes life go. And now I understand that I had this for them too. No one else will want it from me now. Monique appreciates it, enjoys it, needs it: but her life would keep on going without it. It's enough for her that we are together. I'm talking about something more impersonal—like a childish demand that "something wonderful must happen." So it always did.

And now that no one will ask me to use this (perhaps my only) gift, I look into a void. It is made of the loss of love and the loss of function—a double aloneness for which I have not been prepared or trained, and which can be described, I think, as a broken heart.

This is as clear a formulation as I can

make today. Except to add that revelation is more important than pain.

And now that I've finished defining, it occurs to me that I will have further revelations, bringing new understanding. Shall I come to realize that a "broken heart" is merely self-pity? I don't think so. My tears have the feeling of self-pity, but my heartbreak stands aloof and observing, and it has no tears.

There is another kind of heartbreak, and Solita once defined it. "I, too, once had a broken heart," she wrote, "and it stayed broken ever after; it never lived again. Some kind of organic growth replaced it, something that has functioned like a heart at times and turned

me toward God, nature, impersonal emotions, large and small. Through this event I came to know another world—the world of the broken heart. One of its aspects is that it doesn't need or want anything 'wonderful' any more—just good, better—bad or worse. Sometimes worst."

And there is still another kind. It comes from no thought of, or pity for, one's self, and it brings deeper tears. It is pity for someone else's hidden, silent, valiant, longing, wishful, fear-filled, hurt-filled, humour-filled—Dorothy's

life. I have this heartbreak too now, and it is the kind that never ends.

Oh, I'm not complaining—I wouldn't dare. Someone who inspires great love gives you so much to think about that you never come to the end of your remembrances. You have no time for self-pity, and you have no need for courage; you have no space for loneliness, and you are fortified against emptiness. I think of a little poem by Börries von Münchhausen, "Words spoken to a grave":

Über ein Grab hin

*Je länger du dort bist
Un so mehr bist du hier;
Je weiter du fort bist
Um so näher bei mir.*

*Du wirst mir notwendiger
Als das tägliche Brot ist;
Du wirst lebendiger
Je länger du tot bist.*

*(The longer you have been there
The longer you are here.
The farther you are from me
The more I feel you near.*

*You were my necessity
As is one's daily bread;
And you are all of life to me
The longer you are dead.)*

Once I was lost, but not lonely; and once I was lonely but not lost. Now I am not lost, and not lonely—I am loved; that is, I remember that I was loved, and that such an event has a present and a future as well as a past. ✕

RETURNING

The cheeks were surprised by the warmth of the tears
Filled with remorse
My habitual selfishness

All is given
Everything received
Nothing am I

Save through the returning

Overjoyed Being
Breathing
Offering

—Stephen Balliet

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT COMES FOR DINNER

SQUARE
GASTON BERTANDEAU
11 RUE LABIE

ON MAY 30, 1937, OLGIVANNA AND FRANK Lloyd Wright, and their 11-year-old daughter, Iovanna, come for dinner at Mr. Gurdjieff's apartment at 11 rue Labie. Kanari is there and says to Olgivanna, "I saw a friend of yours in America and she told me your place was imbued with a great spirit—that she felt your presence everywhere." Olgivanna smiled with pleasure.

Says Wright, "Huh, I wouldn't say that. The spirit there is architecture."

Then, at the toasting of the idiots, he says—"Very interesting, these idiots of yours. I've invented some also."

Gurdjieff makes no reply.

During dinner, trying to be amiable, Wright offers, "Mr. Gurdjieff, you're certainly a good cook. You could earn a lot of money cooking somewhere."

"Not so much as I can earn shearing," answers Gurdjieff. (Wright had earlier given him money.)

After dinner, Gurdjieff brings out a chapter of

Meetings With Remarkable Men and asks who would read it. As he passes the chapter to Kanari, Wright takes it, saying—"I read very well."

Gurdjieff gets up and leaves the room, as Wright begins to read.

After reading a number of pages, Wright whispers to his wife, "Damn, I'm sleepy, I can't take it. Still, I don't want to hurt the old man's feelings."

He reads a few more pages. Gurdjieff returns and sits down.

Wright immediately stops reading—"You know, Mr. Gurdjieff," he says, "this is interesting and it's a pity it's not well written. You know you talk English very well, too bad you can't dictate. Now if I had time you could dictate to me and I could write this for you in good English."

Gurdjieff makes no reply.

Wright reads several more pages and says, "Now I must go and take my little daughter home. She's sleepy—and so is her father."

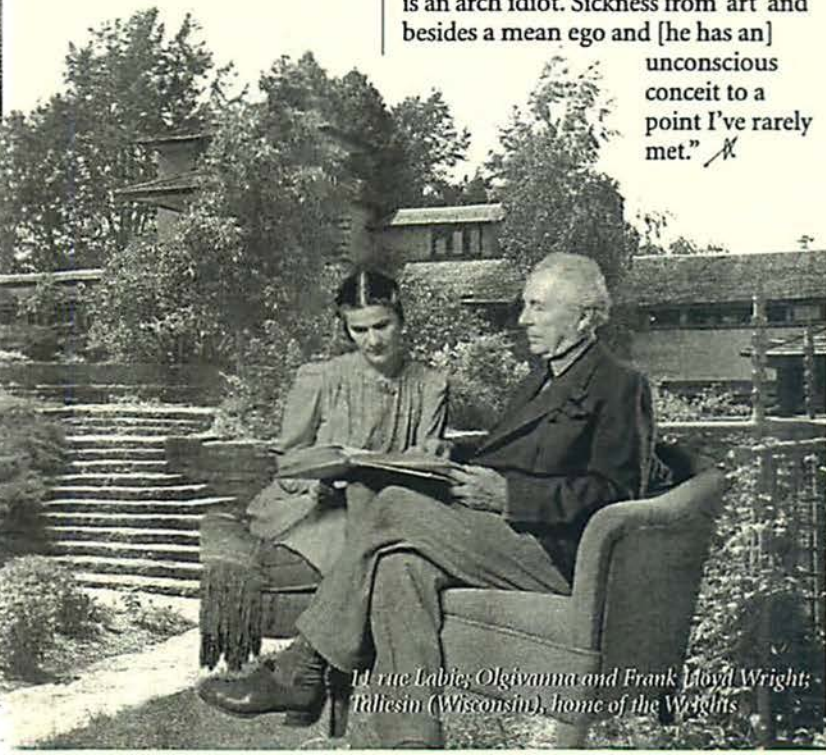
"Yes," Gurdjieff mockingly agrees, "for her sake, stop." Then he adds, "She is young. You, of course, old man now and life finish. But she only begin."

Wright's face flames and he tells him—"My life is not finished." Pointing to Iovanna, he adds, "I could right now make six more like her."

Olgivanna gets up, tears in her eyes, and leads Iovanna to the door.

Kanari writes in her diary: "Wright is an arch idiot. Sickness from 'art' and besides a mean ego and [he has an]

unconscious conceit to a point I've rarely met." ✕



11 rue Labie; Olgivanna and Frank Lloyd Wright; Taliesin (Wisconsin), home of the Wrights

Seven Deadly Sins

Continued from page 4

precludes anger targeted at another."

Dante described vengeance as "love of justice perverted to revenge and spite." In the *Purgatorio*, the souls of the wrathful/vengeful walk around in acrid smoke, symbolizing the blinding effect of anger.

Sloth

Unlike the modern concept of sloth as laziness, the religious sin of sloth had two components: *acedia*, a lack of caring and an indifference to one's responsibilities to God, and *tristitia*, a sadness or sorrow. The early Church fathers saw it as a grave spiritual malady, expressed in dejection or a feeling

intact one's friendship with God.

Dante defined sloth as the "failure to love God with all one's heart, all one's mind and all one's soul." In Dante's *Purgatorio*, souls who failed in life to act in pursuit of love are engaged in ceaseless activity.

Avarice

Also known as greed or covetousness, avarice is the excessive love of money and material possessions. Avarice is fed by other sins such as vainglory, envy, and gluttony. At the end of the Middle Ages, many religious writers began to consider greed, rather than pride, as the root of all evil. This emphasis on the dangers of avarice reflected the growing economic prosperity of the merchant class

eternal for the sake of temporal things."

In Dante's *Purgatorio*, avarice is defined as excessive concern for earthly goods, whether in the form of greed, ambition or extravagance. In punishment for their sin, the avaricious and prodigal lie face down on the ground, unable to move.

Gluttony

Gluttony is the excessive indulgence in food and drink. Aquinas identified six ways to commit gluttony: eating too soon, too expensively, too much, too eagerly, too daintily and too wildly. The Encyclopedia discusses St. Paul's reference to those "whose god is their belly" (Phillippians 3:19), as well as the spiritual gluttony described in "The Dark Night of the Soul" by St.



Pride (*hubris, superbia*) is a desire to be more important or attractive than others, failing to acknowledge the good work of others, and excessive love of self (especially having a false position toward God). A demon holds a mirror in front of a well-dressed woman who arranges her fancy headdress.



Envy (*invidia*) applies more generally than greed, which is largely associated with material goods. The envious resent another person for something they perceive themselves as lacking, and wish the other person to be deprived of it.

of oppressiveness, resistance or even disgust that threatened a monk's commitment to religious vocation. Evagrius called it "the noonday demon," referring to the fatigue, boredom and listlessness monks felt at midday. Cassian connected it to the spiritual importance of physical labor, seeing *acedia*, the physical inactivity and lack of effort, as an expression of the inner state of shirking one's religious duty that could lead to *tristitia*, or despair.

According to the Encyclopedia, sloth is the disinclination to perform the labor or exertion necessary to serve God. Aquinas stated that sloth is torpor in the presence of spiritual good; that is, distress at the prospect of what must be done for God to bring about or keep

at that historical period. Nevertheless, the sin of greed was a key theme depicted in Greek myth, biblical stories and medieval allegories, such as Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, well before the late Middle Ages. The Encyclopedia defines avarice as the inordinate love for riches. "Its special malice, broadly speaking, lies in that it makes the getting and keeping of money, possessions, and the like, a purpose in itself to live for. It does not see that these things are valuable only as instruments for the conduct of a rational and harmonious life, due regard being paid of course to the special social condition in which one is placed." Aquinas wrote that greed was "a sin against God, just as all mortal sins, inasmuch as man condemns things

John of the Cross. Spiritual gluttony is the disposition of those who, in prayer and other acts of religion, "are always in search of sensible sweetness; they are those who 'will feel and taste God, as if he were palpable and accessible to them not only in Communion but in all of their acts of devotion.' This he declares is a very great imperfection and productive of great evils."

In Dante's *Purgatorio*, those guilty of the sin of gluttony are starved in the presence of trees whose ripe fruit is forever out of reach.

Lust

Lust is a cousin to gluttony in its excessiveness and unending search for physical pleasure. Like gluttony, it is

insatiable. The Church fathers rejected the body as the enemy of spiritual life, seeing it as filthy and shameful, and as a result saw female sexuality as evil and the source of temptation. Nevertheless, there was a recognition that chastity involved more than physical celibacy. Cassian, for example, encouraged his monks to be chaste in body and soul. "First of all, the inner places of our heart must be very carefully purified. For what those others wish to acquire in terms of purity of body, we must possess ourselves in the depth of our conscience."

According to the Encyclopedia, lust is "the inordinate craving for or indulgence in carnal pleasure which is experience in the human organs of generation. The wrongfulness of lust is reducible to this: that venerable satisfaction

of one's superiority or prime importance, i.e. pride, which is placed above all else. Envy is the belief that one's superiority, i.e. pride, is lessened by the success of others. Wrath results from what is perceived as injury to one's pride and self-importance and the sense of injustice that results. Sloth is desire to shirk one's religious duty, placing one's comfort above spiritual growth. The goal of avarice, the obsession with money, is to enhance one's superiority, i.e. pride. The final two, gluttony and lust, place sensual pleasure above all else. Thus, the medieval image of the seven deadly sins as a tree with pride as the root and trunk is an accurate depiction of the relationship between pride and the sins that flow from it. Accurate or not, G. I. Gurdjieff sees

and religion did not satisfy. He intuited that the answer lay in esoteric wisdom societies of earlier times. Making many journeys into remote and dangerous areas, he finally came to Egypt where he was initiated three times into the ancient Egyptian mysteries. He found that "The Christian church, the Christian form of worship, was not invented by the fathers of the church. It was all taken in a ready-made form from Egypt, only not from the Egypt that we know but from one which we do not know. This Egypt was in the same place as the other but it existed much earlier.... Prehistoric Egypt was Christian many thousands of years before the birth of Christ, that is to say, that its religion was composed of the same principles and ideas that constitute true



Wrath (*ira*) is inordinate and uncontrolled feelings of hatred and anger, self-destructiveness. Two enraged men brawl before a run-down inn. The man on the left has had a chair broken over his head, while the other grapples with a woman who attempts to stop him. He holds a knife, with which he may strike her, and a mug of beer indicating that drunk and belligerent, he has also committed gluttony.



Sloth (*acedia*) is neglecting something one should do, an apathetic listlessness; depression without joy—in early Christian thought, regarded as a wilful refusal to enjoy the goodness of God. A man sleeps before a warm fire in midday, clutching a money bag, ignoring the offered rosary and devotional book.

is sought for either outside wedlock or, at any rate, in a manner that is contrary to the laws that govern marital intercourse. Every such criminal indulgence is a mortal sin, provided of course, it be voluntary in itself and fully deliberate."

In Dante's *Purgatorio*, those guilty of lust (both heterosexual and homosexual) must pass through an immense wall of flame as they call out examples of lust.

Pride as the Root

It is easy to see that in each of the seven deadly sins described above, pride is the source or root of the sin, for in each the person puts the self, what he or she self-defines as necessary for happiness, above all else. In the case of vainglory, it is the desire for recognition

the deadly sins in a light exoteric Christianity never suspects.

The Esoteric Perspective

In 1912, Gurdjieff brought a seminal and esoteric teaching to Moscow which, in contradistinction to the three classic spiritual ways of working with the body, emotions or mind, worked with all three at once, and which he said was Haida Yoga (the quick path) or more commonly, The Fourth Way. Early in his life, he said, he had come to "the complete sensation of myself," that is Being, and seeing the misery and violence of ordinary life, the question arose in him, "What is the sense and significance of life on Earth, and human life in particular?" The answers of science

Christianity." He told his Russian students that "The [Fourth Way] teaching whose theory is here being set out is completely self-supporting and independent of other lines and it has been completely unknown up to the present time." In other words, while elements of the teaching could be found in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Sufism, etc., the origin was The Fourth Way. When asked its origin he replied—"This is esoteric Christianity." [His emphasis.] By this he differentiated the teaching from the commonly known exoteric version.

Such a radical perspective was difficult to consider let alone accept for any but the most serious of spiritual seekers. But even more unpalatable was the idea that one did not have a soul simply by

being born, but had to make one. *Salvation, therefore, could only be for those who made a soul.* (This will be thoroughly discussed in the last installment of *The Gurdjieff Journal's* ongoing series, "In Search of the Soul.") As Mr. Gurdjieff said, it is not a question of being reborn but of being born, for ordinary man—though made in God's image—is mechanical, hypnotized, asleep to their chief feature, or chief fault, a substrate of their false personality. "Chief Feature" Gurdjieff said, "in each one of us is a key to our actions and manifestations.... Always the same motive moves Chief Feature. It is like a bias in bowling, which prevents the ball going straight. It is something mechanical and imaginary.... It arises from one or more of the seven deadly sins." Asleep to himself,

the great obstacle to our wishes and achievements, the weapon of the representative of hell."

Delineating further real pride from false pride, Gurdjieff pointed out:

There is a saying: 'He who has real pride is already half free.' Yet, although we are full to the brim with pride, we must admit that we have not obtained the least bit of freedom for ourselves. . . . Pride is also an attribute of the soul. By pride we can discern the spirit. Pride is evidence that its possessor is of heaven. Pride is "I." "I" is God. Pride is hell, pride is heaven. These two, having the same name, are different and opposite, and no ordinary consideration and observation of them will ever distinguish

deadly sins—that Gurdjieff brought the sacred and seminal esoteric teaching of The Fourth Way. With esoteric Christianity being only for those called to it and the exoteric tottering after 2,000 plus years and, unfortunately, not likely to endure—what then?

One thinker observes and intuits:

[The danger is] Technology will have mastered us, and we won't even know it. It will seem natural that we exist merely as bioplasmic machines, a form of worker ants, each stamped with a bar code, totally enframed in a sterile, mentalized-technologized world. Such a machine world running on its 'oil'—water to keep it cool and electricity to power it—would impoverish all humanity. The human



Gluttony (gula) is the over-indulgence and over-consumption of anything to the point of waste. On the floor are a potty training seat, ball and stick for a game, a sausage on a skewer roasting over a fire, and a cooking pot. A hat with an arrow through it and the knife on the wall indicate anger and violence that accompany drunkenness.



Lust (luxuria) is excessive thoughts or carnal desires for others which therefore relegate love and devotion to God as secondary. Fruit and wine show the relationship to gluttony.

man cannot sin. "Sins exist," Gurdjieff explained, "only for people who are on the way or approaching the way. And then sin is what stops a man, helps him to deceive himself and to think that he is working when he is simply asleep. Sin is what puts a man to sleep when he has already decided to awaken." He would agree with Pope Gregory I that pride is the basis of all sin but would note that this is false pride. "All the trouble," said Gurdjieff, "lies in the fact that we do not possess ourselves and that we have no real pride. Real pride is a big thing; unfortunately, we do not possess it. Pride is a kind of measure of the opinion one has about oneself. *If a man has real pride it proves that he is.* [Emphasis added.] Pride is also our chief enemy,

one from the other.

False pride, soaked as it is in its origin, that of self-love and vanity, is the consequence of the properties of what Gurdjieff called "Kundabuffer," an organ implanted in humanity long ago but then removed, but whose specific properties still endure. It causes human beings to see the world "topsy-turvy" and so fosters false personality and prevents the growth of essence, conscience and real "I." Applying the analysis of the seven deadly sins, self-love is false pride, with vanity being vainglory, the desire for recognition of the superiority of the person.

It was for those called to esoteric Christianity—that of making a soul and consciously working with the seven

experiment on Earth would be over—a human and a spiritual catastrophe, a binary hell world, from which there would be no return. ✕

—Claire Levitan

Notes

1. *Chief Feature.* C. S. Nott, *Journey through this World* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), 87.
2. *The concept.* Morton W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins: An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept, with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State College Press, 1952), 59. There is no mention of the seven deadly sins in the Bible. The Book of Proverbs

(Proverbs 6:16–19) lists “six things the Lord hateth, and the seventh his soul deteseth.” They are: “a proud look; a lying tongue; hands that shed innocent blood; a heart that devises wicked plots; feet that are swift to run into mischief; a deceitful witness that uttereth lies; him that soweth discord among brethren.” Only pride repeats in the list of Seven Deadly Sins. Paul, in the Epistle to the Galatians (Galatians: 5:19–21), provides a much longer list of sins, which includes: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and the like.” Pride is not mentioned.

3. *They were gluttony.* Evagrius,

Brazos Press, 2009), 36–37.

7. *As one religious scholar.* Solomon Schimmel, *The Seven Deadly Sins: Jewish, Christian and Classical Reflections on Human Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 25.
8. *Each sin.* Dante, *The Divine Comedy, Part II: Purgatory*, Introduction, Dorothy L. Sayers (London: Penguin Press, 1955), 65–67. From the gate of Purgatory, Virgil guides the pilgrim Dante through its seven terraces. These correspond to the seven deadly sins or “seven roots of sinfulness.”
9. *Vices can be.* *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., Art. 8, III, 1866. www.scborromeo.org/ccc/p3s1c1a8.htm. On March 10, 2008, the Vatican provided a new list of “Social”



Greed (avaricia), related to lust and gluttony, is a very excessive or rapacious desire and pursuit of wealth, status, and power, wanting more than one needs. The bailiff in the center holds a symbol of office with one hand, accepts a bribe with the other.

Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus, trans. Robert E. Sinkewicz (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), xvii.

4. *A student of Evagrius.* John Cassian, *The Institutes of the Cenobia and the Remedies for the Eight Principle Vices*, trans. Boniface Ramsey, OP, *Ancient Christian Writers*, vol. 58 (Mahwah, NJ: Newman Press, 2000), 113–280.
5. *For when pride.* Gregory, *Moralia in Job*, 31.45.87–88, www.lectionarycentral.com/GregoryMoraliaIndex.html
6. *This list.* Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies* (Grand Rapids, MI:

Seven Deadly Sins, published in *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper. They are: 1) “Bioethical” violations such as birth control, 2) “Morally dubious” experiments such as stem cell research, 3) Drug abuse, 4) Polluting the environment, 5) Contributing to widening divide between rich and poor, 6) Excessive wealth, 7) Creating poverty. <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aizloDFbRPRM>.

10. *That frame of mind.* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 2a2e, Question 162, vol. 44. www.sacred-texts.com/chr/aquinas/summa/sum291.htm.

11. *A less atrocious.* Joseph Delaney, “Pride,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 12 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911). <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12405a.htm>.
12. *Gregory referred.* Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, IaIIae, 132.4, citing Pope Gregory I.
13. *Aquinas quotes.* Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, IaIIae, 132.2.
14. *Cassian compares.* DeYoung, 72–73.
15. *A sorrow which.* Delaney, “Jealousy,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 8.
16. *Aquinas defined.* Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Question 36.
17. *As vultures.* Basil, “Concerning Envy,” *Fathers of the Church*, vol. 9, St. Basil, *Ascetical Works*, trans. Monica Wagner (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1962), 470.
18. *Ethical rating of wrath.* Delaney, “Anger,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 1.
19. *Anger does not produce.* DeYoung, 119–20.
20. *The early Church fathers.* DeYoung, 83–85.
21. *Canterbury Tales.* In *The Pardoner’s Tale*, Chaucer tells the story of three gamblers willing to betray their friendship to feed their greed.
22. *Its special malice.* Delaney, “Avarice,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 2.
23. *Aquinas identified.* Delaney, “Gluttony,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 6.
24. *St. Paul’s reference.* Delaney, “Gluttony.”
25. *First of all.* Cassian, *Institutes*, XI, xi–xiii.
26. *The inordinate craving.* Delaney, “Lust,” *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 9.
27. *All the trouble.* C. S. Nott, *Teachings of Gurdjieff: A Pupil’s Journal* (New York: Arkana, 1990), 53.
28. *He who has real pride.* Nott, 53.
29. *The complete sensation of myself.* Gurdjieff, *Meetings*, 205.
30. *Egypt was Christian.* P. D. Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous*, 302.
31. *Completely unknown.* Ouspensky, 286.
32. *This is esoteric Christianity.* Ouspensky, 102.
33. *Sin is what puts a man to sleep.* Ouspensky, 357.
34. *The danger is.* William Patrick Patterson, *Spiritual Survival in a Radically Changing World-Time* (Fairfax, CA: Arete Communications, 2009), 7.



In 1604, Guru Arjan Dev completed the *Adi Granth*, the holy scripture of Sikhism, and installed it in the Golden Temple. Each morning around 4 a.m. the *Adi Granth Sahib* is carried into the Temple on its palanquin.

not incarnate. In His manifest aspect, He is deemed to be a personal God participating in the life of the universe, watching, directing, upholding and cherishing His creation. He also bestows divine grace enabling one to unite with Him and participate in immortality.

The Sikh approaches God through *Naam*, which is translated as "name." However, it is much more than that: it represents the shift from self-centered experience to one that is God-filled. *Naam* expresses the nature of Timeless Being in all aspects and with all qualities. The *Adi Granth* states: "*Naam* gives form to everything, through *Naam* comes all wisdom and light." And: "*Naam* is the creator of everything, to be divorced from *Naam* is death." The highest ideal for a human being is to carry out the will of God by linking oneself to *Naam*. This may be accomplished through living a proper life with an emphasis on meditation. As directed in the *Adi Granth*, the experience of unity is achieved through the discipline of *naam simran*, meditating on the divine name: "Chant the *Naam* yourself,

and inspire others to chant it as well. Hearing, speaking and living it, emancipation is obtained. The essential reality is the True Name of the Lord."

The Nature of Man

Sikhism does not attempt to explore the mysteries of creation—how or why the Universe came into being or why God created Man. Nevertheless, man is recognized as the product of God's intention and the highest creation on the evolutionary scale of life. Man is also a microcosm of the universe: "Whatever is found in the Universe is found in the body, whoever searches it shall find it." Man mirrors the universe with respect to both material and spiritual elements. The human soul is life itself, indestructible. In its essence it is identical to God. Analogies often used in Sikhism are that the soul within each person is like the spark to the fire, the drop of water to the ocean, or a ray of light from its source. "O my soul, you have emanated from the light of God, know your true essence." The future life for each soul is one of two

kinds, merger into the Absolute Being or transmigration.

The soul is sometimes referred to by Nanak by the word *man* (pronounced mun and not to be taken for the English word), which has no satisfactory equivalent in English, for it includes the indestructible quality of each soul. However, the soul is not merely an isolated eternal spark of life alone. It is bound up with the mind and heart and all three aspects are included within the word *man*. It is both the source of our possibilities and the source of our evil impulses: the seat of lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride that manifests when caught in illusion by one's sense of self-reliance. It is also the faculty by which the truth may be apprehended, the means by which we meditate and the source of feeling which may lead us to devotion to God. Thus, *man* is to be restrained, but not crushed. The *Adi Granth* states: "The *man* is unsteady, it does not know the way. The man who puts his trust in his own *man* is as one befouled; he does not recognize the Word." Yet it also states:

"In his *man* is Truth and so Truth is in (the words of) his mouth also. With Truth as his banner he finds no obstacles remaining." And the reconciliation of these is provided: "To conquer the *man* is to conquer the world."

These possibilities exist only for humans, a status taken for granted, but difficult to achieve: The *Adi Granth* notes that there are 8.4 million species of being. Birth in human form is, therefore, rare and is the result of good deeds done over immense periods of time. The Sikhs refer to it as the "epitome of fruitful effort"; it is the opportunity to achieve Union. Yet it is squandered: "This is the opportunity to meet the Lord; why don't you remember Him in meditation?" A more expansive passage of the *Adi Granth* describes the protracted path one takes to attain human form:

For many births you have become a worm or moth, an elephant, a fish or a deer.

In several births you may have become a bird or a snake or may have been yoked as a horse or an ox.

Meet the Lord of the universe. Now is the time to meet him: after a long time you have been given human form.

In many births you were created in rocks and mountains, produced as vegetation, even aborted from the womb.

You were made to wander among the eighty four hundred thousand forms of existence.

By virtue of the fellowship of the saints you have achieved your present status to perform the Lord's service, repeat his name guided by the Guru.

In Sikhism, the ultimate purpose of all life is union with God by which one transcends the cycle of birth and death and lives within a condition of eternal beatitude. The *Adi Granth* is replete with references to this union with God by portraying Him as the husband and the seeker as the wife, spiritual happiness likened to connubial bliss. "Along this path to our Husband Lord, we climb the steps of the ladder, and come to merge with Him." And elsewhere: "The Gurmukh (the God-facing man inspired by the Guru's spirit) is ravished like the pure and happy bride on the Bed of God, her Husband."

Man's path to this union requires obedience to God's will. Sikhism does

not postulate the existence of free will for humanity. Moreover, right living alone cannot achieve release. The ultimate release is a matter of grace. God is responsible for union; man's participation is essential, but this too is dependent upon the prior activity of God. The divine initiative is essential for man to recognize the need to participate. Salvation depends upon both grace and effort; one must engage in a discipline to cleanse oneself and appropriate the opportunity being offered. This requires that the seeker free himself from attachment and ignorance while living in the midst of temptation.

The obstacles that prevent the soul from returning to its source are based on our past, *karma*. As Guru Nanak put it, "One receives in accordance to what one does. As one sows so one eats." In addition, our present failures are attributed to *maya*, or illusion, and *haumai*. *Maya* causes us to hold a materialistic view of life and therefore to value what is impermanent, while our *haumai*, which includes self-reliance, directs us away from our true dependence upon God. To overcome *haumai*, certain practices are encouraged including meditation, living an honest life as a householder and sharing what one has with the community. These practices must be undertaken with the proper motivation, which is called into being through *Naam*, the cure for all suffering.

Sikh Practices

Honest labor and righteous conduct toward all are important elements of Sikh conduct: "He who eats what he earns through honest toil and gives some of what he has in charity: he alone, Nanak says, knows the true way of life." Society is nurtured by the company of holy men, and therefore Sikhism eschews the monastic life. Nanak also rejected yogic and ascetic practices.

He emphasized that life was real and an opportunity for spiritual progress. Spirituality had to be expressed in life. In his system, worldly life without being informed by the force of spirituality is barren, and spiritual life without its expression is just sterile. Therefore, at one stroke he rejected *sanyasa*, otherworldliness, celibacy, asceticism and monasticism, and in two simple and clear couplets he laid down a new goal and methodology

of his whole-life system, combining intimately the life of the spirit with the life of the world. He stated that the Benevolent Creator was working the world with his Graceful Will. Therefore, the only way to be a truthful person (*sachara*) was to 'carry out the Will of God,' and 'life was a game of love,' in which one should be ready to lay down, without wavering, one's life, if need be.

In short, one becomes attuned to God through love and devotion.

In Sikhism, the foundational method for becoming attuned to God is through meditation: "Only if one meditates on the Word (*Naam*) does *haumai* go." The early morning hours, before the sun rises, are seen as the best time for meditation. In addition, Sikhs are taught to meditate and chant in the evening as well. During the day, as Sikhs go about their daily work they strive to remain constantly aware of the divine. The discipline taught by Guru Nanak did not center on external practices, rather, it focused on what might lead one to experience loving devotion to God: "He who worships the True One with adoring love, who thirsts for the supreme love, who beseeching cries out, he it is who finds peace for in his heart is love." Guru Nanak taught that devotion to *Naam* is the essence of immortality.

The loving remembrance of God leads man to attain Bliss and knowledge of the Divine. The remembrance of God or the *Japa* is literally muttering that slow recitation audibly or *sotto voce*. In this manner or process of meditation the seeker's mind falls to silent meditation and concentrated self-attainment and identification with the Creator. ...when it... continue[s] effortlessly or naturally [it] comes to be known as the *Japa-Jap* which means silent recitation that is deep uninterrupted meditation which further leads to...incessant communication with God. In this stage of spiritual elevation there is unbreakable bliss. Guru Nanak describing this state of ecstasy says that the seeker listens to the melody of the soul which is produced after the union of the soul with the higher self. In the state of union with the eternal is heard the Divine Music and the self is attained with the infinite.

The Soul's Ascent to God

Sikhism teaches that the union with God can take place during one's lifetime. Nanak's *Japji*, Song of God, describes five stages of the development of consciousness, the last of which is called *Sach Khand* or the Realm of Truth. The references to the five stages of development within the *Japji* are somewhat obscure and therefore have led to diverse interpretations. The first is that into which all humans are born, called *Dharam Khand*, the realm of righteous action. "The earth exists for dharam to be practiced," suggesting humanity has been placed on earth to serve the divine purpose. This requires a developing sense of moral awareness and social responsibility. Righteous action requires an understanding of the law of cause and effect, thus progressing through this stage depends upon taking seriously the law of *karma*. Each person must come to recognize that he or she is judged according to one's actions:

The body is the field of action, in this Dark Age of Kali Yuga; as you plant, so shall you harvest. Justice is not passed on mere words; if someone eats poison, he dies. O Siblings of Destiny, behold the justice of the True Creator; as people act, so they are rewarded.

For those who continue the ascent, the second is *Gian Khand*, the sphere of Enlightenment or the realm of knowledge, where one becomes aware of the vastness of the universe and the mystery of existence. It may represent a weakening of one's self-centeredness. It is characterized by experiences of joy. "Knowledge shines in the Realm of Knowledge. In it there is joy of sound, sight and deed." Here one may hear the universal sound current: "The Sound-current of the *Naad* vibrates there, amidst the sounds and sights of bliss."

The seeker may then progress to *Saram Khand* which is obscurely described. It is variously known as the Realm of Effort, the Realm of Bliss, and the Realm of Humility. If *saram* is derived from the Sanskrit word *sarma*, it refers to the realm of effort where the mind becomes perfected and attuned to God. Commentators alternatively argue the word derives from the Sanskrit *sarman*, and interpret it as the Realm of Bliss, while others favor the Persian

word *saram* and interpret it as the Realm of Humility or Surrender. This is the stage where one struggles against the last remnants of ego; the sense of awe and humility experienced in the *Gian Khand* will not crystallize unless one further strives for consciousness. The importance of effort is emphasized in the *Adi Granth*: "Regard your body as a field, your *man* as the plough, your actions the ploughing and effort the irrigation."

The next stage, *Karam Khand*, is seen by most Sikh scholars as the Realm of Grace. However, it may more appropriately be deemed the Realm of Fulfillment if the Sanskrit word *karam* retains its meaning as *karma*, indicating that one begins to reap the reward of one's efforts. The objection to its meaning as the Realm of Grace is that there is no indication in Guru Nanak's teachings that grace comes at this late stage in one's ascent. Nanak's writing suggests it is available throughout a seeker's efforts, with a special emphasis at the very beginning of the seeker's journey, as it is by grace that one is put on the path to liberation.

By learning our true nature, we achieve *Sach Khand*, the Realm of Truth, our soul merging with the being of God, the supra-soul. This stage defies description, "Hard as steel is the story of this state to narrate."

The Formless One, *sach khand*, is not a geographical spot, but the final state of the evolution of human consciousness. One can only experience it, but not describe it, for here words cease to have any meaning and no analogies can help in describing the Unique. Here in the Divine Court, the perfect ones rejoice in His presence. It is from here that His Will (*hakam*) goes out to the universe, and the liberated, grace-filled souls perform it joyously and effortlessly. The devotee becomes one with Him and realizes Him as a unifying force working through all objects of His creation. This way he attains to the non-spatial *sach khand* and to the Dweller therein.

Knowledge of the ultimate Reality is beyond the ordinary reason of man and comes by revelation, through grace. It may well be that Guru Nanak emphasized the role of grace in his Mul Mantra because of his experience of enlightenment at the river Bein. Thus,

while the union with God is seen as the ultimate purpose of life, that union is not, according to Sikhism, in any one seeker's control, nor is it exclusively a matter of effort. Yet without the effort it may never come. Sikhism teaches "If a man goes one step towards Him. The Lord comes a thousand steps towards man." ✍

—Ron & Claire Levitan

Notes

1. *In haumai he comes*. Two titles are usually given to the Sikh scriptures, the *Adi Granth* (*Adi* means first, *Granth* means collection, anthology or book) and the *Guru Granth Sahib*, sometimes preceded by the honorific *Shri* (Lord). W. Owen Cole and P.S. Sambhi, *The Sikhs: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices* (London: Routledge, 1978), 44. In this article reference is made to *Adi Granth* throughout.
2. *If the angle*. Narindar Singh, *Sikh Vision of the Cosmic Order, Part III, Realization of Akal Purakh*, Paper presented at International Sikh Conference, 2004, http://globalsikh-studies.net/r_link/articles.htm.
3. *One who understands*. *Adi Granth*, 1411.
4. *Manifest as the Word*. Cole and Sambhi, 73.
5. *He was born*. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs, vol. 1: 1469–1839* (New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1991), 9.
6. *Popularly stated*. W. H. McLeod, *The Sikhs: History, Religion and Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 29.
7. *Meditation and the singing*. McLeod, 151.
8. *The town governor*. McLeod, 109.
9. *Historical fact*. McLeod, *Guru Nanak*, 8.
10. *There is neither*. Cole, *The Sikhs*, 9.
11. *Devotion to God*. Narindar Singh, *Sikh Vision of the Cosmic Order, Part I*, presented at the International Sikh Conference, 2004, http://globalsikh-studies.net/r_link/articles.htm.
12. *Attracting many disciples*. Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*. The name Punjab means the land of five waters.
13. *Community was obedient*. Cole, *The Sikhs*, 91.
14. *Source of Sikhism*. The *Adi Granth* consists of 3,384 hymns. The writers of the *Adi Granth* include seven of the Gurus as well as contributors

- from other faiths. Guru Nanak Dev composed 974 hymns. It also includes 292 hymns from Kabir.
15. *This Being is One.* McLeod, 163–64, as paraphrased by Jodi Singh. All Sikh meditation is grounded in this Creed. Gurnek Singh, *Guru Granth Sahib: Nature of Numinous Experience*, Punjabi University, Patiala, paper presented at International Sikh Conferences, 2004; http://globalsikhstudies.net/r_link/articles.htm
 16. *The name Waheguru or Wonderful Lord is used often used by Sikhs as a mantra in meditation.* Though not coined by any of the 10 gurus, it was sung by bards at the court of Guru Arjan (the fifth guru in the line of succession). Cole, *The Sikhs*, p. 91.
 17. *God endows.* McLeod, 167.
 18. *Does not incarnate.* The gunas are Sava (purity), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (inertia).
 19. *Divine grace.* McLeod, 171.
 20. *Naam gives form.* *Adi Granth*, 986.
 21. *Naam is the creator.* *Adi Granth*, 603.
 22. *Chant the Naam.* *Adi Granth*, 269.
 23. *Whatever is found.* *Adi Granth*, 695.
 24. *O my soul.* *Adi Granth*, 441.
 25. *It is bound.* McLeod, 178–81.
 26. *But not crushed.* McLeod, 181.
 27. *Recognize the word.* *Adi Granth*, 415.
 28. *No obstacles remaining.* *Adi Granth*, 839.
 29. *Conquer the world.* *Adi Granth*, 6.
 30. *8.4 million.* *Adi Granth*, 1075.
 31. *Fruitful effort.* Narindar Singh, *Sikh Vision of the Cosmic Order, Part II, Human Destiny—A Sikh Perspective*, 1.
 32. *Meet the Lord.* *Adi Granth*, 631.
 33. *For many births.* *Adi Granth*, 176.
 34. *Along this path.* *Adi Granth*, 7.
 35. *The Gurmukh.* *Adi Granth*, 22.
 36. *Grace and effort.* McLeod, 207. As stated in the *Adi Granth*, 5: "Nanak, all we receive is by the grace of the Beneficent One."
 37. *So one eats.* *Adi*

- Granth*, 662.
38. *True way of life.* *Adi Granth*, 1245.
 39. *Society is nurtured.* Narindar Singh.
 40. *He emphasized.* Daljeet Singh, *The Five Gifts of the Gurus*, 2, http://globalsikhstudies.net/r_link/articles.htm.
 41. *Does haumai go.* *Adi Granth*, 139.
 42. *The discipline taught.* Wearing five articles of faith, what are called the Five K's, are among the Sikh practices most popularly known. The five K's are comprised of Kesh, uncut hair; Kanga, a wooden comb; Kara, an iron bracelet; Kachera, a particular type of cotton underwear; and Kirpan, carrying a curved sword. These requirements were initiated in 1699 by the tenth Sikh Guru, Ji, in response to political and military concerns and were imposed upon all who became members of the Khalsa, a military organization. Currently, these are seen as a commitment to the faith and provide visible forms of identification. There are varied interpretations of the significance and symbolic meaning of each. These practices appear to stray from Nanak's teaching denouncing external practices as a means of spiritual

- deliverance. McLeod, *The Sikhs*, 5.
43. *Heart is love.* *Adi Granth*, 505.
 44. *The loving remembrance.* Gurnek Singh, 7.
 45. *Righteous action.* It is sometimes said to be the region or stage of piety.
 46. *Law of karma.* Cole, *The Guru*, 51.
 47. *The body is the field.* *Adi Granth*, 308.
 48. *Knowledge shines.* *Adi Granth*, 7. McLeod, 222.
 49. *The Sound-current.* *Adi Granth*, 36.
 50. *Commentators alternatively.* McLeod, 222.
 51. *Strives for consciousness.* Five Khands, http://sikhiwiki.org/index.php/Five_Khands.
 52. *Regard your body.* *Adi Granth*, 595.
 53. *Path to liberation.* Cole and Sambhi, 80.
 54. *The Formless One.* Dr. J. S. Mann and Dr. Surinder Singh Sodhi, editors, *Concepts in Sikhism, Cognitive Psychology—Mind Map Approach to Understanding Sikhism for the Second Generation Sikh Children*, 92–93, http://www.globalsikhstudies.net/r_link/articles.htm.
 55. *Wheel of transmigration.* *Adi Granth*, 1112.
 56. *His Will (hakam).* *Hakam* refers to Divine Will or Divine Law.



The Panj Piare (five beloved of the Guru) lead the procession of a Nagar Kirtan through a town. Nagar means town or neighbourhood, and kirtan is a term describing the singing of divine hymns.

world" and lead to its spiritual greatness. Paradoxically, his conviction that his yoga was needed so that "India should come out of the philosophical school and renew its contact with life" was the very reason given for his "continued retirement and detachment from action."

Mirra, the Occultist

Aurobindo's life changed dramatically on March 29, 1914, when French barrister Paul Richard visited Pondicherry. This was Richard's second visit, the two having met soon after Aurobindo had arrived in Pondicherry. Accompanying him this time was his wife, Mirra Alfassa. Whether or not she was there originally is not clear, as Aurobindo's notes when he first met Richard made no mention of her. But with this second meeting she definitely made an impression. "She seemed to have a capacity for spiritual surrender," he said, "that rivaled that of the great Indian *bhaktas* or devotees." Later, he realized that "the Sadhana and the work were waiting for the Mother's coming" (as Mirra would soon be called). Mirra, from the instant she saw Aurobindo, was convinced he was her spiritual master. She recognized him from her dreams as a figure named Krishna, who had been guiding her sadhana for many years.

Mirra was born in Paris on February 21, 1878, to Sephardic Jewish

parents, her father from Turkey and her mother from Egypt. She had been given the name Blanche Rachel Mirra Alfassa, but from birth her family called her "Ma." From early childhood on she had mystical experiences, including trance states and travel out of the body. Educated in music, painting and mathematics, she became a student of Gustave Moreau, becoming a part of Parisian artistic circles, and friends with Auguste Rodin, Monet, Matisse and many other great artists. At 19 she married Henri Morisset and gave birth to their son, André. By this time, on her own, she had achieved a conscious constant union with the Divine Presence. She then came across a book by Vivekananda, and later the Bhagavad-Gita, taking Krishna as a symbol of the immanent Divine. Soon the dark Asiatic figure, who she called Krishna, began coming to her in dreams guiding her in her inner journey.

In 1904 she became an active member of an esoteric group, the *Mouvement Cosmique* [the Cosmic Movement], founded by Max Théon, a Polish Jewish Kabbalist and occultist who had formed The Hermetic Brotherhood of Luxor and other esoteric schools in England, France, Egypt and Algeria, teaching a form of "sexual magic" and possessing an encyclopedic knowledge of the occult. Born Louis-Maximilian Bimstein, and later known as Aia Aziz, meaning "the beloved," and finally as Max Théon, meaning "the greatest God," he said he had received initiation

in India after which which he formulated what he called the "cosmic tradition," which he claimed predated the Kabbalah and the Vedas. He married an English woman, Alma, who was endowed with extraordinary clairvoyant ability, mediumistic qualities, the vital power to materialize and move things, and other psychokinetic phenomena. The science of occult studies expounded by Théon and channeled by his wife were published in their monthly journal *La Revue Cosmique* [The Cosmic Review], which Mirra soon edited. She worked with Théon and his wife for two years in Tlemcen, Algeria, and was given a complete training in the philosophy and occult practices of both adepts.

Mirra would later pass on the teachings from this period of influence to Aurobindo, who adopted many of the concepts and elements of Théon's teachings, and even the terminology. Much of Théon's metaphysic found its way, through Mirra's mediation, into Aurobindo's comprehensive cosmology. She believed that Aurobindo and Théon had independently arrived at some similar conclusions about the evolution of human consciousness.

Returning to Paris from Algeria to teach Théon's system, Mirra divorced Henri Morisset, and through the teaching met Paul Richard. Shortly after, in 1908, Théon's wife suddenly died, a huge blow to Théon from which he never recovered. He declared that as the Heart of the Movement had stopped



Blanche Rachel Mirra Alfassa as a child



Mirra Alfassa, aged 19



Alma and Max Théon

beating, the *Cosmic Movement* and the *Cosmic Review* would stop too. Mirra and Paul Richard soon married in deference to family demands. Their "union was an unusual one," as Mirra had no interest in consummating the marriage and encouraged him to look elsewhere for sexual gratification. Theirs was to be a relationship of intellectual and spiritual collaboration only.

The Thought of the Future

She and Richard planned to stay for a year or two with Aurobindo to further their mystic-yogic studies, however, early on Richard proposed that the three start a monthly philosophical magazine. Aurobindo readily agreed. They named the magazine *Arya*, a Sanskrit word meaning one who "accepted a particular type of self-culture, of inward and outward practice, of ideality, of aspiration." Its first issue contained 64 pages of text, and was published in 1914 on

Aurobindo's birthday. But the First World War intervened and after seven issues Richard was called away to the war. He and Mirra left for France; it would be five years before she would return to continue her sadhana with Aurobindo.

From 1915 to 1920, Aurobindo continued the task of writing three works of philosophy, one of yoga, six of commentary, three of social science, three of literary and cultural criticism, and dozens of essays. He also published a collection of original poetry, a five-act verse play and the first version of a poetic narrative, *Savriti*, that would eventually become an epic. All of his major works excepting *Savriti* were serialized in *Arya* through installments, with the stated intention "to feel out for the thought of the future," and to link it "to the best and most vital thought of the past." Spanning six and a half years and 77 issues of *Arya*, and becoming "in fact, a financial success," Aurobindo

arrived at what he believed was "a grand synthesis of human knowledge," which contributed "the intellectual side of my work for the world."

His philosophy (he disliked the word) is often described as integral nondualism, or integral idealism, or just integralism—an intuitive approach which seeks to understand reality in its undivided wholeness and fundamental oneness. Aurobindo wanted to discover whether this experience of the omnipresent Reality could be made—by training—the normal part of man's consciousness, and if so, he wanted to work out the psychological result, the transformation, that would follow in the life of the individual and of the group.

Aurobindo reasoned, "The material universe is the lowest stage of a downward plunge of

the manifestation, an involution of the manifested being of this triune Reality into an apparent nescience of itself, that which we now call the Inconscient." Aurobindo maintained that the force hidden in its apparent opposite is in fact the self which the nescience has lost, and therefore must make the constant action to seek and recover. "It is through the conscious individual being that this recovery is possible."

Aurobindo's aim was "a change of life and existence," achieved by "bringing in" a new power of consciousness, which he called "the supramental." This Supermind is the bridge between the lower and higher hemispheres of existence.

Once the Divine is found and manifested, one's limited consciousness may be transformed into the Divine Consciousness, and therefore to become its vessel, or instrument, in all of one's active nature. There are many ways of opening to this Divine Consciousness or entering into it. My way which I show to others is by a constant practice to go inward into oneself, to open by aspiration to the Divine and once one is conscious of it and its action, to give oneself to it entirely.

The supermind then must be brought down into the consciousness of the Earth and fixed there, and to bring it down is the goal of Aurobindo's yoga. This is described as a "double movement of existence—involution and evolution," where there must be aspiration of complete surrender, but at the same time one must reject the lower nature.

Oral remarks made by Aurobindo, as recorded from memory by a disciple, describe this process first as a need to separate ourselves from desire, feeling, etc., so that whenever desire comes, we realize that we are not desiring, but only experiencing the coming and going of desire, and secondly:

Whenever the thinking part of man is active, we notice very clearly that the work is going on in a place somewhere above the forehead. When the feelings are awake in him, the action is centered in the heart. In both the cases, the self takes the heart and mind for its theater of action. Man must transfer his center of heart and mind to that

Continued on page 28



Mirra Alfassa and Paul Richard traveling in Japan

the letter in which he is referred to as "a charlatan and a thief." He then tells the group they can decide either to stay with him, or join Ouspensky's group and "never see me again."

October 2, 1947. Lyne Place. At dawn Ouspensky, who has returned to England in January, dies. Upon hearing of his death, Bennett says:

Throughout the day I felt a great love towards him, such as I had never known while he was alive. Nevertheless, I was strongly aware of the difference between death after a long life on the Earth and a premature departure. Ouspensky's potentialities had been brought into time, and they had undergone an irreversible transformation. There was something that I could not understand and should not try to understand. A great cycle of my own life which had lasted twenty-seven years had closed. I felt love and gratitude towards Ouspensky, but I felt no nearer to him than I had before.

When they were on speaking terms Bennett was concerned that business ventures would keep him away from meetings for months, if not years. Ouspensky had told him of a Russian fairy tale:

A knight sets out on a great adventure. He arrives at a place where the road divides into three. Unable to decide which to choose, the knight sees an old man, who tells him that if he goes to the right he will lose his horse, to the left he will lose himself; while if he takes the road in the center, he will lose both himself and his horse. The knight reasons with himself that a knight without a horse is helpless, and a horse without a knight is useless, so he might as well risk losing both. He chooses the middle path, and after desperate adventures, in which the old man's prophecy is fulfilled, he finally reaches his goal.

Ouspensky tells Bennett, "You are now in that position. But I may as well tell you that if the knight had chosen either of the other two paths, it would have been the same in the end. Only it was necessary that he should persist and never give up. That is the only condition."

January 1948. England. Cecil Lewis, an airman, author, and co-founder of the British Broadcasting Company, becomes a student of Bennett's. Lewis describes his initial impressions of Bennett:

In stature he was a tall, good-looking man [who] had the air of being used to command. He spoke several languages, was widely read and seemed as much at home in philosophy or psychology as he was in higher mathematics. But all this variety was, so to speak, hidden beneath genial conversation and an evident open-hearted generosity of nature. He met all problems with assurance and authority, was never at a loss for an answer and, though, in fact, he had only received a limited part of the Teaching he brought to us, it was quite enough to draw us to it and later, when the source of it all appeared, for him to seem to know it already.

With the death of Ouspensky, and Gurdjieff believed to be dead, Lewis says that "He, Bennett, alone remained as the custodian of these tremendous possibilities, which were Gurdjieff's legacy to the world. How could we preserve them for posterity?"

Believing the international situation to be unstable enough that a third world war might break out and the teaching be lost, Bennett's solution was to establish the teaching in a safe haven. Says Lewis: "With practically no further investigation... Bennett swept us all off our feet by deciding that something



Cecil Lewis, co-founder of the BBC

must be done at once. He suggested that South Africa was our best choice."

Presently, Bennett, Cecil Lewis and his wife Olga, and a few others fly in a converted Lancaster bomber 6,000 miles to South Africa. The purpose of the trip was to scout feasible sites to set up the teaching, preparing a commune for some 200 students. Eastern Transvaal is finally chosen.

Bennett, however, begins to have second thoughts. He prays for guidance. Deep into the night he says he becomes aware of a Presence that tells him: "You are not meant to stay in Africa. Your place is in London. Trouble will come; not as you imagine, but differently, and you have to be in the midst of it. There is no need for Noah's Ark, for this time there will be no flood. The task before you is quite different from what you suppose."

Bennett then sees South Africa's Prime Minister, Field Marshall Jan Smuts, who tells him:

You think that if European civilization is destroyed, something can still be preserved. I do not believe this. Europe is still, and for at least a century will continue to be, the bearer of the hopes of the human race. . . . There is nothing like it in the rest of the world. . . . The crisis in human affairs, as I see it, consists in the premature acquisition by mankind of powers which it cannot use wisely. But this crisis cannot be solved by running away from it. If you have understood the situation a little better than others, then your place is at home. Go back and preach the supreme importance of our European heritage.

Bennett, apparently never telling Lewis of his experience with the Presence, returns to London, leaving the Lewises and a handful of others who stay to build the commune. ✕

—From *Struggle of The Magicians*
To be continued.

Notes

1. *The Dramatic Universe*. Bennett's massive 1335-page study, begun in 1940 and continually revised till his death Friday, December 13, 1974, focuses on value, will, hazard (uncertainty), and triads. While Bennett contends that much of his work is derived "from sources quite unconnected with Gurdjieff's teaching," the roots, in fact, derive from Gurdjieff.

Letters

Continued from page 2

puts into question the *wholeness* of Mr. Gurdjieff's *legominism*, which he began December 1924 and worked on until his death in October 1949.

Horacio de Pomar
Salinas, California

Interestingly, Mme de Hartmann in her unpublished memoir, What For?—in contradistinction to the word published in her and her husband's Our Life with Mr. Gurdjieff—wrote that Gurdjieff said Mme de Salzman was "clever" instead of saying she was "intelligent."

Si 12 as an End, Rather than Means?

Reading Margaret Anderson's "Art of Love" (TGJ #54) I had a strong impression about how the loss of a loved one can be experienced. Anderson was certainly a talented writer and, rightly so, was using self-expression to heal the loss of an "exceptional human being and exceptional artist." Her awareness of the emotions and details of people and events seems acute, along with her multitude of ongoing questions leaning towards uncertainty. But why say the "Art" of love and use the term "Art" in connection with "great behavior?" What's being talked about here seems like what Gurdjieff called subjective art. Then, there's the question of what kind of love she is referring to. Is this the love of the body that depends on type and polarity? Then, where lies the polarity of opposites? And, why the heightened effect of the "different difference" that makes Georgette "interesting?" My sense of her writing was that there seems to be an almost religious fervor for feelings, and possibly the hope of repeating them over and over. But, as she says, this is "my truth."

Is it possible that she took si 12 as an "end" in and of itself instead of the "means" to something higher? Was this being played out through the idea of "sexual ecstasy" that she corresponded about with Kathryn Hulme? Nevertheless, she lived an amazing life.

Emil Lohan
Vancouver, British Columbia

The Mind & the Vagina

Your article "J. G. Bennett and the Inner Barrier" (TGJ #54) vividly demonstrates what is emblematic of the

conflict experienced by all of us who have been raised in the modern world and conditioned to trust only the mind. Divided from our essence, having lost contact with true feelings, we face the world with the false personality and only theoretical knowledge, accumulated in the most mechanical part of the mind.

"Now only your mind is awake: your heart and body are asleep," Gurdjieff tells Bennett, and warns him that he must work to awaken his body and "begin to acquire Being." This is the key, Gurdjieff says, "the greatest secret man can discover about human nature." Unless he does this, Bennett's mind will "also go to sleep." But, slave to his great gifts, he cannot see the barrier which separates him from reality. Entranced by his encyclopedic and mathematical mind, he chooses knowledge over Being, resisting the opportunity Gurdjieff has offered. For we men the mind and the vagina always seem to win.

Peter Brendon
Portsmouth, New Hampshire

Wisdom & Energy Making Money

In reading "Confucianism" (TGJ #54), what came up was how little we in the West understand the deep impact this teaching has had on a country that will soon be the largest economy in the world, China. The philosophy/religion of Confucianism with its emphasis on relationship and social harmony has allowed for and in some way helped to perfect centralized governance and the associated controlled economy that, at least for now, has allowed China to prosper. The Chinese government has taken a very hard line regarding political and social freedom, which they believe leads to social disharmony. The pressure that builds for political and social freedom has been released, to a large degree, by the new economic prosperity currently being experienced in China. In many ways the relationship between the people and the Chinese government is a "Confucianistic" bargain. How this latest Chinese enterprise will end remains to be seen and a positive outcome, even on an economic level, is far from assured. From a Fourth Way perspective one could say they have taken the wisdom of the East and the energy of the West and made money.

Stephen Dirk
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Head Bound

Reading "Live in the Head, Die in the Streets" (TGJ #50) I was prompted to log on to Dr. Kell's website and listen to the hour-long interview with William Patrick Patterson discussing his recent book, *Spiritual Survival in a Radically Changing World Time*. This was truly worth listening to as Dr. Kell's questions, which often deviated from the topic, gave Patterson the opportunity to discuss various Work ideas, but still come back to the theme of the book, man's mechanicality and the influence of technology. Although the interview was somewhat awkward as it was conducted by telephone, there was such a clear distinction between interviewer and interviewee. Dr. Kell seemed familiar with Work ideas, but his speech, the tone of his voice, the disjointed questions, gave the impression he was indeed head bound. Whereas, Patterson, who was speaking deliberately and from somewhere deeper, was so clearly embodied. This to me demonstrated the effect of the Work on consciousness. ✍

Matilda Morrison
Peoria, Illinois

THE Gurdjieff JOURNAL

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The first journal of The Fourth Way, the intention of *The Gurdjieff Journal* (est. 1992) is to observe and report upon the contemporary world "mercilessly without any compromises whatsoever." Through original research, timely and provocative feature articles, essays and reviews, TGJ explores the principles, perspectives and practices of Gurdjieff's teaching and how they can be applied to daily life.

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of a higher one, just above the crown of the head. This is the place where the Shakti is situated. From this seat of activity, all actions emanate. By these two means we separate ourselves from body, life and mind.

In early writings Aurobindo directs the novice to "do just the opposite of the thing most people do and you have also done. People begin with the body and the *prana* [vital life], go on to the *citta* [memory] and the *manas* [lower mind], and finish up with the *buddhi* [intellect] and the will. The real course is to start with the will and finish with the body. There is no need of Asana, Pranayama, or anything else preparatory or preliminary if one starts with the will. That was what Sri Ramakrishna came to show so far as Yoga is concerned, 'get *Shakti* and she will give you *Sat*.' Will and *Shakti* are the first means necessary to the Yogi."

The second necessary means is unattached *bhukti* or enjoyment of the phenomenal creation. Seeing the world as a manifestation of shakti, it should not be rejected but enjoyed as a creation of the divine.

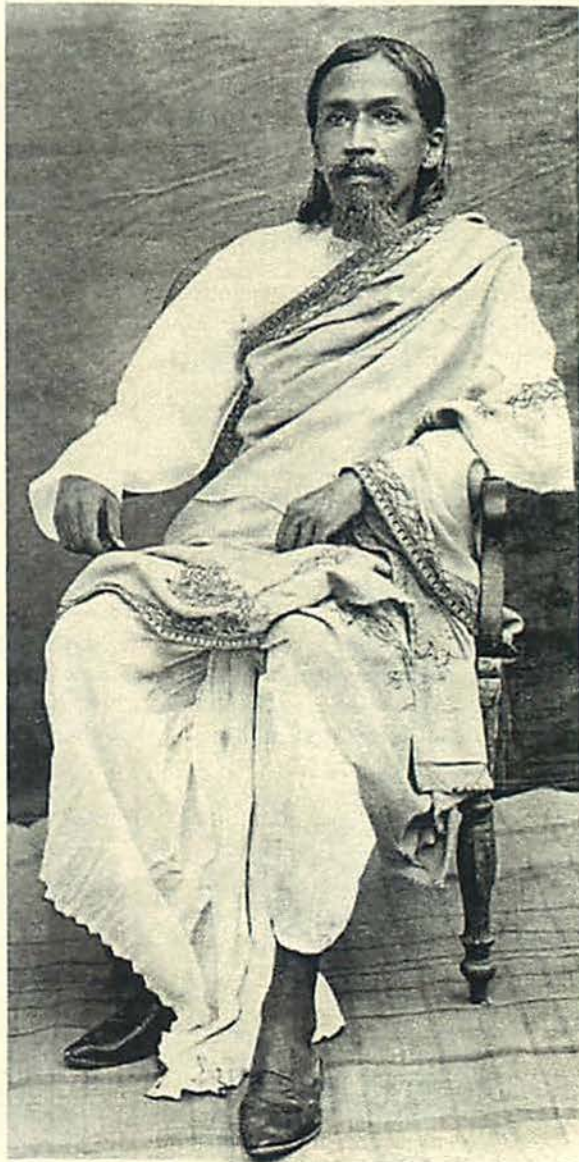
Here Aurobindo draws two lines of progress that must be followed, first to extend the action of the intuition to make it more constant, all-embracing, so that it replaces all the action now done by the ordinary mind. "The higher mentality cannot be complete or secure so long as the inferior intelligence is able to deform it or even to bring in any of its own intermixture." We must transform the lower action of the intellect and the intellectual will by the constant pressure of the powers of intuition and inspiration. The second is "proper to the way of *Bhakti*"—once we can acquire the capacity of always being able to will to command an absolute tranquility, based in that silence, "to listen for the voice, wait for the impulsion or command, the *adesa*, obey only the idea and will and power of the Lord within the heart of the creature." ✕

To be continued.

—Jean Lauderdale

Notes

1. *Since 1908 when I got the silence*. Sri Aurobindo, *On Himself* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1972), 88.
2. *Be passive*. Sri Aurobindo, *Record of Yoga, The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo*, vol. 11 (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Publication Dept., 2001), 1412.
3. *He spent nearly all the time*. Peter Heehs, *The Lives of Sri Aurobindo* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 228.
4. *He had realized the static Brahman*. Heehs, 232.
5. *Four parts of his work in life*. Sri Aurobindo, *Supplement, Aurobindo to Motilal Roy, July 3, 1912* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Archives and Research, 9 Dec. 1985), 433–34.
6. *His was a synthesis*. Pitirim A. Sorokin, "The Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo," in Haridas Chaudhuri, Frederic Spiegelberg, eds., *The Integral Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo* (San Francisco: Cultural Integration Fellowship, 1960), 205.
7. *Gives remarkably little of what is promised*. Heehs, 287.
8. *Technology and social organization had made*. Heehs, 293.
9. *Mirra would later pass on the teachings*. The Mother, *Mother's Agenda*, vol. 3 (New York: Institute for Evolutionary Research, 1982), 58, 454.
10. *Mirra and Paul Richard soon married*. Heehs, 254.
11. *Arya, a Sanskrit word meaning*. Sri Aurobindo, *Essays in Philosophy and Yoga, The Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo*, vol. 13 (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, 1998), 441.
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