

35. Gurdjieff's sources 3: Fragments & Whole

1. Let me today examine some more affinities between G's teaching and the Vedic Tradition in India. The Vedic Tradition starts with the *sūktas* 'hymns' of the *Ṛgveda* and passes through many phases and many forms of expression (the poetic and prose Upanishds; the texts in *sūtra* 'brief, pregnant formulations'; epic like the vast *Mahābhārata* etc.).

In G's *Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson* we meet repeatedly the principle *Trogoautoegocrat* – a term made up for the occasion by G from Modern Greek meaning 'I eat myself and so maintain myself'. (Bennett got this right on p191 and 275 but the verb is *cratō* not *cratizo*). This is the simple fact that every level of being in the Ray of Creation, at every level of Cosmos, is food for another. The elements air, fire, water etc. feed on one another; plants feed on them; animals feed on plants and higher on lower ones; man feeds on organic life; gods (celestial bodies) feed on man; and so on.

2. In *Bṛhadāranyaka* Upanishad we read (1.3.17-18) that *prāṇa* 'the vital power breath' gathers food and the other powers (*devās* 'gods') say 'The whole world is nothing but food'. And in 1.4.6 – "Food and eater; such is the extent of this entire world". In 6.2.12: In that fire [i.e. man's organism] gods offer food and from that offering arises semen" – which becomes man in a woman. However, 3.8.8 declares that the Absolute "does not eat anything and nobody eats it".

Man transforms energy, fine or gross, by eating and being eaten. Common man produces semen (*retas*). Superior man produces higher energy (*ojas*).

3. Another important idea (and reality) in G's teaching is that of the three bodies that the Self has in his embodiment in this world. This could come from Paul's *Epistle to the Corinthians* (15.42-49): the carnal (of earth), the soul (=mind), the spirit. But G expounds the idea using the image of the carriage – all given beautifully in *Ouspensky's In Search of the Miraculous* p41 ff. There is the Divine body which is the Master, the supreme Self or "I" and "Will" (which he terms "causal"). This has the carnal body (=carriage), the astral or natural (=horses), and the spiritual or mental (=driver). All this is imprecise and confused drawing terms from different traditions.

This image too is missing in Christianity and Islamic sources. But it is found in a somewhat different form in Plat's *Phaidros* 246AC.

The Kaṭha Up. gives a more precise and elegant picture (3.1-9): the Self is the master, the passenger; the *buddhi* 'higher intellect' is the driver; *manas* 'ordinary intellect' is the reins; the desiring senses are the horses; the carnal body is the carriage; the roads are the objects of the senses. "When a man has real understanding with *buddhi* as driver and *manas* as reins and the senses obey the driver, then he reaches that high state from which there is no rebirth".

4. Generally, in the Indian philosophical schools the bodies are given as follows: *ātman*, the Self, the Master; *kāraṇa śarīra* 'causal/spiritual body of one's nature'; *sūkṣma* 'subtle mental body, soul'; *sthūla śarīra* 'the gross carnal body'.

Perhaps even more telling is the term "Fourth Way" as distinct from the ways of the fakir, monk and yogi (p44-6, In Search...). These reflect rather clumsily the three ancient ways in the Indian culture of Karma 'action' (which you can follow without being a fakir), of bhakti 'devotion' (which you can follow without being a monk) and of *jñāna* (or *buddhi*) 'knowledge' (which you can follow without being a yogi).

However, it is said generally (in *Vedānta* especially) that if a householder (one in common life) follows one or all three without personal desire, he obtains all the *puṇya* 'merit' of any celibate monk or yogi. This is the 4th way where the aspirant does not have to change his condition or mode of living (provided it is not criminal) in the world.

5. Consequently, it seems that the whole integral system is present in the Vedic Tradition of India.

One may claim that the Cristian tradition was the main source. Another, that the Sufi tradition was. But any claim must be substantiated by affinities – many and strong affinities.

I am not saying that G stayed and studied very long in any school in India. If he had, his teaching would have been different and cast in a very different terminology. But the different strands and elements (the fragments of an unknown teaching) that make it up must have come perhaps in part from India and from traditions and systems that probably originated in large part or wholly in the Vedic Tradition of India.

36. Gurdjieff's "mission" (2)

1. I dealt in an earlier paper Es 31 with G's mission, as seen at least by John Bennett, who was initially appointed as G's representative in England, but was removed by Mrs. de Salzmann, and who wrote many books about G. Some of JB's views I examined in previous essays.

G's basic mission was teaching: how to die and be reborn in this life, die in our old selves that we take to be normal in all our ignorance and habits of mentation, feeling and behaviour. Or, to use a different image, how to jump from one river where we float passively, subject to accidental buffets and pushes or slow-downs and stops to another stream where we glide into a specific current and keep to the surface and a regular progress. Both images are used in a talk G gave in New York, on 22/2/1924 (236ff in View from the Real World).

Both images point to an inner transformation whereby men and women attain to a state of higher consciousness, higher being and higher mind.

But how is this to be effected?

2. G conveyed almost to everybody who came near him, not only to followers and close students but also outsiders, his sense of mission. This manifested in practical terms in 1914 when he started teaching group(s) in Moscow. When Ouspensky was drawn to G in April 1915, the teaching expanded to Petersburg as well and, in fact, continued even during the early years of the Bolsheviks when G and O and several others escaped to Essentuki, Tiflis and other locations until they ended up in Constantinople.

Throughout this period G maintained closely a group of students. (When O decided to break away, he too formed some group giving his own lectures.)

At all times then G aimed at creating an Institute where he would educate people through lectures, physical labour, movements and dances and other exercises and practices.

However, the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man failed to take root anywhere – in Russia, Constantinople, Germany and England – despite G's efforts. It came into existence for a short time in France, only to return to non-existence in 1924 after G's serious car-accident.

3. Its failure in previous years is understandable. The social or general conditions were not at very propitious in Moscow, Tiflis and Constantinople. There appeared no patrons in Germany and in Britain G could not obtain a residence permit.

What did it achieve in the two years at the Prieuré in France?

Not very much as far as I can see.

The regime was partly monastic in that students lived there with various others parachuting in and out occasionally but it was never in any sense religious with liturgies and other rites. After the dissolution of the Institute some people stayed in loose groups (Mme de Salzmann, de Hartmanns et al); some wrote books (Nott, Peters, Tchekhovitch et al) and many simply left for a worldly life (Mrs. Bhutkovsky-Hewitt, K. Hulme, Orage and many others).

The Prieuré was sold in 1934.

4. Of the lesbian ladies' group, the Rope, Jane Heap went to London and formed a group in 1935 continuing work under G's guidance until her death, 1964. Solita Solano became G's secretary for a period. Except for Heap, all (minus Leblanc who died in 1941 and Gordon who died shortly after the war) dispersed after G's death but even before that they had carried on their amours, changing partners without any embarrassment.

Ouspensky had absconded long ago setting up his own "Work". Orage had also absconded without any further interest. Bennett came and went with wondrous instability consulting now this and now that spiritual master but settling with none and writing volumes and volumes.

There was Lord John Pentland in America (who had studied long in Ouspensky's groups at first) and Mme de Salzmann (who also bore G a son) who continued with their groups, Institutes and Foundations.

5. Mme de Salzmann and some others felt something was missing from G's teaching and introduces some form of meditation, though G had at times stressed the need for an exercise of (complete) rest resembling meditation.

Today there are many groups functioning in many countries. Some receive coordination from centres which are the Gurdjieff Foundations in America and Europe. Others function quite independently and also modify the original system by adding (as Orage had done in his days) new exercises and often some form of meditation.

None as far as I know (except Bennett's frequent abortive efforts) tried seriously to find not G's real sources but the original System - if there was one - like the one in India mentioned in the previous 33 and 34.

37. Gurdjieff's "mission" (3)

1. After stopping in August 1924 the activities at the Prieuré that constituted the teaching of the Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man, after his terrible car-accident (July 1924), G turned his sense of mission to publicising his teaching through writing from 1924 to 1935. During some of those years he devoted much time to composing music for his dances; some pieces are truly exquisite.

In December he started dictating to Mrs. de Hartmann *All and Everything: Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson*, which was the First Series. The 2nd was *Meetings with Remarkable Men* and the 3rd (and unfinished) *Life is Real Only Then, When "I AM"*. There was also the *Herald of Coming Good* which was after a short time considered unfit and was withdrawn!

This, he wrote, was the "fundamental aim of all my life, which included the intention to spread the essence of my ideas by means of literature also".

2. From this last citation, anyone not acquainted with G's style in *Beelzebub* can get a taste of the quality of the writing – very original and very contorted, but deliberately so. He "corrected" and rewrote everything so that there is no "literary language" as we commonly understand it. And this effort is yet another manifestation of G's constant acting, putting on a persona and odd behaviour and making it difficult for anyone to approach and know him.

The syntax is complex and difficult in lengthy sentences, while the language is infested with neologisms and artificial terms. I mentioned in a previous essay the principle of Trogoautoegocrat meaning (in Greek) that one type or level of being feeds on another. Then there is the Law of Three which is given as triamazikamno 'I put together three or I do with three together' (from Modern Greek). Ashiata Shiemash is Hebrew denoting the "Creative Sun". The term Kesdjan is Persian for the "soul's vessel". The Law of Seven, again, is given as heptaparashinokh, a mixture of Greek (*hepta*=seven) and Armenian. And so on.

3. Thus we have another paradox. On the one hand G wants his message to reach as many and as far as possible and on the other he couches it deliberately in a difficult language so that only a few elect can get it fully and explain it to others!

Some say he lost contact with the Inner Circle. This is rather presumptuous; for it presupposes knowledge of what the Inner Circle is and how it operates. It presupposes also full knowledge of G's personality and essence, to use G's terms for a man's entire nature and character.

Others say G went out of his mind, starting with his car-accident and the closure of the Institute – an act which left in desolation his older Russian students since they were uprooted and abandoned in a foreign world. It was not only Ouspensky that voiced this view.

However, many continue to regard G as the "herald of coming good"!

4. One needs to be dispassionate about G's case.

There is no doubt he brought a very old teaching about Man and the Cosmos(es), a system formulated in a fairly modern language, in terms that accord fairly well with modern philosophy, psychology and other studies. Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous* gives a full and accurate expression of that teaching. G himself (despite his *Beelzebub's Tales*) and the most ardent gurdjieffians admit that this is so and all continue to use that book as basis.

Yet even there, in that clear, excellent presentation there are complexities and artificialities indicative of a less than perfect understanding of the original Whole Teaching (if there had been one available to G) and its less than perfect formulation given by G. I am referring to G's terms like *Ayocosmos*, magnetic centre, triads of forces, octaves of food, the chemical terms 'hydrogen, oxygen' etc, the astral body and so on. These and many others are very imperfect terms.

Then, there is the man himself and his powers. This in the next paper.

38. Gurdjieff's "mission" (4)

1. Undoubtedly Gurdjieff's knowledge was greater than that suggested by the rather defective system he taught due to a clumsy and inadequate terminology. However, even G's knowledge had limits for when Hussein asks Beelzebub (towards the end of the Tales) what can liberate humanity from egoism, he replies: ""it will be with Time alone, thanks either to the guidance of a certain Being with very high Reason or to certain exceptional cosmic events "p 1118). There is a clear implication that G with his "fragments" was not the one.

G's powers were also limited. He displayed very uncommon powers when he induced telepathic communication into Ouspensky in Finland in 1916 (if indeed this event took place). But despite the praises of hundreds of followers and the magnetism they claimed he exerted on most students, there is no other case similar to that of O. So there is a very big question-mark here.

G also claimed, or often others claimed for him, that he had great healing powers. Perhaps he did. But we see no clear evidence of them. He did not heal Katherine Mansfield (of tuberculosis), nor his wife (of cancer) nor his mother (of liver malfunction) nor K. Hulme's mother (of dementia). He may have alleviated their condition but we don't really know.

2. G may well have studied with men of the Inner Circle, or men who had contact with, or had themselves studied with men of, the Inner Circle.

But G himself does not appear to have been a man of the Inner Circle. The limits of his knowledge and of his powers make this quite clear. Also his inability to judge full well men like Ouspensky, Orage and Bennett. He spent considerable energy and time on such people, yet failed to train them adequately and so make them help him establish his own proper Institute.

On the other hand, he drove away deliberately but inexplicably people like the Hartmanns who, especially Mrs. Olga, exhibited both devotion and notable talents.

The collapse of the Institute was another strong indication. No convincing reason is given. Very odd was again the deliberately, willfully uncouth style in the writings of Beelzebub. This was more of an obsession than a wise man's precaution to safeguard the esoteric knowledge.

The Upanishads and Bhagavad Gītā, Lao Tse, Moses and Daniel, Plato and the Gnostic Gospels may not reveal all practices and ideas used in their respective traditions but they can be read comfortably by all who can read.

3. There was something erratic in G's behavior, at the same time ostentatious and arrogant. Yet he exhibited great compassion and patience with all people but, on the other hand, he did not hesitate to lie and cheat when he thought it fit, whether as a young man (as he admits in *Meetings...*) or as a mature guru. He himself taught that truth and constancy was

the hallmark of higher mind and higher being. How else would a teacher inspire his students who love to imitate? But he himself was hardly a good example of this.

He also led no measured day carrying carousals and conversation well after midnight and thus passing this habit onto his students.

Then, rumors have it that he fathered several illegitimate children on various females. And, it is quite clear, he constantly demanded money and more money...

Yes, G was a very gifted man but does not seem to have been of the Inner Circle.

39. The "system"

1. I should return now to Ouspensky and his work in England. This subject will take several more papers. So, before turning to that, I shall examine some aspects of the "system".

According to O himself (www.ouspenskytoday.org/wp/chronology1931-1941, p 2) - "Mr. Gurdjieff always insisted it was not a system; it was just fragments ... Now I make it more of a system".

As usual, G was right and O wrong. It was not a system in any sense of the word. It was G's teaching and then O's teaching. Yet even today the aspirants/seekers in O's line of development continue to refer to a "system" instead of teaching. Beckwith (p 6, *Ouspensky's Fourth Way* 2015, Starmine, Oxford) writes that O added his own ideas to G's "fragments of an unknown teaching" forming them into "a coherent system of knowledge".

This sounds nice but it is untrue. For, within a system, all components or aspects are closely interrelated and well known as specific parts, substances, energies, elements. Much in O's "system" is unknown apart from its confusing terminology. I examined some points in earlier essays.

2. Here now, let us start with the Cosmoses or the Ray of Creation. This is a notion that O borrowed from G as is evident in O's *In Search* ... But we find exactly the same diagrams in Beckwith, p p 195,197, 200, 211: and of course the Cosmoses are said to be (or vibrate in frequency of) notes in a complete musical octave exactly as in G's formulations.

The Absolute (=Godhead, First Principle) is termed *Protocosmos* and stands with the top Do of the octave. By its very nature, as Plato and others say, The Absolute is indescribable being beyond our senses and mind. It is the ultimate Unity, the ultimate Reality, the indescribable Self of the Universe (in Indian philosophy).

The second is the Universe, the Hagio-, or (simplified) Ayo-Cosmos, termed also Eternal Unchanging, note Si. There arise at once three difficulties. Sciences tell us today that the Universe was produced after a Big Bang. This means there was no Universe before. So there is nothing Eternal or Unchanging about it. The name could be taken literally and mystically as "One Verse [of the Creator]" or it could be said to refer to some other (occult) aspect, but the next Cosmos is termed Galaxy and this is the astronomers' world. There is a second difficulty in the term: *Hagio/Ayo* means in Greek 'Holy'. So, in what sense it is "holy" as distinct from the Absolute or other Cosmoses? Finally, there is another Cosmos lower down called Deutero- cosmos which again in Greek means "second" but it is in fact, fourth! We have confusion here, not the clarity of a "system".

3. The third cosmos is termed note La, Galaxy, Archangels and Macro-cosmos ' the big world'. Again, lower down there is another cosmos termed *Tritocosmos*, Greek for 'third world'! But if that is "*Trito-*", i.e. 'third', then that should appear as third! In fact, O does not correct G's rather offhand terminology but repeats it.

Then comes the fourth cosmos called *Deuteroscosmos* (= '2nd world'), Angels, the Sun and note Sol. Then follows the Solar system or planets or Earth (all on pp 197-200 in Beckwith), called *Mesocosmos* 'Middle world', note Fa or Mi. Then is the Biosphere on Earth termed *Tritocosmos* 'third world', whereas it is the 6th!

Why is there all this confusion - which is not only a matter of terminology? The confusion arises because the "system" is an ad hoc concoction and none of its propounders know these "cosmoses" in reality. O yes, they (both G and O) use hydrogens and laws (1,3,6,12 etc.) but nothing is really explained and known or observable in experience!

Beckwith says (p 201) that the "Shankaracharya describes a very similar scheme of creation" but gives no quotation. The Śankarācārya does give a Ray of Creation but it is vastly different. I have dealt with it briefly when writing of the Enneagram in a previous essay.

4. On pp 200-204 *In Search ...* is explained the nature and function of the "magnetic center" which eventually brings a man to the "Work" or a school. It is explained that it is formed by a collection of special impressions which are felt and/or remembered together. This is formed in the mind (or second body) but we are not told where exactly in relation to the other centres and their moving, emotional and intellectual divisions.

Where are located the Higher Emotional and Intellectual centres? Are they too in mind (second body) or higher up? Beckwith (p 217) has the Higher Emotion in "Heart" (middle zone) and Intellect in "Head" (top zone) but this does not explain anything very much.

These are only few of the defects. There are many more but these give an idea of the problem.

So, we see that the notion of O's "system" is rather defective and Beckwith's attempt to pass it off as an improvement on G's formulations is unsuccessful.

40. The “system” (2)

1. Whatever was said in the previous paper of the cosmoses in Ouspensky applies just as much to Gurdjieff’s teaching of the same subject.

The same holds for the location of the centres. An explanation is needed here regarding their location in the human organism. Obviously even the lowest functions do not belong to the carnal body. There is of course the network of nerves and the brain zones or compartments but the intellectual and emotional centres cannot be rooted in the flesh though effects of their function and manifestations will appear in this body.

The question naturally arises: are the Higher Centres of Emotion and Intellect (Bethwick, 217-8; *In Search...*194-5), or body-mind as it is misleadingly designated, in the so called Fourth Room, in the second “astral” (*In Search...*41; Bethwick, 27) or in a higher body?

2. The question then extends to the essence-personality distinction and, further, to the observer of all functions.

Whose function is observation or ‘self-remembering’?

We sense cold or heat in the body. We feel anger, disgust or joy. We think of, or picture, persons and events. Or we suddenly remember to “self-remember” or to attend (and have mind and body together).

What entity observes these phenomena? Or, to put it differently according to the system, to which centre does the function of observation belong? How are centres and their functions interrelated with the four bodies?

There are general and rather vague statements relating Higher Centres to higher states of consciousness but these also do not explain much in relation to the four bodies.

3. And what of essence and personality?

G says: “man consists of two parts: *essence* and *personality*. Essence in man is what is his own. Personality in man is what is ‘not his own’” (p 161 *In Search...*).

O refers to them repeatedly in his own talks without any alteration, as for instance in ch 12 of *A Further Record: Extracts from Meetings 1938-1945* (Arkana, 1986). Here O also gives triads [Physical] Body and Essence as the neutralizing force on top with the poles of active (many “I’s”) and passive “One I” or “Soul”; in a third triad the poles of positive and passive are reversed. People don’t realise that these mean very little in actuality!

Beckwith also refers to essence and personality on pp 144-147 of *Ouspensky’s Fourth Way*.

4. However, while both G and O embark on lengthy explanations and insist that students should observe the manifestations of these two components, they do not say where they

are located, how exactly they related to the different centres and, more important, who/what observes all phenomena related to them.

Now we certainly observe our surroundings, the clothes we wear, the tensions or sensations in the body and its limbs, the thoughts and feelings and moods in the mind, the waking and dreaming conditions, the inspirations and flashes of higher states, whenever they occur.

What is observing and where is its location?

Neither G nor O give an answer to this basic question. To me this seems half-baked esotericism. For it is pretty futile to expatiate about observable phenomena and “self-remembering” without coming to a good understanding (be it intellectual only) of the observer, the rememberer and the ultimate Self.

More on this subject will follow in the next essay.

41. The “system” (3)

1. Today I shall continue with the inconsistencies or discordances in the teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky with the reminder that G preferred to call his “fragments” while O and followers felt pride on their “system”.

In *In Search of the Miraculous* G seems to say very little on attention. He takes it for granted that his listeners know what it is and so connects it chiefly with self-remembering. Thus the line of attention is directed towards (I ←-----attention-----→ object of observation) the phenomenon that is to be observed (seen, heard or whatever) and simultaneously covers the subject (I, myself, or,) whoever is observing thus “remembering oneself”. (Ouspensky’s *In Search...* p 119). On other occasions G simply connected this function with the working of the centres and with different states of consciousness. But how is attention controlled, whence does it come and what sort of energy is it? We are not told.

O dealt with this subject in much the same way, taking it only a bit further.

2. G Beckwith deals extensively with attention and brings in the four stages which Dr. Roles simplified from the *Philokalia*:

a) *prosbolē* (= ‘impact’ as impressions fall on mind);

b) *sunduasmos* (= ‘combination, conjoining’ of attention with (a) particular (set of) impression(s);

c) *sunousia* (= ‘merging’ as attention is lost in the impression);

d) *pathos* (= ‘suffering’ as by repetition it becomes habit/addiction: pp 154-5, *Ouspensky’s Fourth Way*).

The *Philokalia* is a superb-collection of sayings, short and long, of saints and mystics of the Eastern Church and, naturally, is coloured by the Christian monastic experience. Beckwith does give the 5 stages in the Greek version which are more expressive: after *sunduasmos* comes *sunkatathesis* ‘assent of mind/desire/will’; then the term is not *sunousia* but *aichmalosia* ‘captivity of attention’ followed by *pathos* (p 326).

Beckwith also presents Śāṅkarācārya’s comments on attention pointing out that ordinary man has “floating attention” or no attention (p 167), but it seems that the Indian guru did not give the 5 stages of attention that are known in the Vedic Tradition.

3. I mention all this because the process described above is one-way and inexorable, as though people are condemned to and up in captivity and suffering.

Of course, this is not true. If it were, men would have no chance of observing dispassionately, of self-remembering, of liberating themselves from the terrible state of “identification”, which corresponds to *sunousia* and *aichmalosia* that is ‘merging/captivity’.

G does warn against identification (*In Search ...150-151*) saying that it is almost a permanent state and “freedom is first of all freedom from identification”. O too warns about it (*A Further Record ... ch 4*) in much the same way.

However, neither G nor O explain how one frees oneself from this terrible condition. If one remembers suddenly and by the grace of God, well and good; otherwise one is doomed.

Other followers (K. Walker, M. Nicoll, J. Bennett et al) are no better. M Nicoll in his *Psychological Commentaries* (vol 1 p 70) writes of only 3 kinds:

1. zero attention, which characterizes mechanical divisions of centres;
2. attention that does not require effort, but is attracted and needs only the keeping out of irrelevant things;
3. attention that must be directed by effort and will.

4. In the Vedic Tradition there are 5 states of attention with an opportunity of escape. This comes at the second stage when attention is about to “conjoin” with the attractive object. Here, if one knows about it, observes that the interest has flared up and has the extra energy to remember not to identify with the object. If one does this, then his attention is free to expand or concentrate to one point and be free from attachment and identification: one can self-remember at the same time. Otherwise, one will fall into identification, captivity and delusion (called *mūḍha* in Sanskrit). Leon Maclaren of the School of Economic Science alone, as far as I know, in his lectures formulated the act of attention in this way in English terms.

Now then, repeated identification certainly produces suffering in the long run while repeated timely remembering and disengagement or non-identification leads to controlled attention. This is the 6th aspect of the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, the eightfold system of Patañjali, which is termed *dhāraṇā*: mindful attention or consciousness directed and held at any one point (but without captivity and identification and suffering).

42. Observer and observation

1. The observer has several names: seer, watchman, witness; but he is also smeller, taster, sensor through touch and hearer. I shall use the term “observer” to cover all these. For even when we sense rough gravel or fine silk, the resulting impression, the quality of the sensation in the mind is observed.

In *Views from the Real World* Gurdjieff says (p 117) that “Memory, attention, observation is nothing more than observation of one centre by another.” He reiterates this adding (119): “when you see and remember what is happening in you, it means that one centre observes another. And if it can observe, it follows that there is something through which to observe”.

He says nothing more on this leaving the issue unexplained.

2. As I wrote in the previous paper nobody else, who has dealt with the “system”, comes up with anything more precise on the nature of the observer and observation.

In more than 55 years study of esoteric philosophy and application of related practices, I have been unable to observe one centre observing another. Unless G meant that there is an observer who observes the functions/processes of seeing and remembering. But if so, why not say so?

In fact G’s description is far too complicated (especially in previous and subsequent chapters) and smacks of ad hoc explanations with centres, connections, coils, various apparatus, strength of associations, gradations etc.

The structure of the physical body is complex but not complicated. That of the mind, despite its apparent chaotic contents, is simpler.

3. Elsewhere G talks of essence and personality, I dealt with these two aspects in the previous paper.

However, I take it up again because there are more questions. G adds to this duality the body (*Views...* p136ff). The development of each, he says, proceeds separately and depends on data available to man.

For the body these data are “heredity, geographical conditions, food and movement”. Personality is formed through what the man hears, reads and education. Essence is purely emotional with elements of heredity before the formation of personality and, later, only those sensations and feelings among which he lives. This last sentence is not very clear. And how is this essence related to the emotional centres, lower and Higher?

4. As I said previously we are not told where essence and personality are located nor how exactly they develop as independent entities. Here G brings in levers which set in motion these entities and are formed around the age of 7-8 but are capable of alterations up to the age of 17.

G clarifies that essence corresponds to the “horse” in the image of the carriage and points out that the horse does not understand the language of personality. But he does not explain how one may learn the horse’s language and train it.

When “mind” is brought in (p 144), the complexity (and confusion) grows considerably. G does not say so, but it seems to me he intends it here as a synonym to personality. Otherwise the meaning is difficult.

Even more difficult becomes the notion of “separation of oneself from oneself” as is termed a further subsection. In this G says that “mind, our thinking”, has nothing in common with us, with our essence implying that “we are our essence”, which, he adds, is weak and can change at any moment for it is dependent on many influences “food, surroundings, time, weather etc. But even a weak man can give the desired direction to his mind”. This is true but then essence can hardly be oneself!

5. In his system Ouspensky follows G closely adding the notion of “false” personality (ch12: *A Further Record...*). He sets up three triads with three elements: Many I’s, false personality and body-and-essence.

But since this is rather complicated I leave it for the next paper where we shall examine the observer also in O’s system.

43. Observer and observation (2)

1. G. Beckwith reproduces faithfully (p309: *Ouspensky's Fourth Way*) three triads with elements "Many-I's", "Personality" and "Body-and-Essence" and also "Magnetic Centre" and "Real I", which are found in O's *A Further Record...* ch12, Static Triad, Oct 1938.

O used the term "False Personality" but did not contrast or distinguish it from a "Real/True Personality". And GB uses only "Personality" abandoning the adjective "False". This then means that the two terms refer to the same thing.

In the first triad Personality carries the active force (+), Many I's the passive (-) and Body-and-Essence the neutral (=).

In the second triad the Magnetic Centre carries the active force and Personality is passive with Body-and-Essence being neutral again (and the Many – I's gone). The "Magnetic Centre" is a term invented by G. In the more reliable traditions the term was "love of truth" or something similar.

2. Three things are questionable here (and in the other triads). Body is not compatible with these entities which belong to the Subtle Body (or Astral, Psychical, Mental).

It is carried on from some early talks of Gurdjieff where he coupled Body and Essence. The second is the distinction of between Personality and Many-I's: "Personality is hardly ever mentioned by G, O etc. without saying that it is made up of acquired opinions and convictions, sympathies and antipathies, attachments, habits, desires and the like, **each one being a separate small "me" (hence Many-I's) !**

The third is even more important. Let us take the third triad with Real-I active (+), Many-I's passive (-) and Body-and-Essence neutral (=). G had said that the Real I (the real I, Myself) grows out of the essence, so it is questionable whether there would be Essence in the presence of Real I. Moreover, if this, or any other such triad with Real-I is not a theoretical construct, who/what is observing the triad(s) as the forces interact? Is there any function in us that can observe the Reai-I?

3. On pages 214-215 GB gives a diagram presented by Dr. Roles (8/12/1969) showing a still Observer on the level of the *Tritocosmos* [=Biosphere] and Cellular World, a Still Observer on the level of *Mesocosmos* [=Earth] and the Molecular World and an Ultimate Stillest Observer on the level of the *Deuteroscosmos* [=Solar System] and Atomic World.

All this is undoubtedly highly significant but rather theoretical. In any case, it is not O's idea.

GB does touch on the true, ultimate observer citing remarks of the Śankarācārya who says that "one has to become the impartial and silent observer of whatever happens" even if it is samādhi (p158). GB tries to connect this with O, referring vaguely to some unspecified statements of O (p16505). This is a pity. If O had realized this "silent witness", he would have

said so, would be quoted and would not have had constructed the triads mentioned above in §1.

44. Mr Ouspensky

1. “His eyes were remarkable for their capacity to hide at will all signs of feeling and thought. He could make himself look heavy, almost stupid; or a sudden charming smile could light up and humanize his whole face. You could not be with him a minute without being aware of his strength and power”.

So describes O an anonymous devoted follower on the Internet site *Ouspensky Today:org/wp/chronology/1931-1941*. And the description continues: “He was never at a loss for an illustration to explain the point he wanted to make. One had the impression of bottomless well of knowledge that he could draw from at will... His mere presence seemed to make almost everything not worthwhile saying... A man, first of all, of the most complete and unswerving spiritual integrity... of the very highest intellectual powers, with a superb-memory. A dominating man, though he did not, I think, consciously seek dominance. Yet for all the force that resided in him, a man who commanded in many individuals and over long periods, the deepest loyalty and affection... to many he seemed cold and inscrutable... To be disloyal to him was to betray the God in yourself...”

2. The dots indicate more encomia. I would not expect less from a follower. But the description is not impartially honest.

On the same site, next to these praises we find another page on “Lyne Place – Social life” with several photographs of men and women carousing and the note:

“There were also the all-night sessions that Ouspensky held for his close associates, where he was perhaps continuing the tradition of the nights in the Stray Dog in St. Petersburg. Francis Roles recalls that these talks were ‘magic’, particularly if one managed to stay awake until morning.”

That someone thought these all-night sessions ‘magic’ means nothing beyond his own evaluation. What is indicated here is that there was no principle of measure for day and night, for eating and drinking, for teaching and conversing. Gurdjieff and his close associates (and often others) indulged in similar practices that showed lack of measure.

3. I wrote a note on ‘measure’ earlier, 26. It was based on advice given to L. MacLaren by Santananda Sarasvati of Jyotir Math in North India in different years. And it should be followed in daily life.

I know of no widely acknowledged sage of ancient or modern times who would not insist that a genuine teacher of an esoteric discipline (or any teacher, indeed, except one for corrupt practices) or genuine aspirants should keep measure in their activities during the day, in sleeping and waking, in eating and drinking and in sexual enjoyment. Obviously, there will be very special occasions when one would deviate but this would not be habitual.

I opened a Collection of wise opinions of past sages and fell on Huang Po, a Chinese Zen master of the 9th cent CE. He illustrates the right and wrong measure in the use of senses

with noise and sensual eating: “When you provide food for the body in hunger, but without greed, that is wise eating. But if you gluttonously delight in flavors, you indulge in what arises from wrong thinking. Merely seeking to gratify the organs of taste without realizing when you have had enough – this is sensual eating” (from *The Zen Teaching of Huang Po* by John Blofeld, Buddhist Society, London 1957).

4. The Śankarācārya of Jyotir Math, mentioned above, was asked (late 20th cent) about measure in daily life and he replied that “the introduction of measure starts directly from the Absolute”. He explained that to accomplish any work, one must follow certain measures or regulations and these were declared by the Creator at the very beginning of the creation.

Surely, then, one fundamental regulation or measure is the division of day and night. In the day we indulge in waking and activity and at night in sleep and rest.

And as Ecclesiastes says (ch 3): “To all things there is a time (*chronos*) and a season (*kairos*) for every matter under the sun”. So, there is *kairos* for carousing and lecturing and *kairos* for not doing these.

Let me finish with Lord Kṛṣṇa’s words to Arjuna, his friend and devotee (*Bhagavad Gītā*—6.16): “Yoga is not for him who eats too much nor for him who does not eat at all. It is not for him who sleeps too much nor for him who burns the midnight oil”.

For indeterminate reasons, neither Gurdjieff nor Ouspensky seemed to appreciate the need for measure.

45. Mr. Ouspensky (2): Marie Seton

1. One could cull many praises for O from many sources. Equally, there are many who have reservations and some even hostility.

Marie Seton was about 26 when a friend introduced her to O's groups in London in 1936. She knew Russian and had been to Russia. When O learnt that she had done some translations (including Chekov), he sought her acquaintance. In her 1962 brief Memoir, *The Case of P.D. Ouspensky* (only 13 pages A4) she writes "I do not think anyone was ever kinder to me, nor that anyone ever respected me as a person more than O".

She felt that she derived some benefit from her attendance in those groups. But in 1938 she left and later went to America. In the autumn of 1940 O and some others arrived in America and to her surprise O asked her to be his secretary. She thought this was because of her knowledge of Russia, its language and culture.

2. She liked the "System" that led to Self-Knowledge and Self-development. She understood that some people had a "magnetic centre", which made them receptive of and suitable to the esoteric work involved in the groups. That is how her friend recognized her and took her to the groups.

She also understood that most people are asleep "but think themselves awake" reacting mainly according to what other people think of them. But those with the magnetic centre had the potential to reach a "transformed state of being" with a Higher Intellectual Centre and a Higher Emotional Centre, which latter were more important for man's self-development. There was much else, of course.

MS realized that O looked after the theoretical aspect of the System, i.e. the lecturing and teaching, and Mrs. O after the practical application of the work done especially in the country house where "she lived in very comfortable circumstances with all her housework done... by mostly sincere men and women... She had great power over people."

3. Ouspensky's "loss of way for a period", MS writes, "was not from an inherent flaw in the theory of the system".

What, according to her, was this "loss of way for a period"?

Well, at some point she began to notice that O "was strangely extravagant. There was among the students "a wealthy young couple who paid all the major bills".

O would direct her to buy "the most lavishly expensive fruits, cheese and delicacies for his personal consumption... It was not that eating and self-awareness were in conflict. But did a person choose the most expensive things when someone else was paying the bill?" And one day she noticed that the people who actually paid the bills were not asked to share these expensive foods.

Even this perhaps would not have mattered much, but MS noticed that O was interested in other wealthy people, like a rich businessman and his girlfriend and the widow of the late star, Rudolf Valentino.

4. One day a rich middle aged couple, having noted that MS was very close to O and spent much time with him, told her: “You must be highly developed to work so closely with Mr. Ouspensky.”

This came as a shock to her because she could see how eager the people were to be developed and be in O’s company. A temptation suddenly loomed in her mind to pose as a “developed” person.

Then, on a separate occasion O instructed her to chastise (MS does not say how) one of the men who had come with O from England – someone who had been in the central core of the set-up. She felt she could not do it. But she saw that she could now exert power over people and become arrogant.

Most students “lived to gain [O’s] approval and the more they hoped for it, the less they got it. Sometimes he became furiously angry, particularly with the young people who paid the bills”.

All this sounds rather strange but that is what Marie Seton wrote. Is she trustworthy?

We shall continue in the next paper.

46. Mr. Ouspensky (3): Marie Seton (2)

1. "I cannot pin down the day when I began to speculate about the inner state of P.D. Ouspensky" Marie Seton writes.

After lectures he would ask a few students including the young couple (who footed the bills) and MS to go to supper with him at a nearby restaurant. They would have drinks and food and time would pass pleasantly. Increasingly these parties would break up later and later. Often O was sharp with the students and they thought it was a test to awaken them. But he never ticked MS off.

Gradually O would stay on even after the others left and would ask MS to keep him company as he drank another and another and another glass. They would stay until four in the morning and even later – not because he had become enamoured of her "but only because he sought some companionship" and he would talk for hours about his homeland but "always about things before he ever met the system of Gurgieff" as she calls him!

2. Perhaps his close companions during O's last days before death would say he was preparing for "recurrence", strengthening his memory for his next life. Perhaps MS was not "developed" enough, as she admits, and did not understand him.

However, she felt that O was being nostalgic and, although he did not say so, "he was extremely unhappy" and that was why he had so many drinks.

She also felt he was sincere. And she felt his sincerity also when he explained that he broke away from G because "G had gone off the rails – become mad – and he (=O) wanted to save the System".

3. One day O asked MS to cancel a group-meeting so they could go to dine at a restaurant with good food and wine. And so as they were drinking coffee MS asked, after considerable thinking about it, whether the dinner was worth cancelling a lecture and how fitting this was with the System. Also how fitting it was for O to lose his temper with the students. This is what, according to MS, O replied:

"They are such fools... I took over the leadership to save the System. But I took it over before I had gained enough control over myself. I was not ready... It is a long time since I could control my state of mind."

"Will you not try to gain control over your temper? Everybody thinks you are testing them," MS said never doubting that O was speaking the truth.

4. "They are such fools!" O said contemptuously.

"But I really feel I have learnt something from the System".

"Then you are the only one..." O said. "The others are deluding themselves. They have never gained anything."

“Why don’t you give up the lectures and try to gain control of yourself again?” MS asked.

“The System has become a profession with me,” O replied.

They had more frank conversations at subsequent dinners, MS continues, and she was struck by another revelation.

“In Russia,” said O, “there used to be a thousand or two thousand people at my lectures. Here there are a hundred – too few.”

And MS wondered whether the adulation of those rich people had led him to abandon, or had weakened, his desire to control himself.

5. On another occasion, always according to MS, O said: “I have become dependent on the comfort, the luxury. I can’t give it up.”

MS left soon afterwards. Then, years later, she learned that O had died and that during his last year he had found again his direction and had corrected himself.

I do wonder whether all these revelations are true or whether MS, writing in 1962, has reshaped in her mind the whole affair and puts words in O’s mouth. On the other hand, we saw in 25, §3-4 the testimony of Gurdjieff himself stating in public that O had no permission from G and was not qualified to use G’s teaching. And in sifting all the earlier testimonies from O’s own writings, I came to the conclusion that the few years O spent with G were not enough to give him the control needed for esoteric teaching. (I read MS’s Memoir very much later.)

47. Mr. Ouspensky (4): “The bridge” 1997

1. *The Bridge* is a Journal published by the Study Society, London, which is an organization carrying on O’s legacy but is now considerably modified and enriched by the teaching of Śāntānada Sarasvatī, Śaṅkarācārya of Jyotir Math (died December 1997).

In 1997 the 12th issue commemorated O’s death after 50 years, containing articles about many aspects of his work with many references to Dr Roles, who took over the leadership after O’s death, and to the Shankaracharya, whom Dr Roles found and accepted as his new teacher back in 1962.

I shall not examine every article in the 260 pages of this commemorative issue, which are all worth reading. I shall focus on the Editorial and on those dealing with Christianity.

2. The Editorial (by an anonymous editor) says on p 10 that O’s *A New Model of the Universe* was written before O met G and his teaching between 1912 and 1914. But not when it was published.

The book was published first in 1930. In its Prefatory Note the author says that it was “practically completed before 1914” but even sections of it that were earlier published separately (*The Fourth Dimension, Superman, The Symbolism of the Tarot, What is Yoga,*) were all revised and more closely connected together before publication. Most of the chapters were revised between 1922 and 1929 but the sections “What is Yoga” and “Eternal Recurrence” were revised yet again before 1934 when the second edition came out in English. So the final product was illumined by O’s experience under G’s teaching.

I am spelling out all this because several authors have written that the book was completed by 1914 and some have accused Gurdjieff of plagiarising from it.

3. The Editorial ends with the citation, dear to O’s heart, from Paul’s *Epistle to Ephesians* in which the Ephesians are encouraged to be grounded in love and so comprehend with all saints “breadth, length, depth and height” - which O took to be the three dimensions of space and the one of time making the four dimensions of the space-time continuum.

But why does the apostle, who is prisoner of the Lord and of Jesus Christ, stop at 4 dimensions? There is not much wisdom in only four. Even many modern physicists who are confessedly atheists have come to comprehend the 4 dimensions of space-time. Surely the love and wisdom of true saints would extend beyond the 4 to the 5th and 6th dimension, which would then reach the presence of the Lord himself!!!

Then, the Epistle is addressed to the “saints” which are already at Ephesus (in Asia Minor or Anatolia, today’s Turkey) in a style of repetition and extension which Paul loves: e.g. *holy without blame; wisdom and prudence; in heaven and on earth; greatness and might of power; principality; power, might and dominion*: all in the short chapter 1.

Moreover, Paul was preeminently the Apostle of Apocalypticism, that is the second coming of Jesus which will occur while “we are still alive”, when all the faithful in Christ (after the dead have been resuscitated) will be raised in clouds and meet the Lord in the air (*1st Thessalonians* ch 4. 15-18).

4. It is rather astonishing to see these contributors, all O’s staunch followers, not bothering to examine what the Gospels really say but simply copying and parroting whatever they have learnt from the “System”.

Mr. J. Witchalls, also making an excursion into the New Testament, cites the same passage from *Ephesians*, again without any further explication and development of the issue.

Mr. N. Dewy writes expressly on O’s Christianity (25-31) and K. Jupp follows suit (33-38). The former refers to Robin Amis and his book *A Different Christianity ...* which I examined in 8. He too cites the *Ephesians* passage but, again, without taking it any further! He also mentions many other books that are close to or contain the teaching of Jesus. Mr. Jupp analyses some passages and finds (by extension) non-dualism in the Gospels – which is true of some passages.

Sadly, nobody really looks at the NT and its structure and history – and the contradictions, discrepancies, and lack of historical knowledge, shown in my 4 and 5.

I shall return to this.

48. "The Bridge" (2)

1. The 12th issue of *The Bridge* is the commemorative volume in 1997 of the 50 years since Ouspensky's death. The contributors are, of course, absolutely right to praise O for having laid the foundation of their organisation and present a teaching which includes the Advaita (=monism) philosophy of Śaṅkarācārya, Śāntānanda Sarasvatī.

However, I think they are doing O a disservice in not examining thoroughly his "system" and separating his blunders and faults both as thinker and teacher from his undoubted virtues.

Why do they find it necessary to indulge in excessive praises and ignore the faults? Surely any reasonable devotee of Truth would not want faults to be perpetuated (since they are not identified, held up to the common light and corrected).

2. As is well known, O understood that something was missing from the fragments of the teaching he got from Gurdjieff. One of the most important things was probably his own inadequate development under the will of another man (i.e. G). But in the G tradition there is an exercise of rest which some call "G's meditation" and which is not in O's system. Mme de Salzmann stressed this "meditation" and so did some others. I believe there were other aspects that G did not give to O.

Yet, despite O's awareness of this deficiency, he never tried to find the source, or some of the sources, of the Whole System from which the fragments were taken, or to search for something that would fill the gap. But after more than 20 years he placed this onus on his successor, Dr F. Roles.

3. In this issue there are several essays with "Memories of P. D. Ouspensky" and they are very revealing. Other essays touch on some interesting topic and on inspiring ideas in Tertium Organum and in *A New Model ...* Others again examine Dr Roles' search for the Source and some of the messages the Śaṅkarācārya sent.

Particularly good are the ones dealing with the Cathedrals, the Pyramids and other artistic forms manifesting the miraculous. But nobody goes into the very great paintings of Fra Angelico or Da Vinci etc. to take further and diversify this line of study. I find it strange that they remain only with O's examples instead of expanding his pioneering glimpses.

Nobody unfortunately examines Yoga, which is so close to, or (according to some) an aspect of, Advaita and was accepted by the first Śaṅkarācārya, known as Ādiśaṅkara. Nor does anyone examine further the subjects of Superman, of Dreams or of Manu. So be it.

4. There is an article by M.Churchill on "Some Gnostic and Other Fragments" that influenced P. D. Ouspensky's researches (101-106). It is a rather disappointing essay and much material in it has nothing to do with Christian Gnosticism or O himself.

The writer cites Origen, Tertullian and Irenaeus (Bishop of Lyon, 2nd century). Both Origen and Tertullian were later pronounced heretics having themselves attacked the "heretic"

Gnostic Christians, who most probably had a truer tradition of Jesus' teaching. He also cites the non-existent other, esoteric Gospel of Mark. But he does not even mention the several extant fragments from the *Gospel of Thomas* in the *Oxyrynchus Papyrus*, the *Gospel of Mary* and other Gnostic pieces circulating even in O's time.

Mr. Churchill could have delved a little deeper into the subject. But his essay ends well with an Orphic hymn of the early 4th century BCE. (Many more such emerged later.)

It is a pity the contributors stayed on the beaten track of praises (and some irrelevancies) instead of enriching and expanding this tradition with fresh material. Thus, for example, although some of them quote the passage from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians where the Apostle writes of "the breadth, length, depth and height" and Ouspensky's equating of these with four dimensions (three of space and one of time) nobody takes the matter further explaining its practical significance for our daily life and spiritual advancement.

49. Ouspensky's Fourth Way

1. Gerald de Symons Beckwith (G B hereafter) brought out in 2015 his *Ouspensky's Fourth Way* (Starnine, Oxford, UK).

Much has been published on O, he writes in the Foreword.

"Much also has been published by those who attempted to follow in his [O's] footsteps, Dr Maurice Nicoll, Rodney Collin Smith, John Bennett etc but with one notable exception, Dr Francis Roles, about whose quietly influential life's work of reconstructing and developing Ouspensky's teaching hardly anything of any substance has been written or made publicly available".

In my mind rises the question: Why write about Dr Roles? He never sought fame and, except in his actual teaching, he maintained reticence. Did he ever hint that a book about him should be written?

If not, why go into all this trouble?

2. It is with questions of this nature prompted by GB's book that I thought of embarking on these brief papers. I felt there was some falsity in all this abundant production of publications on what should remain a purely esoteric subject and also an oral tradition passing from Master to disciple and being reconstructed within one's being. It should not be publicised.

GB adds: "My good luck then [was] to receive such insights, but it brought with it a duty to make as sure as possible that some things are not entirely lost to history".

Why, to continue with irritating objections, would it matter if history never learnt that Dr Roles actually searched and eventually found one definite Source which has a complete system? The people interested in it, drawn to it and eventually transformed much or little by this New System, would learn all they need from their tutors. The uninterested millions in the Outer Circle would not learn, of course, and it would not matter a scrap. Would it?

3. So in this book we find O's development of G's teaching, turning the "fragments" into a system. Then we find that his successors in London "made the ancient knowledge new again in the light of modern science" but always remembering and "demonstrating that individual practice and experience are the only keys that will open the prison gates to lasting freedom". The book also presents "a tried and tested map of an inner journey that can be made by anyone truly in search of the miraculous".

Here we meet again with many notions of doubtful significance. I am not interested in examining in a printed form the inner map because this is an esoteric psychological matter, not something discussed on paper publicly. No amount of descriptions in print helps anyone. It is understandable that some notices may be given in print or on the Internet informing

people of such studies. But the map is a matter for study orally and practically with a teacher in a contained, regulated group.

The scientific (medical, psychological, chemical etc) evidence may add glamour but is not of the slightest help in a meditative breathing exercise, in the application of the practice “Do not steal” or some other similar practice. Nor shall I deal with the doings and character of Dr Roles, his associates and the Śankarācārya.

But I shall delve considerably into O’s “system” hereafter.

50. Ouspensky's Fourth Way (2)

1. G. Beckwith's title is a misnomer for two reasons. The term itself "fourth way" belongs to the Vedic Tradition when it was said that anyone or the three traditional ways (of action, devotion or knowledge) were pursued by a householder without personal desire. Then, the system of the Fourth Way purveyed by Ouspensky was, in fact, G's teaching.

O's formulations are to be found in the writings, arranged after O's death by Mme O – *In Search of the Miraculous, The Psychology of Man's Possible Evolution, The Fourth Way* and two volumes of *Extracts from Meetings and A Further Record: 1928-45*.

G's teaching is found in O's *In Search of the Miraculous, in Views from the Real World* and the trilogy of *All and Everything* (plus various books like K. Walker's, J. Bennett's, C. Nott's etc, etc). This last trilogy is not crucial to our investigation.

Apart from insignificant details due to the different idiosyncrasies of the two men and O's intellectual clarity of expression, there is no other significant difference between the two teachings.

2. The first part of GB's book deals with historical events and the second examines the "system". Before looking closely at the two divisions, I shall examine one aspect of the historical events.

On p 66 GB refers to the School of Economic Science in London which was started by Andrew McLaren (Member of Parliament, Labour) in 1937, his son Leon and some friends. Afterwards the SES, as it came to be known, was run by Leon alone, an indomitable barrister. Young McLaren introduced into the Economics courses the main Platonic ideas and the Socratic method of dialectic, i.e. conducting an inquiry with question and answer (1950). In 1953 LM met Dr Roles and joined the Study Society.

Soon LM introduced the Fourth Way as a separate Philosophy course into the SES. He reconstructed the system brilliantly. At this point GB (p 67) wonders that LM "unusually wrote material for the groups" even in the Study Society. Yet only a paragraph later he acknowledges LM's "intellectual brilliance and clarity". In fact, thanks in part to his lawyer's training, he had a greater ability to organize succinctly material for transmission than Ouspenski.

3. On the whole GB disdains LM's efforts and the teaching in the SES. He is not the first and won't be the last. He writes of LM that he "would never accept that to actually understand what he was writing about... required that he examines himself and his own character in a manner he appeared both unwilling and unable to accept. Only too keen to enforce stringent disciplines and ascetic styles of life onto his students, he seemed to lack much ability or desire to apply them to himself". (pp 67-68). But how did he know this and by what criteria did he evaluate LM's self-disciplines?

Having known the SES and LM from the late 1950's onward until his death in 1994, I must agree that this is true to a very minor extent in those early years but wholly untrue of later years when LM too accepted the same Śaṅkarācārya as his own teacher. He might not appear such a zealot for self-discipline but GB's estimation is way out. Certainly, he never enforced any ascetic style of life on anyone!

4. GB's view reflects Dr Roles', since I doubt he had much contact with the SES and LM. GB cites a letter of Dr Roles to the Śaṅkarācārya 29/9/1964 wherein he writes among other things that LM "has seemed to me to be far from understanding because there is a very active mind... It is very difficult to get him to take your words to himself – he is only thinking of how he will pass them on, so I dare not give him much" (GB, p 71). But this is just an opinion which is not free of subjectivity.

After LM's request, Dr Roles did introduce LM to the Śaṅkarācārya and the latter accepted LM as a disciple. So the Shankaracharya at least thought LM was doing very useful work!

GB goes on to demean even further LM and the SES: "Francis Roles and the study Society generally, saw the ... SES as a rather pedestrian organization... only superficially on a path similar to their own... it seemed that MaClaren had seized the exquisitely mysterious and mountainous landscape of Ouspensky's system and reduced it to a featureless plain of rules and regulations" (p69). This opinion too is highly subjective.

5. However, in the end GB does acknowledge that the SES offered enormous help in spreading the meditation after organizing efficiently the Maharishi's efforts in London and elsewhere (South Africa, New Zealand etc). "By the end of his life, LM had brought the inspiration and practical blessings of... Advaita tradition to the attention of a wider audience in the West than any other individual except perhaps the Maharishi himself" (p 72). A man without self-discipline could hardly do that.

And to complete this picture I quote from Dorine Tolley's biography of (herself and) LM: "After LM's death I showed the Part One material [=Introductory 12 Sessions] to Prof Guyatt of the Study Society who had been a pupil of Ouspensky and Dr Roles. He expressed his admiration for the way LM had made the esoteric concepts [of O's system and Shankaracharya's teaching] accessible for a wider public, something which had not been attempted in his organization" (p55 *The Power Within* 2008, privately published in Sydney, Australia). In fact, LM produced a much better fusion of the old "system" and Śaṅkarācārya's Advaita than Dr Roles giving emphasis to Advaita.

But this we shall examine later.

51. Ouspensky's Fourth Way (3)

1. The second part of G. Beckwith's book deals with doctrine. The first deals largely with the history of the movement from Ouspensky to the Study Society and other events and developments. The book is very valuable in every respect.

I found nothing of any real significance in O's formulations or supposed "reconstructions", as presented in the book, justifying GB's claim that O "developed" G's teaching. All that O did (having ample opportunity) was to put into a different order according to subject matter and sequence G's "fragments", enunciated not in a coherent, logical sequence but according to G's perception of situations and needs. (In fact, if some publications are to be believed, O repudiated his whole system in the last year of his life! Of this, later.)

All subsequent writers, Walker, Nicoll etc., did much the same as O. Any author who presents the "system" is not, while writing, giving ad hoc talks to a group of people who need to understand little by little and also put into practice what they are being taught. The writer's job is to present the teaching clearly and, of course, in a logical sequence. G was not doing that but met the disciples' needs as they arose.

This can hardly be described as developing or enriching the ideas taken for presentation and use in teaching others. I find nothing that can be rightly called development or reconstruction in O's formulations. For example, if O had actually given specific laws under which humans or Organic Life live instead of talking vaguely (ch 9, *A Further Record ...*) about biological, physiological etc laws, that would have been "development".

2. There are two separate aspects in the system: Human psychology (= higher bodies and centres) and cosmology (=Ray of Creation with world levels). It is to G's credit that he attempts to connect the two showing that All Suns (note La in the large Cosmic Octave) corresponds to man's Fourth Body; Sun (note Sol) to the 3rd, Mental Body; All Planets to Astral and Earth to Physical Body (*In Search of the Miraculous*: 94).

Curiously GB does not give us this correspondence, which should have been in O's other publications, as well. Otherwise, the psychology and cosmology O gives are exactly the well-known "fragments" taught by G.

3. GB's chapter 3 of part 2 deals with psychology and has two references to Ouspensky. Both are clever formulations saying something that O does not in fact say!

The first explains that the key to impartial observation of whatever goes on in our psychology is "to know that what we see is not in fact our Self." This, GB explains, is what O meant "by waking up conscience – the emotional realisation of the truth about ourselves as we are, which dissolves the buffers that conceal and keep our inconsistencies apart" (p 165).

However, this may be what O meant somehow, but GB cannot possibly know this. What O was saying in January 1939 is this (ch7, *A Further Record...*, "Work."): "Work is... self-study... [it] includes acquiring knowledge and control of oneself".

In chapter 8 “Will” (subsection “Effort” in Feb 1935): “The efforts we can do are efforts of self-observation and self-remembering”.

In both of these cases the self is an object observed, not the subject observing, i.e: “I am not what I am observing and I remember that I, the Self, am above these functions”.

4. One second instance is even more astonishingly devious. GB starts with a consideration of stillness and *samādhi* (a term not found in O) in the subsection “Stillness - the basis of practice” (p171). He has a reference to Śankarācārya and a lovely excerpt from Ramana Maharshi’s *Tripura Rahasya ‘The Mystery beyond the Trinity’*. Then he gives a very interesting passage from Dr. Roles on “Silence” (in 1981) which is a mixture of Śankarācārya and O: “If we pay more attention to those pauses [between activities] and lengthen them so that the present moment can be prolonged – this is another of Mr. O’s teaching. A present moment can be a ten thousandth of a second or it can be three seconds, the time of a single breath; it can be 24 hours, a moment of organic life on earth... “

Yes, except that this is Dr. Roles and Śankarācārya, not O! Nowhere in his writings does O say anything about prolonging or expanding the present moment with a pause between activities. This is Shsakaracharya. What O says is that by trying to remember himself he could prolong certain sensations (=seeing people walking but being asleep!) but did not connect it with expansion of time (*In Search...* 265).

In any case, O’s notions of time as breath came from G (*In Search...* 213,333). So there is, in fact, no actual “development” of G’s ideas. It is Dr Roles who did some developing especially after he received Shankaracharya’s teaching.