

Meeting #3 Nov 22th

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Attendees: Robin, Paula, Dirk, James, Vanya, Bobbie, Ekant, Robert, Sandy, Michelle

Sandy: Enneagram of writing of Tales was counter clockwise?

RB: For every road up is a road down. Think about the food diagram and think about it in terms of moving down of substances that are excreted – second food diagram you could draw. Always a road up and down and true of enneagram.

Sandy: True of astrological charts ... different ...

Objective science explanations vary between 1931 manuscript and 1950 and this ...

RB: In terms of 1931 manuscript – work in progress and he changed his mind about the text.

Sandy: Does the objective science change?

RB: May be instances where the change in wording appears to change the context. Seems to me he just got it wrong and then corrected it. May be things in the first publication of the Tales which are also wrong and he never corrected before his own death. There are things I have difficulty with ... and difficult to know if it is an error.

Sandy: When or why things get revised ... length of years it took to develop and wherever his knowledge came from became more solid by 1950 version ... given his humanity.

RB: There are people who accuse G of making mistakes ... expected to be perfect? Impossible to evaluate because he works in a different way to the way we work. He decided to go and establish a group in Russia (under Stalin) – did he really want to do that ... or perhaps just to fill an interval in an octave.

[Reading]

Sandy: Contrast in rhythm between Deutsch and English.

Did Gurdjieff speak German at all?

James: Don't think he did.

Sandy: Did Louise March do it all?

RB: Yes.

G spoke smatterings of languages he spent time in and he sometimes uses German words when appropriate. He spoke a mixture of things rather than any one language.

Robert:

“I did not then, any more than now, risk speaking alone with strangers in my broken German, but I began to think where I could have seen him before . “ page 216 Meetings

Vanya: Recognised that more often dashes in German than in English. He puts less inverted commas in German than in English.

James: Uncle Sam didn't get a mention in German version.

Ekant: Wouldn't be recognised in Germany. Uncle Sam is rice here – my only association.

Ekant: There is some text on p10 about Russian language that is not in English. Translation:

... to tell anecdotes and to recount someone's family tree with less than honourable epithets... derogatory

Dirk: p14 middle ... in English ... your love of knowledge and in German “your thirst of knowledge”

Philosophy in German is love of wisdom ... Wissensdurstes

Ekant: hanging around ...

James: Also noticed difference in rhythm. Amazed by accuracy of the translation.

Sandy: Psychological difference between love of truth and love of knowledge.

Knowledge is big ... and truth is from the heart. German philosophers and poets and loving poetic people – tradition I remember.

Ekant: I would say love of knowledge is more emotional and Wissensdurstes is more intellectual.

Vanya: Also thirst is more of the body – have to drink ...

Ekant: grammarians is not in the German

Sandy: Word for grammar

Ekant: grammatica – is the translation, but not usual – would never say

RB: Something here that distinguishes between German and English. What happened in middle ages – various varieties of Latin used in academic places and in monasteries. Latin was no longer spoken and effort to standardise on Latin so it was always represented in same way. Foundation of Latin grammar. Rules as to how it had to be written in order that everybody understood the same thing. In England ... made a bit deal about English grammar – the way things ought to be written – may be doesn't exist in German at all?

Vanya: Yes it does. Studied as a teacher and we make a big deal.

Ekant: In German would say “scientist for language” – would include grammarians

RB: Objection is that grammar doesn't reflect way language is spoken. May not have happened in Germany ... invention of printing – English language moved dramatically. Elizabethan period with playwrights in England and they invented how they expressed things and English didn't have any rules. Shakespeare would take a noun and make a verb out of it. Invented the verb “to champion” ... did in lots of different ways. Changing rules of language to write in Greek form of drama and became how you would use words. Before him wasn't legitimate use of words.

James: Sir Thomas Wyatt also amazingly influential – in Henry VIII court – experimented with the English language.

RB: Was a time before printing when it was OK to experiment with language. With printing ... Latin-derived. Caxton ... only 5 books available in English, so he took books from Greek, French ... and invented new words to translate into English.

Gurdjieff uses English words for meaning and have to look at the etymology because he is not taking the modern meaning – taking the pre-Shakespeare meaning.

Caxton was 1500 or so. After Guttenberg. Guttenberg never made a success of printing and took a while for it to spread. Mostly useful for printing the bible and was written out by hand

before. Wasn't initially thought of as a good business and spread across Europe faster than in UK. Problem that there are words that G is using and using 'middle-English' and close to early German – not that different.

Sandy: ... teach German in school ... Scientist for grammar – grammarians are scientists. Asserting the rules.

RB: In academia ... every body following same track. In chemicals, Germans leading and everybody following and doing German chemistry. Language is nationalistic and may be that English think about language differently to Germans. Things we need to take notes of.

Sandy: ... everybody loves their own language – when he talks about whether to write in Russian, Armenian ...

RB: Practical. Can write in Russian because I was educated in Russian. However, Russian lousy for philosophical concepts – Armenian better. Greek is way more expressive than English. He mentions Greek because he knows it is an expressive language. He referred to Latin as 'dirty Latin' and thought it was a lousy language. Rules – Greek language is more sophisticated.

Dirk: Is the Armenian language related to ...

Michelle: Not related to any other language – has its own branch in language tree.

RB: Roots at 3K years old. Most things on language trees ... English is German with Latin thrown in – split off of German and after 1500 went in own direction. One of the things English does is accepts loan words without thinking. Bungalow from India, for example. Wherever English empire went stole from everywhere else. No attempt to standardise English. There were attempts to standardise French – didn't work.

Sandy: Historically – conquering nations try to impose on conquered ...

RB: America tried to stop people speaking French in Louisiana – laws that said can't speak French.

Ekant: Oranges? Different wording in German – if there were no people like that the pigs would not know about the quality of oranges.

RB: In English have idea of wasting time wrestling with pigs – from Mark Twain.

PS: Not English, American!

James: Mullah Nassr Eddin – Nail is like a requiem.

James: Two ends of stick – about inner world and outer world? What does it mean?

Ekant: A little different in German – in English always and in German – has to have / unconditionally –

Michelle: like a law in German

Ekant: To me – everything has two sides and if you get something you have to pay for it.

RB: Used by Dostoyevsky in his writing.

PS: O the dickens!

Teufel is devil – so same.

RB: In English – cognized, but nothing like that in German. P11 cognized by people for centuries.

Ekant: German is similar – hidden meaning based on recognised truths for centuries.

RB: Also consonance p13. Later in Tales explains how people understand a word that they haven't heard before ... bring into their mind a word that sounds similar to it. P1214. Problem is that people don't usually look up words they don't know – characteristic of everybody that they will find a similar-sounding word and take the meaning from that. Negative feature of a language. Some languages are constructed in order that meaning is preserved – not English, doesn't care.

James: About the tone of the words – noise.

RB: Consonance means 'coming together of the sound of something'. English speakers will pronounce words differently – words same, but difference is consonance. The word is used a lot in the Tales.

Ekant: consonance = Zusammenklang. German word 'consonance' is used mostly in music. Russian word-tones in German.

Michelle: In der deutschen Version: Durch den Verlust der Fähigkeit, aufzufassen und nachzudenken, denkt der heutige Mensch, wenn er im Gespräch ein Wort hört oder gebraucht, das ihm nur durch seinen Klang bekannt ist, überhaupt nicht weiter nach, und es entsteht in ihm sogar keine Frage, was eigentlich mit diesem Wort gemeint ist, da er ein für alle Mal überzeugt ist, dass er es kennt und dass andere es auch kennen.

in russischen war es Gleichklang

dessen Klänge insgesamt

Ekant: In totality

Robert: Beethoven ... sounding together sounds to get an understanding – associating ideas same way we associate sounds.

RB: [from p1214] Owing to the capacity to ponder or reflect, whenever ... content merely to substitute for the unfamiliar word another word of similar consonance ...

This isn't a small thing – everybody needs to understand. Not only what English people do. If I hear some German, doesn't mean a thing to me, because some of the pronunciation doesn't occur in English.

James: Consonance related to mentation by form? Maybe for next time.

RB: English sole and soul – lowest and highest things in man. So yes, big thing in terms of mentation by form and thought.

AI Summary for Meeting #3

Quick recap

The team discussed the importance of understanding objective science and the limitations of human language, emphasizing the need for a new language based on the principle of relativity. They also explored the concept of evolution, the changes in the writing of the Tales over time, and the evolution of ideas in language use. Lastly, they touched on the history and evolution of languages, particularly focusing on English, German, and Armenian, and the significance of consonants in language.

Next steps

Next steps were not generated due to insufficient transcript.

Summary

Understanding Human Languages and Science

Robin discussed the objective nature of the tales and the importance of understanding the four different human languages used in the work. He emphasized that contemporary science often presents dubious or incorrect information, and that the law of 7, in combination with the law of 3, creates the universe as it is. Robin stressed the necessity for everyone in the work to study objective science, even though it can be difficult to comprehend. He also explained the different ways of reading the tales, including literal interpretation, allegorical interpretation, and contemplation, which can lead to revelation. Lastly, he touched on the divergence between the line of knowledge and the line of being in life.

Advancing Language for Accurate Thought

Robin discussed the limitations of the human language, highlighting its vagueness, inaccuracy, and subjectivity. He emphasized the need for an exact language for proper study and exchange of thoughts, especially in fields like psychology, philosophy, and science. Robin pointed out that while some branches of science, like chemistry and pharmaceuticals, have made progress in creating coherent and self-consistent languages, this is not widespread. He introduced the concept of a new language based on the principle of relativity, which would enable accurate determination of the angle of thought and facilitate the transmission of knowledge and information. Robin also noted that this new language is not just about mastering new terms, but also involves adopting new attitudes and perspectives.

Evolution and Universal Languages Discussed

Robin discussed the concept of evolution, emphasizing that it is a conscious and volitional process. He explained that everything in the world, from solar systems to man, either evolves or degenerates, and that understanding words in relation to evolution is crucial. Robin also introduced the idea of three universal languages, with the second language being the same for all people, both written and spoken, but with people still speaking their own language. He then outlined the process of writing the Tales, which involved Gurdjieff formulating an aim and conceiving an overall theme, followed by translation into English, revision, and publication.

Evolution of Ideas in Tales

Robin and Sandy discussed the evolution of ideas and the changes in the writing of the Tales over time. Robin suggested that the Tales were a work in progress, with changes made as the author's understanding evolved. Sandy raised questions about the changes in the science presented in the Tales, to which Robin responded that there may have been instances where the

author changed the wording, which could appear to be a change of concept. Robin also mentioned that there were things in the 1931 manuscript that seemed to be wrong, which were later corrected. The conversation ended with Robin expressing the difficulty in evaluating the author's actions and decisions due to his unique way of working.

Language Use and Communication Effects

The reading shared Gurdjieff's experiences with various languages, including Russian, Armenian, and Greek, and how they have evolved over time. He expressed his preference for Armenian and Greek, but noted that they have become less distinct due to the influence of neighboring languages. He also mentioned his intention to write in both Russian and Armenian, with the help of others who are proficient in these languages. The text ended with a light-hearted note about the availability of French Armagnac and Kaizarian Bastourma.

Gurdjieff discussed his early life experiences and dislike for the "bon ton literary language." He also mentioned his profession as a dance teacher and interactions with people of different types. He shared his thoughts on the concept of a "stick" with two ends, relating it to the idea that every cause in life must produce two opposing effects. He also expressed his frustration with the changes in the Armenian language and his preference for the ancient Greek language. The reading ended with his intention to write in both Russian and Armenian, and his hope that the recipient would be able to understand and translate his work.

Language Rhythm and Word Evolution

The team discussed the contrast in rhythm between German and English, with Sandy appreciating the rhythm of the two languages side by side. Robin clarified that Gurdjieff, who spoke smatterings of every language he spent time in, didn't speak German when he talked to others. Ekant explained that he left out the term "Uncle Sam" in the German version because it might cause confusion, and instead used a package of rice as a metaphor. The team also discussed the influx of new words into the English language during the Middle English period, with Robin noting that Gurdjieff uses the pre-Shakespeare meaning of some words.

Language Evolution and Loanwords Discussed

The team discussed the history and evolution of languages, particularly focusing on English, German, and Armenian. Robin explained that the English language has roots in German and Latin, and has a tendency to accept loanwords without standardization. The team also discussed the influence of the English Empire on language, with Robin mentioning that English words like "shampoo" and "bungalow" come from India. The conversation also touched on the concept of "love of one's own language" and how it can affect language use. The team also discussed the differences in meaning and wording between English and German sentences. The conversation ended with a discussion about Mark Twain, an American author, and his influence on English literature.

Consonance and Association of Ideas

The team discussed the concept of consonance and its significance in language, particularly in relation to the English language. Robin explained that English is not constructed to preserve meaning, and the pronunciation of words can vary significantly between individuals. Ekant and Dirk provided translations of the term "consonance" in German, emphasizing the idea of harmony and sounding together. The team also touched on the idea of consonance in music and its potential connection to the association of ideas. Robert brought up the connection between Beethoven's 9th Symphony and the concept of consonance, suggesting a possible link between the association of ideas and consonance sounds.