

Meeting #002

EU Session Transcript

(Where the speaker was not recognized they are referred to as James, B, C, D, etc.)

James: Robin, why does he change the Lord's Prayer?

Robin: I don't know, I've often wondered that. He didn't have to do that. If he'd just come out with what we expected, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost," then it wouldn't have made us... it wouldn't have been a mild shock. A lot of people who don't really know Gurdjieff at all who read this would just think, "Oh, he's got it wrong." Of course, he doesn't get anything wrong without there being some reason behind it. So maybe it's just to shock us into considering what on earth he means by doing that. And what he actually means, because it's also not true, what he says just isn't true. When I start something, I've started a lot of things in my life, big and small, and they've been successful and unsuccessful, but never have I once said, "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, Amen." I have not done that. And that perhaps why I am not famous and wealthy.

James: Do you think it has anything to do with them trying to make us look at the Law of Three again?

Robin: Well, I think that he's already done that in the preface, and he's doing it again. And at various points in the book, we will just stumble into the Law of Three as we consider what's going on. It's like how he goes and visits these three ancient civilizations. So it's three of them: Maralpleicie, Tikliamish, and Pearl Land. And it's like, well, there's another triple. And I suppose that if we took the time and analyzed all the triples that turn up in the book, then there would be just hundreds of them.

Gwynne: Well, his grammar and his writing is the Law of Three. The way he writes is all the way through. So you can't read this objectively and understand it unless you're paying attention to the Law of Three. Because the neutralizing factor of the understanding comes out of watching these dynamics that he does. To me, the Law of Three is very easy to understand in metaphor and allegory, but not so much in the language, because he's using language as paradoxical, and he's throwing the oppositions in, so you have to understand through the Law of Three, I would think.

Robin: Well, if you've already read the book in the second way, which is as if out loud to somebody else, then you are, in one way or another, experienced in one aspect of the Law of Three. There's one of the six different processes created by the Law of Three, and that's a process that's evolutionary. So you're already, your experience of the book has already got you into that position. But there's much more complexity in this. He is not writing this... when he says the bon ton literary language, he's just saying that in one way or another, when somebody writes something, they have in mind a particular structure of how they articulate. And the way that they articulate will depend upon their education to some degree, but it will always, in one way or another, be an articulation that is absolutely approved by the educational system within which they were raised. Unless they're writing poetry, they obey a certain kind of grammaticality, and Gurdjieff is not doing that. Gurdjieff has written this according to what he calls the grammar of associations. So you will see in certain parts already, you will see in certain parts that there are various digressions in the middle of paragraphs that a normal writer wouldn't put in there. And they wouldn't put in there because they are distractions. And he deliberately wants to distract you by, in one way or another, provoking associations that you wouldn't actually have if he didn't write in that way. There's also a rhythm to the words. And it's very difficult for me to understand because I know, because I've done a lot of writing in my time, that there is rhythm to writing. And that somebody

who doesn't write particularly well, they don't write because they haven't installed a rhythm. But he's installed a rhythm which is just not like any other rhythm you've ever experienced.

Gwynne: Yusuf is trying to say something, Robin.

Yusuf: Yeah, thank you. Good evening, everyone. I'm very new to this teaching, just a week in fact, but I've dived in. And what I felt after this reading, in the silence that followed, I felt a reverberation, literally. It's like the weight and the presence of the words. And it's something which... I don't know whether it's because it's been read out aloud and I've heard it, but I've listened to audiobooks and I listen to, but I didn't get that feeling in other places. And it's like, it's just that sheer presence, it sort of comes through. That's what I wanted to say. I don't know.

Robin: That's an excellent... It's one of the things is I'm a person who has read this book to people a number of times, so I have become, let's say, relatively skilled in reading it out. And the other reader, Ronald, is the reader I alternate with, and he's the same. He knows that this has to be read with a certain kind of attention to the meaning. And when you're reading it out, this isn't as if I were reading an article out from the New York Times or something like that. This is me trying to put as much as I possibly can into the annunciation of the words, into the rhythm of the writing, and trying to do it utterly impartially, without trying to put myself into it, but only knowing how to, in one way or another, enunciate things and read things out. And that's the way that this should be read out. And certain aspects of this book, when they are read out really well, have the effect that you seem to have experienced, in that they have an extraordinary weight. Now, it's said that he rewrote the beginning of this book. From the author that he spent more time on this. Some people say he... I mean, and it depends upon who's recounting this, but some people say he rewrote it 22 times. And I would be willing to believe that. Because first of all, he was very thorough in what he did. And secondly, this is the 'Do' of the octave. And if this goes wrong, the whole book goes wrong.

Ekant: I can share a similar experience to what you just said, Yusuf. Quite some years ago, after a few attempts to read this book, which all failed after a while, then I once took the decision to read it. And I read it in the morning after getting up. And I have to say, I did not really understand what was there, but after reading a few pages, I felt as if a fresh wind was blowing through my mind and something was, in a way, intensified. I could not even say what it was. So it was a very strong effect in my mind when I read it the first time with a certain wish to really read it out. And today, after a lot of years with being also in the work, I have the impression, what we discussed last week when we read the first time, that he, with his writing, he creates a certain atmosphere. And when I just realize what is in these few pages, I see so many concepts and ideas and informations he put already in these few pages. And then I have an impression how it must be for the people in his time to approach this man, to come together with him. In this writing, there is somehow possible to feel the intensity and the clarity and the sharpness of this man through just getting the impression of the words, without any analysis. So I... Yeah. Thank you for your sharing too.

Yusuf: It's like, what he whatever he wanted to say, he didn't leave anything out. It's like nothing more could be said in the point that he wanted to make from all the angles. It's like everything's covered. Yeah.

Ronald: There is a sense that he's telling the reader that they are reading a book. They're reading a book by a person who has curiously framed failings, which you can't quite tell if they are failings or something that beneficially sets him apart. But such things as he felt like he was drowning in his own thoughts. And intermixed with that are these accusations about us that if simply stated bluntly would be insulting. This thing that we have this wealth of quieting notions evoking only naive dreams and beautiful representations of our lives as well as our prospects for the future.

That's bottom of page five and top of page six. And then starts out the paragraph at the bottom of page six, "In my opinion, the trouble with you..." Having an author start out an introduction by saying, "The trouble with you," implies that I've got troubles. And he goes on to describe that I now have a blessing of needing to make no individual effort whatsoever. It really, it does establish a tone. So anyway, so there you go. I think that's sort of what I was going to say.

Gwynne: What is the part that you were talking about that insults?

Ronald: Oh, I just read them.

Gwynne: I mean, so that's considered by you an insult?

Ronald: No, well, yes. What I said, I think, was it could be taken by a reader opening a book for the first time if you haven't been in the work and all this stuff. If you start a book and you're told that, "In my opinion, the trouble with you..." He doesn't even know me. I think a normal response would be to go, "Oh, fuck you." I mean, it's just, ah, get out of my face. That I have no need of making any individual effort whatsoever. Yeah, it's insulting.

Gwynne: But that's why you have to read it from the third, from the divided attention, the third force. Because if you read it like out of your ego or your persona, you're going to get insulted because he does do that quite a bit. You know, he lays it out. And as a therapist, I want to tell you, some people you have to be so blunt with them for them to even get it. You see? And it is... I think that's when my first reading of it, I was like you about that, but I don't see it that way anymore. I see it as this is what someone has to see in order to even get what they're covering up in their associations.

Ronald: Yeah, I think I was addressing the tone that's being set. And because I have read the entire book, he maintains a distance with this fellow, Beelzebub, who sees so many things that leave us by the end having only one chance of saving ourselves, etc. But you never feel criticized or insulted. Everything you said was accurate, but the tone here is, it's not acidic. It's not blaming. He maintains this sort of jocular or bemused distance while telling us all the things that are really disastrous. So that was what I was addressing. And I agree with all the things you said other than some people you need to be very blunt with. This was written for all people. He sat down to write something for all eventual students of the work, or potential students of the work. And he did it in such a way that it sets you in a certain position in regard to what you're hearing or reading. That's the sort of the tone he goes for. And it is, I don't know, I take it as fairly universal. People of a variety of mechanical natures, of chief features and everything else, would be able to enter into this world he's creating. Not an easy thing to do.

Robin: So who's got any idea about the reference to the ancient Tolosites?

Ronald: Oh, it's the Cathars, or Cathers, or whoever. Uh...

James: Cathar.

Ronald: Cathar, Okie doke. Uh, at least that's, you know, having read Holy Blood, Holy Grail and gone to Toulouse looking for the lost Grail or whatever, uh, it was when the general sent back saying, "These Tolosites, they look like really good Christians. How can we tell who to kill?" And the Pope said, "Kill them all. God knows his own." So, that's what I know.

James: The Pope was Innocent III. And that crusade was called the Albigensian Crusade. And they, the Cathars were non-materialists, Ronald. They didn't like the priests and the bishops and all of the pageantry of the Catholic Church. And they were regarded as a threat to the Papacy, to

the powers that be in the Catholic Church. So they organized the crusade and it eventually led to the genocide of the Cathars. They killed everyone. It took them 100 years or so, but they got everyone in the Cathars. And I think this business of the intonation comes from the fact that they used to burn them. They'd set up huge big fires, big pyres, and the Cathars were burnt to death. But some of them, in some towns, they actually walked onto these bonfires singing hymns. So it might have something to do with that.

Robin: I think it's exactly that. I think when he talks about a holy manifested intonation, I think that's the kind of manifestation of an intonation you might have when you're walking into your death. So this is not a small thing that he's insisting here. He's insisting not only that he's going to pronounce the "In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," he's going to do it as if he were walking into his own death.

Michelle: I don't agree with the Cathars because the Cathars were located more east of Toulouse. And Toulouse is the town, and actually in French you would say 'Toulousain' and not 'Toulousite'. And here he is taking a suffix that we also use by Israelite and Jacobite, something about being ancient. And the other thing is that Toulouse was the capital of Aquitania in the time of the Minnesingers. And there was one who was saying... I had the link to the... to the... Shall it was famous for Troubadours, wasn't it Toulouse?

Michelle: Yes, the famous Troubadours. And there, one of the people who are caring for the Troubadours said something... he was Boethius... and he thought that the songs of the Troubadours are sung for the kings and the aristocrats to motivate them to doing courageous deeds, because they would give some courage and strength and generosity. And these songs can allocate this. This is also compatible with the full intonation.

Gwynne: There's a lot of bass in it. It doesn't have your distinction in your speech. So that's what's hard, but I got it too.

Ekant: [Speaks German: Es klingt sehr dumpf. So als wenn irgendwas auf deinem Mikro liegt, so klingt das.] (It sounds very muffled. As if something is lying on your microphone, that's how it sounds.)

Michelle: [Speaks German: Ja, aber es ist, ich habe so... Okay, ja, ja. Ich wollte es nur noch mal noch mal bestätigen. Ist gut.] (Yes, but it is, I have such... Okay, yes, yes. I just wanted to confirm it again. It's good.)

Robin: There's a term that he uses in the first sentence here, which he actually uses and repeats in various different ways throughout the whole of the book. And it's something that at least in the first two or three times I read this book, I just glossed over because I didn't think... well, I didn't think to do anything else. That's the way I am, or where I was. And it's the term 'common presence'. And this isn't any way that most of us would ever talk about ourselves, that we have a common presence, but he's actually already stating that you are three-brained here. And that he's no different than anybody else. He has a common presence just like you do. And your presence isn't anything other than a common presence.

James: He uses it hundreds of times through the book, doesn't he Robin?

Robin: Yeah, and there's also, which we can talk about as and when it arrives, when he talks about the common cosmic harmony. And people just read past that as though it was like, well, of course, common cosmic harmony, we've all got one of those, haven't we? I've got three in my car at the moment. And this use of language needs to be... we need to be aware of it.

James: I read this chapter this afternoon, and there were some of the words that just seemed to want me to check up on them. There was this the word 'tomes', these weighty and bulky tomes. And it comes from the Greek 'tomos', and it means a slice, a slice of something.

Robin: Oh, well done. That's a good piece. And John, what's actually happened is the time changed in America, so you've arrived probably an hour later than... I tried to make that clear in the email I sent out, but it was always going to be the case that some people would miss. But there you go, my apologies that I never put it in 20-point writing or something.

J O'Donnell: No, you made it very clear, but I just made a big mistake. I thought it was very clear, but I just missed it.

Robin: Okay, not to worry.

James: But to go back to that, to go back to this word 'tome', its original meaning was 'to cut'.

Gwynne: Repeat that, James.

James: This word 'tome' that he uses, 'bulky tomes'. I've always just gone past that word without doing anything, but because I thought I knew what it meant. But when I checked out the etymology today, it means it's of Greek origin, and it means, come from the word 'tomos', and it means a slice or a section, or even a roll of papyrus. And it's taken from the verb meaning 'to cut'. Which I thought that was interesting.

Robin: So the thing that James is demonstrating there is, in one way or another... he's probably heard me say this, but I went to visit Paul Beekman Taylor about, it must have been about eight years ago in Geneva where he lives. And he inherited an awful lot of things from the Orage family. And one of the things that he inherited was the version of the Oxford English... the large Oxford English Dictionary, the one that you need a forklift truck to lift up. It was a very bulky... it wasn't a tome, in actual fact, it was just one book, so it couldn't qualify your definition of a tome. However, he showed me notes that Orage had made in pencil in that against various words. And it was quite clear, and of course, me and Paul kind of vaguely discussed it, but it was quite clear that Orage had gone through the text of the Tales with Gurdjieff and had got to... he was using the best etymological source that he knew of, so that Gurdjieff was absolutely aware of the English meaning of every of the words that was used. Now, whether the same procedure was followed by Louise March when she did the German version, or Jeanne de Salzmann when she did the French version, I do not know. But knowing how thorough Gurdjieff is, he probably insisted on some kind of something similar. So what James has got the tendency of doing... I've spent a lot of time with James in various study groups... he now just looks up the etymology of anything that looks suspicious to him. And we should all do that. And sometimes you catch... One of the things that becomes obvious, but it's only a few words that affects, but it really does affect, is that the English language changed very dramatically with the emergence of printing. And not only did the English language suddenly acquire a lot of Latin words, which it had almost none prior to the advent of printing... And that was because William Caxton wanted to print books, and there were only five that were written in English. So he couldn't do a lot of printing with that, couldn't even create a library, couldn't even take a shelf of books with that. So he stole loads of French books and translated them into English, but they contained a lot of words that aren't in the English language, so he just took them. They're Latin-based words. Now, the thing that happened, which was quite odd, but it did happen, and people like Shakespeare were part of the whole thing, is that a lot of the words that were German words, or we would call them Middle English, but they were German derived, they started to change their meaning as well. And the etymology of a lot of the English words prior to, sorry, subsequent to the 16th century and prior to it, are different. So the need to

actually do what James is doing, aside from words like this where it also helps, is actually greater than you think. And it's because our language moved dramatically, more so than German did, more so than French did.

Robin: This final paragraph on the third page, or the first page really, but it's page three: "Having thus begun," which means having begun by invoking the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, "I can now be quite at ease and should even, according to the notions of religious morality existing among contemporary people, be beyond all doubt assured that everything further in this new venture of mine will now proceed, as is said, like a pianola." This is just heavy irony. Now, a few paragraphs later, he says he isn't going to use any of the... he's going to do everything in simple languages. But in actual fact, he doesn't do that at all. He isn't using simple language. He's... I did an analysis for all of the various literary techniques that you can use in the English language, reading their meaning and trying to find examples of the use of those techniques in Beelzebub's Tales, and he uses pretty much 90% of all literary techniques that can be used. Now, it's not really him that's using them, of course, it's Orage that's using them, but Gurdjieff is approving them. So when he says simple language, he doesn't mean simple language at all. He means something slightly different. And he wouldn't want anything to proceed like a pianola because that's just entirely mechanical and without any heart. Irony.

Ekant: I feel with this paragraph quite reminded that this could be a reference to the Law of Seven. When he started with the Law of Three, and this, when he says now, when the right impulse or impetus is there, then it goes, it proceeds... We all know when we study this law, that it will not proceed like a pianola up to the end, but there are some passages where it goes up to certain steps. So this is something which might also be introduced like James referred to the Law of Three, a little reference to the Law of Seven.

James: I really like what when he says that, when he speaks about his hand that has never once failed him in all his life. And then he speaks about his heart, about its inconstancy or constancy. I think is he talking about the loyalty of the body? The body tries its best. It goes wrong at times, and it will eventually die, but it tries its best. And I find it quite miraculous, this whole thing that I have, these legs and these arms and this back and this head. I just find it's almost miraculous. And everybody else is walking around, and they're all walking miracles of an incredible, complicated machine that does its best. It takes orders, and it's loyal. It's quite astonishing. I often feel this loyalty, especially in my hands. Often when I'm working, like a complex physical task, which is usually to do with either woodwork, I've done in the house I built, or with this with my painting, very recently. I had this experience where while I was working on a painting, I wished to have a wooden shelf on the canvas without it just coming out of the canvas. It took me a while to think about it. I prepared it, and then I started working to put it on the canvas, and it was difficult. But the hands seemed to help me. And I eventually succeeded with this, but it was something with the hands really. I was very surprised by some of the ideas that were coming into the construction of this. And it didn't seem to come from me. Not from conscious thinking or thoughts or impulses, it just seemed to happen. And this has happened a few times when I've been working with these three-dimensional pieces that I sometimes make.

Gwynne: That happens to me when I'm writing, James. All of a sudden, I'm writing, and I don't know who's writing. It's like some kind of... and I've had it happen to me in watercolor, I used to do watercolors, and I noticed it in watercolors too. It's a presence that I don't own very well, but it... it's also connected with what Eckhart said, it's taking you to different vibrational levels. And that's all I can explain it. I can't explain it even texturally. It's like, one time I was doing a lecture on writing on Jung, and all of a sudden my hand was quoting things I had not read yet from Jung. So I spent time trying to look up what I was writing. And it was very interesting. That phenomena, I think, is in everybody when we're doing something, if you allow that higher vibration to come

in. But it's a stillness, very quiet. Often times between 2:00 and 4:00 in the morning, I will write, and it's very different than when... it's a stillness that comes over me. And I was wondering about it with you.

James: Yeah, yeah, I recognize what you're saying there, Gwen, about that stillness, yes. He also, he also writes there about the inconstancy or constancy of his heart. And this obviously has to do with all these often very contradictory emotions that we all have, I suppose.

Gwynne: How did that happen, Gwen, that you were actually quoting things that you hadn't even read by Jung?

James: Wow.

Gwynne: It was like channeling some... And then what happens is, I know it's not me. I know that I must be getting it from somewhere. So then my intellect takes over and says, "Well, where is it?" And lo and behold, I have all of his documents, and I go right to it. And I'm just trusting my intuition. That doesn't happen all the time, but mostly between 2:00 and 4:00 in the morning, there is something that takes over. Even when I was doing artwork and I did stained glass for a long time, I would work from 2:00 and 4:00 in the morning and it just was magic. So it has something to do with the vibration of that energy during that time. And I'm in a busy city. I know James, you're in Ireland? Where are you?

James: In Berlin, in Germany.

Gwynne: Oh my goodness. Okay. Well, that's busy.

James: I remember, I recall something Robin said a couple of years ago about ideas just coming as if out of nowhere. And to do with, it was I think, I think it was the Bokharan Dervish chapter about the vibrations. And that gave me a lot of food for thought. Sometimes you just start thinking, and you don't know where the thoughts come from, what its origin was, is it something fresh, it's new, it's different? And one wonders where it comes from. Could this have something to do with this writing that you were just speaking about, Gwen? That it comes from other sources, these vibrations?

Gwynne: Well, also I wanted to mention that when I was reading again for about the 50th time, The Arousing of Thought, I was reading it by myself at 2:00 in the morning. And what I got was a very tonal quality of a thought form that says, "Gwen, what do you have to sacrifice in yourself to read this and understand it?" And I thought, "That's interesting. Sacrifice. Sacrifice. What do I sacrifice in my ego and my persona to be able to do this, to read this chapter especially?"

Robin: So pausing the warning he gives. The warning is very simple: he's going to subject you to a very disturbing experience. Nothing ambiguous about it. But you actually have to really parse the whole paragraph to actually deduce that yes, what he's saying is that your existence as it is now is based on a certain kind of wealth that consists of quieting notions and naive dreams. And he's going to destroy that. And he does.

James: Warning, to give notice of danger or to take heed. And it's Old English, but there's it comes from the Proto-Indo-European stuff, 'wer', and it means 'to cover'.

Yusuf: Sorry, which word was that?

James: Warning.

Yusuf: Oh, warning.

Yusuf: I actually, I mean, I love the word that he uses, 'the wealth', in inverted commas, of course, because he's being, maybe sarcastic or it's a bit of irony as well. But it just covers so much. It covers material as well as... I mean, it's just the way, the placement of that word is just very right for me.

James: Well, I checked that word out for some strange reason today, and it's the Old English meaning of it was just meant welfare or well-being. It's only later on it came to mean money and stuff like that.

Ekant: I see that in this first paragraph of page... not the first... where where he started, the last paragraph, beginning with a warning, he introduces another thing. He say, "either organic, psychic or even," and then in quotes, "willful." So it could be a reference on the three centers in a way. And 'willful' in comma because there is not at the beginning really something we could call a will.

Robin: Yeah, I think that's correct observation there, Ercan. Organic would mean body, psychic would mean the mind, and willful is emotion. Just another triple.

Gwynne: Say that again about the organic.

Robin: Organic is body. Psychic is mind. Willful is emotion.

Gwynne: So placing the organic in the Law of Octaves as you're reading this, or the the seven centers that Eckhart was talking about, how important is that in allowing the body and the organism to be in a state of quietude to raise the level of being and will? Am I barking up the wrong tree?

Robin: I don't know. I'm not sure what you're asking.

Gwynne: I'm not either.

Robin: There may not even be a tree then. Well, you can do that, but there's an electromagnetic field to the other two bodies as well. So it's a difficult thing to sort all of that out. The essence is plasma, and the body of the soul is plasma, and there's just no way of getting away from that. But the problem is that the physical body is also plasma. And the same kind of constructs that make the physical body work have to be the constructs that make the Kesdjan body and the body of the soul work. I mean, it has to be the same because electromagnetic effects scale. They go from the small to the large, and they're always the same. Small or large. This is an interesting phenomenon that they've discovered a long time ago, like 60 or 70 years ago in the laboratory, that electromagnetic effects can be observed almost at atomic level, at the level of the way we perceive objects, at the level of the earth, at the level of the sun, at the level of the galaxies. It always seems to be exactly the same. They're all Birkeland currents. They all appear to have a superconductivity that's very difficult to explain, and so on. It's all there, it's just in different scale.

Gwynne: But if Gwen, if if you don't sense it though, through your body, I get lost in my associations if I lose my senses.

Robin: Well, I think that's true, isn't it? It's like, this is one of the reasons why in the work we are instructed to do a preparation or a sitting at the beginning of the day, in order that we do not let a day go by when we're not aware of our body. Because if nothing else, then those 20 minutes in the morning, you are being in contact with your body. And that is supposed to be an exercise that gradually grows the Kesdjan body, makes it more permanent.

James: But what does he, what do you think he means by these three sexes? Male, female, and it. What what is it? Is he speaking about homosexuals, lesbians, what? Transvestites?

Robin: Well, he does talk about that later, in I can't remember which chapter it's in, but where he goes to these three buildings where the males, the females, and the third sex spend their time during particular periods of the month. So he's talking in terms of those people that are not precisely male or female. But mostly, they don't have many possibilities. But then you get this reality of the fact that you had the Ladies of the Rope, which were a group of lesbian women who proved to be incredibly influential and powerful in the way that the work was taught, particularly in England. Jane Heap pretty much determined the way that the work went in England until the Gurdjieff Foundation kind of ambushed it and took it over.

Gwynne: So, to me, it's more about the androgynous connection.

Robin: I don't think it is. I think when he's talking about three sexes, he's talking about three, as he would say, definite genders. And Androgyne doesn't have a gender.

Gwynne: Well, I don't and I don't read it as gender.

Robin: When he talks about sexes, I don't understand how you can separate the word 'gender' from the word 'sex'.

Gwynne: You and I need a long talk on that one.

Robin: Oh, well, let's have it. Let's take it offline. Shall I drive to you, or shall you drive to me?

Gwynne: It'll take a long three-hour lunch. I'll see you then.

Robin: Well, we're close enough for that to happen, but we don't promise to report back on the outcome.

J O'Donnell: As a postscript to that, I'd pay to see that.

Ronald: Uh, in this general territory of conversation, uh, there's the comment "and my no wise hysterical ladies." And there has been endlessness, endless teeth grinding among the ladies of groups I've been in, reading groups and a Gurdjieff group. And they, oh...

James: They do not like it, Ronald. They do not like that. The women in the groups.

Ronald: Yes, exactly. And I... I'd like a defensive response, Robin. Uh, other than the usual, "Well, that's the time he lived in and the culture he lived in." Well, you don't say that about the rest of the book, or I don't anyway.

Robin: What, you mean in the 1930s, women were way more hysterical than they are now? You couldn't say that. They've all really got male personalities, and it's really hard to distinguish between a male and a female. Gurdjieff said, "Women are hysterical five days a week, men only three." So that's okay.

Gwynne: Well, when you suppress hysteria in both male and female, you then end up with illnesses. So I think that some of the... and that is old guard. I mean, it is during the time Ronald, he was really inundated with the hysteria. But he makes a lot of issues around the sex center that I do not see as a gender connection. And so that's where our talk needs to go.

James: I'd just like to point out, in case some of you have missed it, Eric has made a note in the chat

regarding the origin of the the third sex, I believe. And it's in the chapter on war, but I think if you read that comment, that message, I think that would be quite illuminating in terms of might explain something.

Robin: We we'll study that when we get to it because it's it's a big topic, if you like. There's an aspect to the sex center. One of the aspects to the sex center is it's there primarily in order to enable the continuation of the species. And the sex center is present in one-brained, two-brained, and three-brained beings. And in that sense, there isn't much to distinguish its impact if the impact is about the continuation of the species. But there is also a use of that energy that I've read about, but I don't know anything about it in terms of practice, where within the human being, that energy can be used in different ways. And there is the very significant difference: the female of the species for virtually every species, when no longer capable of reproduction, dies. But in the human species, they keep on living longer than the men, in actual fact. But that isn't the destiny of the female of the species in three-brained beings, but it is the destiny in two and one-brained beings. So that's a distinction. Then the other thing is the need, in one way or another, to actually deal with in males the creation of this energy, which is C12 of the food octave. Which if it isn't dealt with causes specific problems in human beings, which he describes as monks getting fat, and also a fanaticism that can arise from people that are not having that surplus C12 extracted from them. In animals, that just doesn't happen. If the male of the species needs to get rid of the sexual energy, it does. And it does by law, if you like. So there is a significant difference in that respect because there's a psychological impact of the management of sexual energy.

Gwynne: To me, procreation... like in my 80s, I'm no longer procreative, right? But I create a lot. So I think that energy is then used in creation, creativity, artistry. That's when that sex center is fully orgasmic in creativity. I feel very orgasmic when I'm in a creative mode. Hey, you know. And also, I was in a group, a Gurdjieff group, where someone made the connection, I don't know who it was, that said that someone with a clean sex center also has a charismatic magnetic pull in engaging. Is that not new information to you?

Robin: It might be. It isn't information that I know how to process, to be honest. I mean, all that we have in terms of Gurdjieff is various... he used to pay for some of the men in the Priory to go into Paris and have sex with the prostitutes because they needed a certain kind of siphoning off of their sexual energy. So he used to pay for it. And I don't know, he said, some men need once a week, some men once a month, some men half a year, some men a year. It's different in terms of how it accumulates. And that's all that I know in terms of his statement on the fact. But there's also other statements from other traditions, particularly from Tantric, the Tantric tradition, and the Daoist tradition, that that energy can be used in another way. It's transformable into another octave, in which case it's no longer part of the food octave. It becomes... So if you look at the the various hydrogen 12s, C12 is sexual energy and is used for procreation normally. But the other 12s are Sol 12 of the breath octave and Mi 12 of the impressions octave. And Mi 12 is a higher substance than Sol 12, and Sol 12 and Mi 12 are higher substances than C12. So the trick would be to get C12 in some way or other into those other two octaves. If I knew how to do it, I'd sell it all to you for a fortune because I'm sure you'd all buy it. I'm just waiting for Gwen to tell me how it's done.

James: That explains really very clearly what you just said. It explains this business of Tantric sex. Tantric sex energy. Wow.

Gwynne: That is, from me being an old 60s person, the Tantric sex movement was very strong in the 60s. So, you know, it is a matter of moving energy, period. And sex energy is a strong energy. But if it is wasted in only the physical, then you literally... Like when he would send them... He thought his own sex center was a spiritual enlightenment, so these kids he had were these spiritual

kids. He thought his own sex was precious. You see? So I doubt seriously he was going around with prostitutes, period. But I know that when he sent young men to see the prostitute is to get rid of that initial thing that is not Tantric. That's not Tantric at all.

James: I don't think Robin was speaking of it like that, Gwen.

Robin: No, I wasn't. It's more like chucking out the food when it goes bad. And that's what they... those men were using those particular prostitutes for. In actual fact, it's probably a good idea for a number of men who are, let's say, sexually obsessed and become sexual criminals, that the whole of their situation could probably be addressed if they were given the ability to have regular sex with someone to just take away the energy that is disharmonized in them, rather than them become obsessed. I mean, it's really obvious when you kind of think about it. C12 is going to go straight into hydrogen 24, which is identification, if it isn't in some way or other excreted, then it's going to go into hydrogen 24. And whatever the particular intellectual center is fixated on, that's going to become the object of, I don't know, sexual imagination that happens within the individual.

Kelly: When he talks about hysteria, wasn't that directly a sexual disease, in effect, for women, that the treatment was basically giving women orgasms? So it may be exactly what you're talking about that he's referring to.

Gwynne: Well, and Freud's the one that started that, Rod. And he got thrown out of psychoanalytic association because he said just that. So basically, it... we're talking about, to me, when Gurdjieff is talking about the sex center and what Robin's saying about transmuting, is when you have hysteria, you have a blocked sex center. You have a tremendous blocked sex center. Freud, and he was living during that time, so he knew that Freud had been nailed on the cross about it. And Freud had to withdraw... he called it the seduction theory... he had to withdraw the whole idea of hysteria being a sexual component. But he said... so he had to withdraw his statements, but it's out there. You know, his seduction theory is very built on that, on just what you said, Rod.

Robin: God willing, President Biden will get. Based on the Greek word for womb hysteria. That's why it seems a bit... I mean, it's quite true that hysteria is really identified emotion mostly. And therefore men are quite capable of it, but they don't seem to have a womb. So perhaps, perhaps there's some kind of hormonal difference that makes it more prevalent in women.

Gwynne: Men's hysteria is in their headaches. If a male is hysterical, it is in their headaches. They have migraines or headaches because it's blocked. That doesn't mean they're not hysterical. And then some of it goes into manic depression. But you have, in order to treat it therapeutically, you have to bring the hysteria out of the male. And he's usually married to a hysterical woman. Just saying.

Robin: Well, I'm glad we have your experience to deliver us little bits of data like that, because where else would we get them from?

James: Can change very quickly that girl.

J O'Donnell: Maybe that's our chief feature, whiny babies.

Gwynne: That's pitiful hysterical people. Whiny babies are are pitiful, hysterical. I used to have a cat that I rescued and I called it 'Pitiful' because she was so hysterical about losing her other kittens. I still think that this man, Gurdjieff, who I don't see as a kind man, I see him as a genius who operated creatively during high-pressured World Wars, right in the middle of it, and carried

on with his third force. And I think that is a lesson for all of us actually.

James: Actually in the city full of Nazis, you know? Having his meetings, having feasts, living his life to the full in the way through his work, his inner work, and the help that he was giving to others, surrounded by the occupying forces of Nazi Germany. Unbelievable really sometimes when you think about it.

Michelle: But you spoke only from World Wars, but he also was in the Turkish-Armenian war, and the Russian revolution, and it was all awful.

Gwynne: So he himself, his work is a revolution. The Gurdjieff work is a revolution in individuation process, making the individual responsible. And we have our own inner wars that are just the same as World War II, World War III, except we don't see the blood and guts. That's what I sacrificed when he talked to me at 2:00 in the morning, Robin. Sacrifice, Gwen, yes.

Robin: I think that's... it's well known, isn't it, that there's a very strange period between 2:00 and 4:00. And it's said to be the most likely time for you to die because it's the... in during the day, the... let's say your spiritual side is least connected to your physical side. The body is at its lowest point, and the body Keshjan and the body of the soul are doing whatever they're doing.

Gwynne: Well, and you know, the thing is, you would think that at 2:00 in the morning, because I go to bed about 11:00, at 2:00 in the morning, you would think you would still be drowsy. I wake up like the whole world is on fire outside fueling me. My eyes are wide open. It's amazing. And then when I go back to bed at 4:30 or 5:00, I'm dead tired. It's amazing about the energy because it's the energetic level of something.

James: You come across as a highly energetic lady.

Gwynne: Ah, I know. I know it's not me sometimes though, James. It really isn't. You know, because, you know, I'm around, I play a lot of competitive bridge, and I'm around a lot of 83, 84-year-olds like me, and they, you know, they're like old people. And it's like, I don't understand. So if I'm going out between 2:00 and 4:00 in the morning, Robin, c'est la vie.

Robin: Yeah, I know. Invite me round when you're intending to die, and I'll wave you goodbye personally.

Gwynne: I could be dead talking to y'all right now.

Robin: Oh, that's spooky.

Gwynne: I will. Are you going to come to meetings after you're dead? Just a question. We won't change the time so you won't get confused. You'll know. You'll know.

Michelle: We will miss you. We will miss you, Gwen.

James: Yes, we will.

Gwynne: Oh, you won't. No, you won't.

Michelle: I will.

Gwynne: I'll be here. You'll feel me.

Michelle: Oh, okay. So you point out that somebody has to be your substitute.

Gwynne: Well, James will feel me, you know. And overtake your commands.

Robin: We have run out of time. So James, would you like to lead us in a moment's silence to finish the meeting?

James: Yes. I'll take, I'll take a couple of minutes. Okay. So, can everybody just take a more objective position of body? Nothing, nothing too strenuous, just straight back. Soles, soles on soles of the feet on the floor. The head comfortably sitting on the shoulders. And the back is straight as one can make it. Now we use our attention and check out any tensions or ticks that are in the body. And when we come across them, we just let them go. We just let the tension go when we find it. We need to be relaxed. Relaxation is good. I usually have tensions in the face. I'm trying to let it go now. Just let the face drop in a way.

Meeting #002

US Session Transcript

Robin: Now, before we begin the reading, I thought I would just point some things out that hopefully are useful to people. So let me... Right, this is the home page. If you like, it's the records page of this series of meetings. And this will continue until we've got to the end of the book, really. And I just want to show you what's here.

So the first thing to point to is that the text of the tales that we are reading from is here. And this is the tales, but it's been marked up. So everything up to there is the first meeting, that's the text we've studied. This is up to 002 is the second meeting, the text up to there. And so on, and it goes all the way through the first book of the tales. I think if you go to the end, I think it's about 56. No, 58. And what basically has been done here is that we're studying about six pages every week, but the reality is that you can't really break it up that precisely. So sometimes it may be seven or eight pages, but it's that's the level of what we're studying.

So that's that link.

This link here takes you to the multilingual tales resource.

If you go on that, you come to here and basically this site has, well let's go to Gurdjieff's writings because it's easier to demonstrate. At the moment, there's only Beelzebub's Tales here. But if you go here, then that's the English version. And you can page through, so that's the next page, and that's the next page, and that's the next page, and so on. But you've also got the German version. So you can go from the English version to the German version and see the same page in German, or the same page in Russian, or the same page in French, or this hasn't been completed yet, I don't think, but some of the pages in Italian and some of the pages in Spanish.

So this is a complete multilingual set of versions of the tales. And we will be, Michelle Think is the person who's organized this, and we will be linking between this tale study that we're doing and this book so that this is not really an island in itself. There'll be more and more, it'll be more and more useful in time. But it's already unprecedented. I don't know of anything like this anywhere. And it's taken about a year to get to this point.

So there's that.

Then for every meeting, first of all, there's the video record of the meeting. The first meeting of the day and the second meeting of the day, and then there's the transcripts. So what we have here is the transcript, full transcript of the EU session, followed by the full transcript of the US session, followed by an AI meeting summary of the EU session and an AI meeting summary of the US session. So there's that for those that want that.

And then there's this.

So this is a book that is gradually being assembled which has the comments. So it begins with the cover. And what we've got here is all the notes that I've put together from the first meeting we've had, and as you can see, it runs to 34 pages. On the left hand side, we have the text of the tales, and on the right hand side, we have a commentary, but if the commentary, for instance the friendly advice commentary, goes beyond a page, which of course most of them will do, then it just keeps rolling around until you get to the next page. And the next page is the contents page and so on.

So that's being gradually assembled and it will be accumulated week by week. And we will eventually, well, it'll be available anyway as a in a PDF form like this, and we will eventually publish hard copies of it so that what we will end up over a certain amount of time is a complete set of commentary on all of the pages of the tales.

Now it was suggested to me that I allow people to make contributions to this, which is quite fine. I don't mind doing that. So I will be creating a page where if people want to make notes about anything particular, then they'll be able to add it, and I'll add it into the commentary on the tales if I think it's suitable, basically. I'll be the editor of that. So we haven't yet got that, but we've got everything else.

And this is just going to grow over a period of time. And it's not just comments on these meetings we're having, but we will also have comments from other tales meetings in the past, if things have come up there that aren't mentioned.

So that's what we're doing in total. That's the full scope of it all. And I shall keep you informed. I'll probably just walk through this several times. I did a walk through this this morning and about four people were late to the meeting, so they missed it. I'll write some notes on it as well so everybody understands.

And so if somebody joins meeting 10, they hear about this and they think, "I'll join up," then they'll be able to go through everything that's happened. They'll be able to have a commentary on everything that's gone before. They'll be able to read the transcripts of everything that's gone before. That's the goal is that anybody that wants this, for this to become as large a resource as one could ever imagine to the tales. That's what I'm aiming for. Having said that...

Bobbie: So Robin, on this page, you want to edit these years in December.

Robin: Oh yeah, I was only halfway through this and there won't be a meeting on Christmas Eve, I don't think, because everybody will be hanging up their stockings and they won't have time to be Beelzebub's Tales. You know that, really. So you're absolutely right. Thanks for pointing that out. And I'm really happy if anybody sees any fault in anything that's done for them to point it out. I'm not precious about this stuff. I prefer it to be right rather than anything else. So thank you for that, Bobby. You are a superstar.

Robin: I should be able to go back now to where I was, which is to say that Stephen is our reader today.

Sandy: Well, let me say too, this is an amazing project, Robin, and I think everybody that participates in it, it's such a wonderful opportunity to be part of this project. That's a real motivation to keep going on. And also I want to add Bobby told me she was at the AM meeting today. So just a reminder to everybody, you can go to that meeting as well as this one, right? And also review, just review those meetings too. Go ahead, Bobby.

Bobbie: It was last week when I stepped in.

Sandy: Oh, last week. Sorry. I thought it was this week.

Bobbie: No, I was too lazy this week.

Sandy: So if you don't like us, you can go to them. If you don't like them, you can go to us.

Bobbie: But it is interesting to see the different directions the two groups take on the same

information. So, very good.

Robin: Yeah, it's an interesting phenomenon, to be honest, because you also get, because the conversation, I mean, we're actually having a two-hour meeting here, which is also a long time for a meeting, if you like. But it's interesting how one group of people will focus in on something quite different to the other group. It just happens. There's also the phenomena that things that relate to other pages of the tales start to get talked about anyway.

Robin: So there'll be a piece of work done probably by me rather than anybody else, which is to also go through using an AI engine to look at all the transcripts and try to have it make notes and see if it finds anything that was talked about that I never included. So we will have that. So we got other people being able to make a contribution whenever they think that there's something that also could be said.

Robin: I mean, we're charging for the study group because that's what we do, in the sense that people normally don't appreciate anything unless they're paying a bit for it. But to be honest, you could come once and just see it all. Just wait till the last meeting, sign up for one thing, and see it all. We're not trying to be precious about this. We're trying to in one way or another make it available. We think that it's time for this book to be completely opened.

Robin: And so it maybe it goes beyond these two groups. And by the way, I will say this, that the composition of the morning group and the afternoon group on Wednesdays, there are some really, really good people that participate in all of this. And it's what the Japanese, the Japanese have a saying that you may be cleverer than any one of us, but you're not cleverer than all of us. And that's what we are, it's all of us. And having said that, I'll hand over to Stephen, who I'm sure is just dying to read.

Stephen: I am dying to read, but I want to say one quick thing before we start, Robin. First, let me echo Sandy's appreciation and just I'm just hugely impressed by the contribution you make to keeping this book alive and making sure that its power lasts into future generations. And so I think we're all sort of in your debt for that. But I also want to say that now that you're, now that more things are being recorded and our procedures are becoming maybe a little more formal and that you're going to create this running commentary, I hope that knowing that we're sort of building our own book together does not dissuade anyone from saying whatever they need to say or coming up with whatever question they have, as confused as it might be to them, because I would not like anybody to think that they have to say something brilliant or cohesive because suddenly it's going to become part of a permanent commentary. I just think it's really important for us to talk as freely as we need to, even though it may result in some pretty scattered conversations sometimes. So I hope that's not running counter to what your expectations are, Robin.

Robin: No, no, that's actually in the spirit of things. It's I'm ultimately the commentary, I'm the ultimate editor. So if somebody makes a comment and I don't think it's worth including, it won't be included, but it will be included elsewhere on the site. Because I'm not the great expert on everything, but I've probably got more experience with this book than anybody else that's involved. So I can make editorial decisions about what's in the commentary. But it's all going to be there anyway, in one way or another, in the site. I don't want any kind of censorship of ideas because there are so many things that I just never expected that we eventually discovered already in the tales. I don't think there necessarily are any stupid ideas. I just think there are ideas that may...

Stephen: Here she goes again.

Stephen: Shame on me. I was muted. Sorry. Go ahead, Sandy.

Sandy: No, I was actually looking at you folks while I was listening and paying attention to what was being read so beautifully by you, Stephen. And I must say I was just absolutely thrilled to see how many people had their eyes shut and were listening because it struck me this week and not before this week how much sound is involved in Gurdjieff. And I was jotting down the places where I noted that sound is mentioned, heard, referred to, and how important it is in his book.

Sandy: I'd first heard that concept back in college probably 40 years ago with Hawthorne and his use of sound in some of his Puritan stories. And it's like never occurred to me that an author could evoke sound in stories before. And I think nobody does it like Gurdjieff, so I just have to bring up how much sound plays out, starting with the Toulousites and just some of the language is so poetic. But the reference to the Pianola and bombastic, magniloquent, honey-inflated phrases. I mean, that's pretty sound rich right there. I'm not going to go Bon Ton, I have to say Bon Ton is always a very poetic sounding thing to me. So even the ordinary Bon Ton language is sort of poetic sounding there.

Sandy: And here's the reference to the Edison phonograph that we've seen recently in another book we're reading that inspired me to draw Madame Vitvitskaya because I realized she's a reference to sound also when you come across her in another book. So sound is huge in Gurdjieff and I never gave him credit before. Not to mention dancing master, musician. I'll stop.

Stephen: Yeah, it is important. And I have to say that this reading through this time and reading it ahead of our meeting and then reading it aloud this time, I'm struck even more forcefully than before how this entire first section is just permeated with irony. He's saying the opposite of what he really means almost from the first word. I looked up, because I'm going to really use the etymology dictionary a lot this time through. I looked up those first two words, responsible and peculiarly, that's a hard word to say, peculiarly, in the first sentence.

Stephen: Peculiar is related to the word pecuniary, and it's traced back to a word that actually means cattle. And it means, I think, owning, I mean, it seems to have meant originally, having your own cattle. So when he calls his own life peculiar, he may be saying that from the beginning, I had my own life. My own life was uniquely mine and not a life that was I was told to live by anybody else.

Stephen: And the word responsible traces back to a word that means to make a pledge. And so he's also saying that from the earliest times of his life, he was living according to some pledge that he had felt. Now, that may be overinterpretation, but if it's not, if those implications are in there, he's really saying from the very first sentence, "I am not a person like you are. I'm a somewhat different person and I'm a person, and I'm addressing you as a person who... I'm not saying you should become like me, but I'm a different sort of person than you are, let's put it that way."

Stephen: And that later, and when he says that he's going to take from us everything we have in writing this book, he's not kidding. Because it seems to me that he's holding up a mirror from the very beginning and saying, "Here, have a look. Is your life responsible? Is your life peculiar, the way that mine has been? Is it really, has it really been your own life?" And like, that's the opening tone, and it only intensifies from there on out.

Derek: To expand on what you were saying, Stephen, I found it interesting when I was reading through it this time that he, that Gurdjieff found it necessary to emphasize that his hand and his heart are his own. Which, I mean, how many people's metaphorically are not? And then to what Sandy was saying, I've often wondered if the reference to a Pianola isn't the first indication of a

musical structure to the tales.

Robin: Well, there's irony in the Pianola because the idea that you can just begin something and it'll all roll out wonderfully, mechanically, is obviously a complete delusion. So it's, he's clearly making an ironic comment. Now that I've started so well, it's just going to roll out. And here we are on page two, next thousand pages, it'll all be easy. Who's going to have a problem with that?

Richard: He also mentions a conviction that he says more often an indubitable conviction. Now, that doesn't mean it's right. It's just I, there's a like, he could be mistaken, but it is a conviction. So this word indubitable conviction may be a mistaken one, but he's got this word, "Oh, I'm, it's undoubtedly a conviction for sure." And in my common presence, I thought that this idea of a common presence that we have with everybody, it's, it's something that we share socially or does he mean in his common presence, his individual presence? Those are two things that I saw just to add to what Stephen was saying.

Robin: In terms of common presence, my assumption when I one day, I must have read the book about four or five times before I even noticed that he uses this and then had the question in my head, "What does he mean?" My assumption is he's referring to the fact that we are three-centered and therefore we don't have a single presence, we have a common presence that's part intellectual, part emotional, and part physical. And you will discover that there are many other combinations of words in the tales where you perhaps have never asked yourself, "What does he mean?" You know, so it's good to point out some of these things right at the beginning.

John: I think he's also referring to the creation of the universe. He starts out with the doxology, which is a big bang or close to it. And there is the idea, I can't say whose idea it is culturally, but it's the idea that you need a strong do. It's probably mentioned in *In Search of*. Probably said something about it there. I know I've heard it somewhere. You need a strong do to get past the Mi-Fa.

Derek: You're saying, you're saying that the do is the arousing the thought, the whole arousing the thought?

John: Oh, yeah. Sure.

Stephen: Yeah, I think you make a really... I think it's really strong, a very strong do. Yeah.

Stephen: I think that's a really important point, John, especially in light of the fact that nobody does what he says that everybody does, which is to start every new project by formulating in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I can't remember one project I've started with that intonation, which means that I rarely start anything with a strong enough do to ever succeed in getting through it. So, I think that's right on.

John: I've seen a lot of tradesmen do the sign of the cross when they start a project, particularly if they're destroying something.

Robin: Yes. Those words are spoken normally at the time that one does this sign of the cross by those people, I guess, that were taught to do it that way. Of course, Gurdjieff deliberately gets the words wrong. The actual words you'll find in Matthew in the Gospels, and it's, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," or if you go by the King James's Bible, "the Holy Ghost." You've got the choice of "Spirit" or "Ghost," but it isn't expressed in the way that Gurdjieff expresses it there by saying, "and in the name of the Holy Ghost." So that's already an intentional inexactitude, if you like.

Robin: There are specific occasions where the church deliberately does that. So this crossing oneself is one of those occasions, but also at baptisms they do it. And I've got a list of the other things that I'll stick in the notes, but it's... The idea of doing it at a baptism makes perfect sense to me.

Bobbie: We were taught and practiced, we did it as we entered the church and when we left the church. We have a fountain of holy water there and you use that and you bless yourself. So we did a lot.

Richard: Couldn't it mean also that it's the law of three?

Robin: Yes, I mean that's... If you actually look at just this passage, you see the law of three rising up again and again and again in one way or another that you perhaps don't notice. But yes, it's the law of three. But you will also see when he talks a bit later about... it's on page seven, I think. Or is it page eight? Psycho-physico-astrological. The psycho is the mind, the physical is the body, the astrological is the essence. It's law of three, yet again. And I think there's another one earlier. And I think as we go through the book, we could have a bingo card with different laws of three on it, and you could fill in, put a cross when you spot a law of three.

Derek: About the law of three. I wanted to ask, Robin, in the first meeting you mentioned there being only cosmoeses and substances to objective science. So, I mean, I kind of like that, but I kind of hate it because I'll forever be looking for things that violate it. But anyway, is a law a substance?

Robin: The law of three is explained, in my opinion, best by Rodney Collin. Because there are six different manifestations of the law of three. Three of them are ascending and three of them are descending. And therefore, when we're doing something in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we're doing it in that order. And that order is evolutionary. It's ascending, I believe.

Robin: You could put it in a different order if you wanted, "In the name of Jesus, because I like him best, and God and the Holy Ghost, let's do it that way."

Robin: There's another thing to note here, just because there are some things that are being done here for the first time. If you haven't read the book, then you don't, for instance, understand that... let's, we're looking on page five. And he says, "...other like myself, biped destroyers of nature's good." But nature is capitalized. The word nature's got a capital. And is, "I shall begin quite simply with a warning." And the word warning has a capital. And those capitals are an indication that you should take the meaning of this word, let's say, at its highest level.

Robin: So, you can't do this in German, because all nouns in German begin with capitals. So, you can't do it in German. So, the English version of the tales is slightly different than the German version of the tales, because you have these emphases that you don't have. You'll notice as we go deeper and deeper into the text, that he speaks of two kinds of reason: reason with a capital R and reason without a capital R. And the reason without a capital R is normally referred to as bobtailed reason. And again, we'll get to discuss that later on.

Richard: Robin, the second paragraph with the ancient Tulsites, the fact that that was part of the Cathar controversy and they were destroyed, does that history at all come into understanding that second paragraph and why he was bringing up that reference?

Robin: Well, it might do. I think John's got some things to say about this, which are not in alignment with what I'm going to say. But you see, it's up to everybody to try and think. So what happened in Montségur was this, the first, it was actually the first crusade, but it was a crusade by

the Roman Catholic Church against the Cathars. And they sent an army out, and they besieged Montségur, which is part of the Toulouse region. And eventually the defense of Montségur failed, and they burned them all to death. And as they were burned to death, they marched into the fires singing hymns. So you could say that he's referring to, possibly indicating that level of committed intonation that one has when one is actually singing oneself into one's death. That's one thing. But John, you've got some other stuff about Toulouse, haven't you, in terms of intonation? You have to unmute yourself, or else everyone's going to miss your wisdom.

John: As far as intonation goes, even the first time I heard this passage, I felt he was referring to the intonation which the priest makes when he turns and faces the congregation: Dominus vobiscum. And they answer: Et cum spiritu tuo, with the same kind of intonation coming back. And he goes through the Mass, one little piece after another, with that kind of public speaking, as it were. But it's not just normal public speaking, it's a certain tone. I almost think they must teach them that in the monastery, or it's just imitation. Maybe Bobby would say something about that.

Bobbie: John, I do agree there is this sound, but I think it's similar to the sound of the Hebrew readings, kind of a musical, not an entertainment, but it brings you in. Robert, you know what I'm talking about?

Richard: I've never heard it expressed so well, Bobby. It's really, I didn't realize that. Yeah, I mean, it just, musical in the Hebrew... Yeah, I sang in the choir, so everything is music in that whole service, for sure. I didn't think of it in terms of bringing us in, but it is participatory, for sure. But they don't have this, like John was saying, this back and forth where the priest actually faces everybody. In the Hebrew tradition, they face the Torah all the time, or they face what they're reading. The cantor's got his back to the congregation all the time. So it's a different setup.

Robin: But in all of these examples, we are looking at the meaning wrapped in quotes with the words "holy manifested intonation," which means that you are there doing it, whichever way you look at it. So all of these possible links don't detract from that. And I'm sure that the people who are conducting these services, whether they be Christian or Hebrew, or, I've no idea, maybe there's stuff like this in Islam as well, I'm sure that they're all trained to be completely present when they're doing it and manifesting. You know, when the muezzin goes to the top of the minaret and shouts Allah-u Akbar, I'm sure he isn't doing it without training to in one way or another inspire the whole of the population within earshot.

Sandy: This is really wonderful to hear about these intonation traditions of both the Catholics and the Hebrews. And I was wondering, John might be able to answer this. I can't remember the word for it, but between arias in an opera, there's this running the story along with... what do you call that? They're not talking, they're kind of singing. But always the connection, and I wonder if it's true with the priests and the rabbis, if it's the sort of like consolidation of the sound into very few notes, just a couple, three notes. Maybe five, maybe two. Am I wrong on that? But what do you call that, what they do between arias in an opera when they're not talking? They are...

Stephen: Recitative.

Sandy: That's what it is. Yeah. I forgot. Tell me more. Would that be a secular form of what we're talking about? Full intonations?

John: I think it's something different. I don't believe that there's a whole lot of opera, which is acting, is holy... holy... what does he say? Holy invested manifestation. That's a three-centered impulse. And that tone of that need not be considered musical, although there's pitch in everything, of course.

Stephen: I wanted to stay on this word "warning" a little bit longer.

Sandy: Before you go on to that, I want to ask Russell real quick. You seem to know a thing or two about music. Do you have anything else you can add to what I was just asking about, along with John's very good contribution?

Russell: Oh, Robin mentioned something about or somebody mentioned something about the musical quality. Yeah, there's a hint about that. I can't remember the words exactly, but no, as far as opera music, I'm not really an expert, but I did go to school to study music and all this. But, um, no, I think Gurdjieff's music is on a different level. I mean, not that I can really judge that, but I looking, trying to understand his music more in terms of what the shocks are and even how to maybe compose this type of thing or even to understand it better.

Russell: One of the Gurdjieff's students, I can't remember who it was, did mention something that a lot of the... I guess in one of his books, he was talking about... this is Gurdjieff, by the way... talking about not... you know, that the lady that was a remarkable woman and was going through all this music, she must have taught herself how to play piano really well, which is just incredibly impressive to me. But, anyway, that a lot of the music is not... it didn't have an objective effect. So, even though my teacher told me that opera was the highest form of music, I do not believe that it really is the highest form of music in general. Anyway, that's just my own subjective way to look. I don't... I don't know, honestly, what objective music really is. I can't really tell unless I...

Russell: Well, there was a reference to Bach, that Bach had... one of the students that Gurdjieff taught his people how to sense music, not to feel music. Love not art with the emotions, right? Remember? And, anyway, so I can imagine that developing one's other faculty, even the intellectual, is a better way to judge music. In other words, you study the lyrics and you try to see, "Hey, is there any good to this music?" But anyway, I'm getting off on a tangent. But Bach, they said, one of the students that he had three effects that Bach's music had on a listener, and it didn't really matter who it was. And that was a feeling of religiousness in the body and a stimulation of the intellect in a certain way, and yet at the same time, the emotions had a response to it. And I find that to be true, absolutely true. So I don't get that from a lot of opera. I have more of an emotional reaction. That's my long version. I'm sorry, Robin. Go ahead.

Sandy: Back to Stephen, too. Thank you so much, Russell. I think that was helpful to me.

Russell: You're welcome. Yeah, I don't know much about it. I'm barely studying it, even though I've read Beelzebub's multiple, multiple times, over and over. And I just, I just notice that I'm just barely scratching the surface of all the knowledge and the law of three is fascinating how it, you know, interplays in every single objective, you know, even biblical stuff, you know, that's really objective, you know, has this aspect, this three-sided aspect. I'll have to read what did you say, Robin, that Collins book? I haven't, I don't think I've read that book.

Robin: The Rodney Collin book is, that speaks most about it is The Theory of Celestial Influence.

Russell: Ah, that's neat.

Robin: Yeah, you can also read about it in Keith Bazell's books. Some of Keith Bazell's books touch on it. And Ouspensky mentions it, but not to the depth that Rodney Collin does.

Russell: I see. Fascinating. Well, didn't somebody, I never thought of descending and ascending. It certainly makes sense. Uh, I guess I was recalling somebody saying about, "I am now, now I am, am I now?" It seems like it's all ascending to me, but I don't really know anything about that, so I dare not judge it, but it's beautiful what he said and, you know, the idea of that.

Robin: One of the things that happened with me, was at a certain point in time, and it was about 20 odd years ago, that I realized that most people who'd read *In Search of the Miraculous* didn't understand very much about it at all. And there are some, what you would call, very entertaining and stimulating ideas in *In Search of the Miraculous* that are psychological. And I think most people get those, and even if they don't understand them perfectly, I think they reasonably do understand what's being said in terms of the way that the psyche works.

Robin: But when I went to a Gurdjieff group for the first time in America and I asked the question, "What's the difference between an ascending and a descending octave?" Then despite the fact that there were some very old, let's call them, pupils there who had even studied under Madame de Salzmann on occasion, they didn't know the answer. And I was a little bit surprised by this. But then again, it was true that I didn't really know the answer either, but actually you can find the answer out by studying it.

Robin: And this is one of the things about the law of three as well. We should know about the octave. Now, we might not know everything that there is to know about the octave, but we actually should know at least the difference between a descending octave and an ascending octave. And we should know about the law of three as well. And again, the law of three and all of its implications may, in fact, be... may require an awful lot of pondering. But we should at least know the basic structure of the law of three.

Stephen: Remember Husayn's, I mentioned this in an email to you, but I... When he mentions to his grandfather about later on, I know it's later on in the book, but it's how he could... Now I'm paraphrasing badly, but, uh, he could explain it nearly anybody about the... it was fairly simple to understand the law of three in his mind anyway, but to ponder on the law of seven, and I understand the very outside of the of the law of seven, I understand the octave thing, and there's some fascinating math to it. And I got to go back and and really study, but I...

Stephen: It's, you know, like for example, you hit a note and if you want to, if you double the vibrations per second, you get exactly one octave higher. It's fascinating. And so there's obviously this math. So there's this hinting around that you could probably dive into geometry and and get, you know, and take the numbers that Gurdjieff gives for the, for the, uh, you know, and for example, where they were tuning, not just the main white notes of the piano, but now the half steps, which are the black notes on the piano. And then, but now there's these other tertiary and there's a certain number, and then there's another number of finer, yet finer strings, and it's just, it's just fascinating, fascinating, uh, that you could plug those into some geometrical, you know, thing and try to understand it better. I don't know if anyone's done that. I mean, in this group, but I mean, I certainly want to. I haven't yet. I'm just dying to do it, you know, but, uh, trying not to put it off till tomorrow, you know? But, uh, anyway, yeah.

Robin: This is not the focus of this study group. We are not focusing on objective science. We will meet it and have to talk about it because there are various concepts that Gurdjieff comes up with that have profound importance to the way that we should look at the universe. And we will talk about those as they arise. But we aren't trying to discuss the, let's say, the set of information and diagrammatic things that Gurdjieff presented that became the base of *In Search of the Miraculous*. That isn't the focus here. There will be a separate activity that deals with that. And I've already been doing that for quite a while. But there'll be something like this that we try to do in that area because something happened very recently in the past 10 years where it became possible to begin to understand what Gurdjieff was teaching in 1910 when he first came up with the whole of what is described in *In Search of the Miraculous*. Now physics makes much more sense, or at least there are aspects of physics that can make a great deal of sense, and an awful lot of what is regarded as physics and astrophysics is going to get thrown away in the next 20 years. And when I mean

thrown away, it will eventually be just laughed at. All of this ridiculous stuff like Big Bang and dark matter and dark energy and black holes, it doesn't exist. They're fantasies. They're just not real at all. But anyway, that's not our focus.

Sandy: Well, actually, Stephen had a question, I think, that's rather to our focus, and I interrupted him. So I did want to get back to that and hear your question, Stephen.

Stephen: Oh, well, I don't know whether this will take us all any place, but it might be relevant to Robin's admonition that we should know the difference between an ascending and descending octave. So this word "warning," which is capitalized, because it struck me that he capitalized it the first time he used it, then he used it again and didn't. But the first time it's with a capital W. So why? Why is that word important? So I looked, so the etymology... the notion of warning as something to look out for, danger, was a somewhat later nuance. But it seems as though the original old English meaning went "to notice beforehand the consequences that will probably follow continuance in some particular course." So in other words, it might be dangerous, it might not, but mainly warning is trying to be cognizant ahead of time of what the likely consequences of a particular course of action are going to be.

Stephen: So he says in this opening section that if you read this book, I'm going to take from you all of your wealth. I'm going to take from you all of your wealth, and I'm not going to do it gradually. I'm going to do it immediately. In other words, I'm going to rip the bandage off. So if you want to read this book, this is what's coming for you, and it would be good if you took that into account before you start.

Stephen: So I'm thinking, is a warning in a sense a neutralizing force in this case? And is the destruction of what I think I know and who I think I am, if I see that as a restraining force or as a descending octave, because if I identified with it, it could take me into some pretty negative places, if he's warning me ahead of time that this is going to happen, does it serve somehow as a neutralizing force along with that restraining force? And he hasn't told us what the upward force is going to be yet, but he's intimated it's going to be there. In the very beginning, "I think I'm of the person who wishes me well," and yet he's just told me he's going to take everything I have.

Stephen: So it's making me wonder if this is like part of some giant law of three that's going to work itself out maybe not only in just this book, but in all three of his books, in which he's saying, "You can't turn this into an ascending octave unless you are willing to go all the way down first. And the only way that you're going to be willing to go all the way down first is if I give you something that will serve as a neutralizing force for you, namely the foreknowledge this is going to happen, because that will make you less likely to take it personally." I mean, I don't know whether that's in there or not, but in trying to see everything as a law of three, it certainly seems suggestive.

John: Stephen, is it possible the word "wealth" is in half quotes?

Stephen: Uh, let me see.

Robin: It's in shock quotes, yeah, there it is.

Stephen: Thank you, John. You do that all the time. Yeah, I missed that. That's right. He's using that word ironically, too. It's not really wealth. You think it is, but that's because you're asleep. But you're going to feel like it's wealth.

Bobbie: And in your research on the etymology of warning, he's telling us he's going to start an octave. And we'll see where it goes.

John: This whole chapter is full of warnings, isn't it?

Robin: Yeah, I think he doesn't stop at one.

John: This sensation then experienced, I might now formulate in words only thus: "the fear of drowning in the overflow of my own thoughts."

John: And...

Richard: It reminds me that he has this... he's aware of what causes his thoughts to come up. Um, and usually "arousing"... I looked it up and it is this, like fluffing up of feathers, it is... it is... rousing birds for hunting. So he's, he's aware of where, of... he's demonstrating to us that he's objective to his own state, and he can, um, know that he has overflowing thoughts. Um, and he's continually sort of one step... he's objective to himself and kind of showing us how he's objective to himself as like an instruction for us to become objective to ourselves.

Richard: And, you know, there is this pattern, too, that he... I was looking at the, the, the first, the first book of, um, Life is Real, the introduction. Um, and he speaks there about something like the Tulsites. And if they marched into the fire, um, he speaks in the introduction, "I hope in the last moment of my breathing to experience with no possible mental, sensitive, or instinctive doubt, the impulse sacred for a man which was called by the ancient Essenes, 'impartial self-satisfaction'." So in the moment of my last breathing, reminded me of the Tulsites. And, um, and that if they were marching in with their fully intonation, it reminds me of impartial self-satisfaction.

Richard: Um, and I know that he does that elsewhere. I know that, um, in, I think, at the beginning of Meetings with Remarkable Men, he finally has the right tempo going. Now he can begin to write. Um, um, something has, has, has come up to speed in a way. It's like the engine's warmed up or something. So I'm just noticing these kind of patterns between the books of these similar kind of, um, um, uh, realizations of how things proceed, which gets back to the idea of triads of, um, you know, what can go somewhere and what can't. Um, so Sandy, thank you, but that was what was on my mind when you asked was the, um, "the fear of drowning in the overflow of my own thoughts." And then thinking, Harold speaks about, um, his cranium being, being, um, like the buzzing of bees and, uh, he's, he's very aware. I mean, obviously, the most aware person I've ever read, come across, thought about. Um, but he seems to be teaching us, demonstrating this self-awareness.

Sandy: Thanks, Richard. I really appreciate hearing that, and I think it's very astute. Not that I'm supposed to be judging anything anybody says, but that never stopped me, I suppose. Uh, and I do like to hear from everybody, so I would, you know, people who haven't spoken, I just want to encourage you to say a few words just so I can hear your intonations and hear what struck you about these tonight. So, yeah. And I love hearing about the warnings. So, I'll shut up again.

Derek: Here we have the arousing of thought, and later in the books, the materialization of thought. I don't really know what the significance of that is, though.

John: Where is that there, Derrick?

Derek: I'm not sure what chapter, but it's where Hamolin... It's the Tower of Babel story. It's, it's the school where Hamolinator went to. The school of materialization of thought. And Hamolinator was the guy who couldn't decide whether, uh, what side to take on the debate about whether people had souls.

Robin: So what do you think materialization of thought means, Derek?

Derek: I do not know. But associatively, maybe that connects to the thought tapes that Beelzebub watches when he learns about the Akdahn society. That would be materialization of thought if somebody could do that.

Robin: Out of just interesting, um, a guy that I used to be in a group with a long time ago in the London area, um, as a computer consultant. And there was only one English language book shop. It wasn't an English language book shop, but it had a number of shelves of books on it with books on them that were written in English, and I bought C.S. Nott's book. And that was really, if you like, my actual introduction to the whole of the Gurdjieffian thing. But at the back of that book, like the last third of the book, is notes from Orage's meetings to discuss the tales. Now, I've always been, if you like, an admirer of great literature, and it was just clear that Orage was an absolute diamond mine as regards, um, mind, as regards literature. I mean, he was just awesome.

Robin: So I couldn't buy the tales while I was in Italy. So when I went home, I bought it and read it cover to cover. And I don't think I'd have been able to read it cover to cover if I hadn't read Orage's notes and become utterly impressed with things that were clearly in the text that I wouldn't naturally realize. And I tried to for about, I don't know, five or six years, I went around trying to find groups to become part of with Gurdjieff, and no one could read the book. And I'd read it cover to cover, and no one could read it. And it was like, "Oh, we don't bother with that. That's way too dumb." "It's a joke, isn't it, really? It's not really a book." And so on. All sorts of, um, buffering about the fact that somebody has written a book.

Robin: This is possibly the only work of objective art in literary form that exists at all. It's, I think it's safe to say that the Torah is probably another piece of objective art, but I don't know that. And I've studied the Torah. It's not like I haven't had my hands on that, and I suspect that it is also like that. And the Gospels, the Gospels are emotionally extraordinarily powerful, but I don't think they're objective. I just think they're brilliantly written. That's my opinion.

Robin: But the problem that happened, and we're going to meet this in the next two or three meetings, but the problem that happens with most people is that they don't actually know how to think. Now, most people that come to the work do, to a certain extent, know how to think, otherwise they wouldn't come to the work. It would just not make any sense to them because it would just disagree with too many of their fundamental principles, so they wouldn't come. But even those that know how to think, don't really know how to think very well.

Robin: What Gurdjieff is doing with this book, amongst other things, is he's giving you a language which you can use to talk about the work, that you don't have. And when we meet, for instance, the term "common presence," that's a piece of terminology he's giving to you in the first sentence of the book, which you can now use conceptually. But if he hadn't done that for you, that concept would never arrive there.

Robin: The reason that this book has got many, many words in it that are really difficult to understand that he invented, they're called neologisms, I guess, but the reason that they're there is that he wanted to express a concept, and there isn't a word in English for it, or in Russian, or in French, or in German. There isn't words for it. So he invents a word for a concept. And now that he's invented the word, you've got the possibility of having that concept within your thought patterns. But if he hadn't done that for you, that concept would never have arrived there. I'm starting to sound like a preacher, aren't I? It's horrible.

Kelly: I'm sure what you say is true, but when he talks about "Herr Stumpsenhau," or however you pronounce that, you know exactly who that buffoon is. I think it's pretty clear and how he's framed the word itself, the intended meaning.

Robin: "Stumpsenhaus" means a "feast of idiocy." That's the German.

Kelly: It's what it felt like.

Robin: Before we go... I mean, nobody's mentioned the crazy lame goat. I find that strange that nobody mentioned that.

Richard: I'd like to mention it, Robin, because I don't know, I have a note here, page 502, where he's discussing art. And this has to do with the midwives. And if I could just read the paragraph, I think it's like a kind of an echo here that is really interesting. He calls, "To get a clear picture of what these contemporary actors do during their swaggering in these theaters, you must first be told about yet another exceedingly strange illness existing there under the name of 'dramatizacring'. This criminal carelessness on the part of their midwives is that, in most instances, before doing her job, she calls on the way at the houses of her other clients and drinks there more than usual of the wine offered her, so that while she is doing her job, she unconsciously makes exclamations fixed in the process of the ordinary existence of your favorites, like the exorcism of what are called their magicians. And at the moment, as they say, of its appearance in God's world, the new unfortunate being first imbibes the words of this malefic exorcism. And this exorcism consists in the following words: 'Eh, you, what a mess you've made!'"

Richard: So this is exactly what's happening with this midwife. And the lame goat, uh... yeah. Okay, the lame goat appears on page 503. So if he was a Capricorn, I think you mentioned in your book, that's the goat.

Robin: The crazy lame goat is the sign Capricorn. That particular sentence or paragraph is a reference to his birth. The hole kicked in the window is the fact that a new year had started. He was born on December the 28th in 1877, and that was the year in which the phonograph, the Edison phonograph, was actually invented.

Robin: I'll write all of this up, but the midwife was actually, in some way or other, Turkey, because at the time that Gurdjieff was born, there was a Turco-Russian war going on, and the Germans had provided the Turkish with weapons that would make their ability to fight far superior to the Russian forces they faced, and yet they lost, which is why the midwife was actually sucking the cocaine, which wasn't ersatz. These were the best weapons that the Germans could provide. But, um, without the satisfaction that should have been accorded to them. So that's the backdrop to Gurdjieff's birth. It was during the Turco-Russian war, and he's kind of symbolically just put it all together in a few sentences, and he's telling you he's a Capricorn.

Robin: His actual date of birth was December the 28th, but it was always celebrated as the 1st of January in the Orthodox calendar, which I think is the 13th of January in our European, or whatever, Gregorian calendar. That's the meaning of all that stuff, but I'll write it up for anybody that is fascinated by that, because it took me a lot of research to actually find that.

Robin: There's also, when he talks about... I didn't get this from him, I got this from Orage. Orage at one of the meetings said that in the tales, Gurdjieff is using the grammar of associations. Now, there is no such grammar in the sense of there are various formally defined grammars that apply to particular languages or particular contexts in language, and there is no grammar of associations.

Robin: However, there is a mechanism by which we all live our lives, which is in one way or another, to bring our associations to whatever is happening to us in the moment, whether we realize we're doing it or not. And what Gurdjieff is actually doing in this book is he's trying to reeducate your associations. And he does that. You can see it in various paragraphs. You need to

take a long, convoluted paragraph and take it apart and read it and try and make sense of it. And then eventually you realize, "Ah, what he's doing." The reason that he keeps continually, let's say, throwing in distractive digressions is that he wants us to bring all of these ideas together in one thing. He's making us relate them to each other.

Robin: And he's doing that in these paragraphs here. And the idea which he comes up with in the end, "I shall be constrained to write all I have thought out in ordinary, simple, everyday language established by life." And I have to say, it doesn't seem that way at all.

Robin: At one point in time, I got a list of all the different words used in the tales in all 1,200 odd pages of it, and tried to estimate how big your vocabulary would have to be for you to be able to know all the words you encountered. And the answer I came up with, it was kind of a rough calculation, but the answer was in terms of basic roots, 40,000, which is as high as a vocabulary ever gets in English. It's a different language to French or German, or something. So that number would be different in other languages. But this is just the highest percentile of reading capability that you would ever likely have.

Robin: So if you want to read this book and you aren't willing to look up words that you haven't encountered before, then you're going to go past things and not understand. Just saying.

Sandy: I just wanted to ask Kelly. I thought I saw you smile when Robin mentioned the Capricorn and the broken leg. Do I remember that you have some real knowledge of astrology?

Kelly: No, I don't. I just remember his explanation, and I was very taken by that, how he figured it, how Robin figured it out. And my difficulty with this book... I first read when I was 20... was that I've never gotten past thinking it was true. I just, I can't explain it. So, I will keep studying, and I wanted to thank you all for bringing up the Law of Three. That gives me something I might could recognize.

Stephen: Kelly, you made such an interesting statement, I have to ask you to expand. You said, "You never, you never got over thinking it was true." Is that what you said?

Kelly: Yeah.

Stephen: Well, wait a minute. I mean, I think it's true, too. It's just true in a certain way. What do you mean by "thinking it's true"?

Kelly: That it struck me as true, not literal, but it's true. And it always has. And I can't explain.

Stephen: Well, I say good for you. You don't have to explain.

Kelly: Um, well, I didn't get the layers. I didn't look up the words.

Robin: But that's the reason we have groups like this, because it's too hard for one person. It just is.

Kelly: Thank you so much.

Robin: I know an awful lot, but this is the, I think this is the fifth time that I've run a group to study the tales. So this is number five. And I know a lot of things, not because I worked them out, but because other people helped provide me with a lot of very useful information. And also, it just happens to be that as a profession, when I was a professional, I was a researcher. That's what I did. So I know how to research things effectively and quickly, and most people don't because they've

never done it professionally. So, that gave me some advantage in some things.

Robin: But, you know, one of the things that I think is important is that the collection of minds that comes together to study this piece of work is much greater than any single mind that's part of it. It just is.

Stephen: Just before, before we go, Robin, one thing not about the tales, but you mentioned Orage's literary mind. I've been interested in him, and there's a website called Gutenberg.org, which is a lot of books you can download for free. And you can download Orage's collection of literary essays called Readers and Writers. And it's just a collection of essays he did for New Age magazine, and they're pretty amazing. I mean, the things... I mean, he'll... they're pretty brilliant. So anybody who's interested in that aspect of Orage, that's available.

Robin: Okay, I'm glad you told me that because I don't have that, and I will go to Gutenberg and download it for sure. I mean, he was... there were two people... well, probably more than two people... but there were two definite individuals that Gurdjieff came in contact with, Ouspensky and Orage, who were both absolutely brilliant. And, you know, and I've never met the like of those people. I mean, I was taught by Beryl Pogson, who was taught by Ouspensky and J.G. Bennett and Gurdjieff and Madame de Salzmann, and she was an extraordinary mind. She had an extraordinary literary mind. And she wasn't a patch on Orage and Ouspensky. Those were giants, people. You know, giants in respect of ordinary men. But, of course, they were devoted to the work, so that made them yet again different. Anyway, it's 5:00 past.

Bobbie: Wait, wait a minute. Just a minute here. Um, today is remembered. It's Gurdjieff's day that he died. And if we could spend a minute together and appreciate what gift we have here.

Robin: Thanks for reminding me of that, because I hadn't known. So, yes, let's take a couple of minutes in silence and let Gurdjieff be part of what enters us.

Robin: So thank you, everybody.

AI Meeting Summary

EU Session

Quick recap

The meeting began with Robin introducing the structure and resources for the TAILS study group, including multilingual materials and commentary development. The group engaged in detailed discussions about various aspects of a book, including its language, etymology, and the author's approach to challenging readers, while exploring concepts like the Law of Three and the functioning of the sex center across different species. The session concluded with discussions about tantric sex and spiritual enlightenment, meditation exercises, and historical insights about Semyonov's work during World War II.

Next steps

- Robin: Write up the details about Gurdjieff's birth date, the Edison phonograph invention timing, the Russo-Turkish War context, and the allegorical aspects of the broken window pane
- Michelle: Help Ingrid log in to future meetings

Summary

Tales Study Group Overview

Robin introduced the structure and resources for the TAILS study group, including multilingual versions of the text, meeting transcripts, and notes. He explained that the group will cover approximately 5-6 pages of the text per meeting, with the current session focusing on pages 3-8. Robin also mentioned that this would be his last TAILS study group unless convinced otherwise, and he provided an overview of the commentary being developed alongside the meetings.

Gurdjieff's Blessing

The group discussed Gurdjieff's unconventional version of the blessing, and its potential purpose as a shock tactic to prompt deeper consideration of its meaning. They explored the concept of the Law of Three, noting its presence throughout the book in both metaphor and language, and discussed Gertriff's unique writing style that uses grammatical associations and rhythm to create a distinct reading experience. Yusuf and Ekant shared personal experiences of the book's powerful impact when read aloud, with Yusuf specifically noting a strong physical sensation during the reading.

Book Analysis and Author's Tone

The group discussed their reading of a book, focusing on its tone and the author's approach to addressing readers. Ronald and Gwynne explored how the author's direct language could be perceived as insulting but is intended to challenge readers to confront their issues. The conversation also touched on historical references, including the Cathars, and their connection to the book's themes. Michelle mentioned technical difficulties with audio quality during the meeting.

Etymology and Language Evolution

The group discussed etymology and language usage in a book, with James sharing insights about the Greek origin of the word "tome" meaning a slice or section. Robin explained that Oray had meticulously checked the etymology of words in the text to ensure Gerjiv understood their English meanings, and James demonstrated this thoroughness by researching word origins himself. They discussed how the English language changed dramatically with the emergence of printing, particularly noting the introduction of Latin-based words and the shifting meanings of German-derived words in the 16th century.

Insights from Universal Energy

James and Gwynne discussed the phenomenon of inspiration and creativity, particularly focusing on how ideas seem to come from nowhere and the role of intuition. Gwynne shared her experience of writing and creating art during early morning hours, when she feels a sense of stillness and connection to a higher vibration. James acknowledged this experience and mentioned a quote from Robin about vibrations and the mysterious nature of creative ideas. They explored the idea that these insights might come from sources beyond conscious thought, suggesting a deeper connection to universal energy or intuition.

Sacrifice, Warning, and Electromagnetic Fields

The group discussed the concept of sacrifice and warning in a text, with Gwynne exploring the idea of personal transformation and Robin explaining the warning's meaning about disrupting current existence. They explored connections between the electromagnetic field and the body, with Robin explaining how electromagnetic effects operate on multiple scales and are fundamental to both physical and non-physical bodies. The conversation concluded with a discussion about Gwynne and Robin's differing interpretations of "three sexes" in the text, leading to a suggestion for a future offline discussion.

Sexual Energy and Expression

The group discussed the concept of the "third sex" and the functioning of the sex center across different species, with Robin explaining that while the outcome of the sex center is species continuation, its expression varies. Gwynne suggested that in humans, the sex center can be used for creativity and artistic expression after reproductive capacity ends, while Ronald noted that Gurdjieff claimed some men needed to release sexual energy through paid sex with prostitutes at different intervals. The discussion concluded with Robin mentioning that according to other traditions like Tantra and Taoism, sexual energy can be transformed into other octaves, though the method remains unknown.

Tantric Sex and Spiritual Enlightenment

The group discussed various aspects of tantric sex and its relationship to spiritual enlightenment, with Gwynne explaining that the 1960s tantric movement focused on managing sexual energy. They explored the historical context of Freud's seduction theory and its connection to hysteria, noting that men's hysteria manifests as headaches rather than emotional symptoms. Robin shared detailed information about Gurdjieff's birth date and astrological significance, including the role of the Russo-Turkish War and the German military's involvement, while Gwynne and others debated the accuracy of different birth dates and astrological interpretations.

Semyonov's Creative Legacy and Meditation

The group discussed the life and work of Semyonov, particularly his creative work during World

War II, and Gwynne shared her insights about his approach to individuation and inner responsibility. James led the group in a meditation exercise focusing on body awareness and relaxation techniques. The conversation ended with a moment of silence and a brief discussion about the timing of Gwynne's death, which she playfully suggested might occur during her late-night energy periods.

AI Meeting Summary

US Session

Quick recap

The meeting focused on a comprehensive project to study and annotate Beelzebub's Tales, which includes multilingual versions, meeting transcripts, and an evolving commentary book. Participants discussed the importance of maintaining open communication during commentary recordings and explored various interpretations of key concepts in the text, including the Law of Three and its relationship to musical octaves. The group also examined the historical and spiritual significance of different religious traditions and their connection to Gurdjieff's teachings, concluding with a discussion about Gurdjieff's birth and the challenges of reading his works.

Next steps

- Robin: Create a page where people can make notes and contributions about the tales for inclusion in the commentary
- Robin: Write notes explaining the website structure and resources so people joining later meetings can understand everything
- Robin: Write up detailed notes about the symbolism in Gurdjieff's birth passage .

Summary

Beelzebub's Tales Annotation Project

Robin presented an overview of a comprehensive project to study and annotate Beelzebub's Tales, which includes multilingual versions of the text, meeting transcripts, and an evolving commentary book. He explained that the project, organized by Michelle Fink, aims to create a vast resource for studying the tales, with contributions from participants and the use of AI to identify additional discussion points. Robin emphasized the collaborative nature of the project and encouraged participation, noting that meetings are open to anyone interested in joining. He also mentioned that the project's commentary book will be published in both digital and physical formats.

Open Communication in Commentary Recording

Robin and Stephen discussed the importance of maintaining open and free communication during the recording of their commentary, emphasizing that no idea should be censored, as even seemingly trivial contributions might yield valuable insights. Robin clarified that as the ultimate editor, they would ensure that only relevant and meaningful content is included, while Stephen expressed appreciation for Robin's efforts in preserving the book's legacy. The conversation then shifted to the content of the book, with Stephen reading an excerpt that highlighted the author's unique perspective and writing style, which differ significantly from conventional literary norms.

Sound and Irony in Gurdjieff's Writing

The group discussed the importance of sound in Gertchev's writing, with Sandy highlighting how sound is used throughout the text, including references to the Tula sites, pianola, and Edison phonograph. Steven noted the irony present in the first section and explored the etymology of key words, suggesting that Gertchev is setting a unique tone from the beginning. Derek agreed, adding that the emphasis on Gertchev's own hand and heart might indicate a focus on personal

autonomy. Robin pointed out the irony in the reference to the pianola, suggesting that the idea of mechanical ease is a delusion.

Interpreting Indubitable Conviction and Presence

The group discussed various interpretations of the term "indubitable conviction" and its relation to the concept of a common presence, which Robin explained as a three-centered presence combining intellectual, emotional, and physical aspects. John introduced the idea that the creation of the universe involves a "strong dough" concept, which Stephen connected to the practice of starting projects with religious intonations, noting that few people follow this tradition. Robin highlighted the deliberate use of incorrect religious wording in the text as an intentional act, and the group discussed the significance of the sign of the cross in religious contexts. Derek raised a question about whether a law could be considered a substance, which Robin acknowledged as a potential topic for further exploration.

Exploring Cathar History

The group discussed the Law of 3, with Robin explaining Rodney Cohen's interpretation of the Law of Three's six manifestations, three ascending and three descending. They examined capitalization in the English version of a text compared to the German version, noting that capitalization emphasizes certain words. The conversation then shifted to the historical context of the Cathar controversy and the destruction of ancient Toulousites, with Robin explaining the significance of Montsegur and the Cathars' death by fire while singing hymns. John and Barbara contributed insights about the intonation used in religious services, with John focusing on the priest's interaction with the congregation during Mass and Barbara comparing it to the musical nature of Hebrew readings.

Musical Traditions and Spiritual Significance

The group discussed various musical traditions and their spiritual significance, with Robin explaining how different religious services involve intentional manifestation through specific intonations. Sandy and Russell explored the concept of recitative in opera, with Russell sharing insights about Gerdieff's music and Bach's three-dimensional approach that engages both intellect and emotion. The discussion concluded with agreement that while opera may focus on emotional expression, Gerdieff's music operates on a different level that engages multiple aspects of human experience.

Law of Three and Octaves

The discussion focused on the Law of Three and its relationship to musical octaves, with Russell expressing interest in exploring its mathematical and geometric aspects. Robin explained that while the study group isn't primarily focused on objective science, they will discuss Gurdjieff's concepts as they arise, noting that recent developments in physics have made it possible to better understand Gurdjieff's teachings from 1910. Robin also mentioned that while most people misunderstand *In Search of the Miraculous*, the basic structure of the Law of Three and the difference between ascending and descending octaves should be known by students.

Warning's Role in Text Analysis

The group discussed the etymology and significance of the word "warning" in their text, with Steven exploring its original meaning of noticing consequences ahead of time. They analyzed how the author uses warnings to prepare readers for the destruction of their perceived wealth and identity, potentially serving as a neutralizing force in a larger three-part pattern. Richard shared

insights about the author's self-awareness and objective perspective, noting patterns across the books that demonstrate how thoughts and realizations build momentum.

Thought Materialization and Universal Languages

The group discussed the concept of "materialization of thought" from a book, with Derek and Robin exploring its connection to universal languages and Sufi teachings. Sandy and Robin debated the nature of thought and language, with Robin suggesting that the biblical "word" might refer to vibrations or chords rather than literal words. JD shared insights about musical aspects of religious texts, particularly in Jewish faith traditions, and how intonation and tone can convey meaning beyond the written or spoken word.

Exploring Gurdjieff's Challenging Text

The group discussed their experiences reading "Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson" by Gurdjieff, noting the author's arrogant and challenging tone intended to deter readers who lack understanding. Janet and Robin explored how Gurdjieff's unique language and neologisms help convey complex concepts not easily expressed in existing languages, while Russell shared his personal connection to the book through his father's introduction. The discussion highlighted the book's status as a rare piece of objective art, with participants agreeing on its importance as a tool for developing deeper thinking and understanding.

Gurdjieff's Birth and Legacy

The group discussed Gurdjieff's birth and astrological significance, with Robin explaining that Gurdjieff was born on December 28, 1877, during the Turko-Russian War, and that his birth was symbolically connected to the war and his Capricorn zodiac sign. They also explored Gurdjieff's use of "grammar of associations" in his writing and the challenges of reading his works due to the extensive vocabulary required. The group agreed on the importance of studying Gurdjieff's works collectively, with Robin emphasizing the value of collective knowledge over individual understanding. The conversation ended with a moment of silence to honor Gurdjieff's memory on the anniversary of his death.