

Sri MadhavaAshish on the WHY and HOW TO of Meditation in the work of becoming Sixth Race Man(As understood by a pupil based on Ashish's Books, Letters, and Anecdotes)

“Few men of our planet”, Sri MadhavaAshish warns us, “have at any time achieved the actual experience of the essential unity.” (MSM, 37). If that is so, we might ask, why should we bother with a task unlikely to yield success? Ashish further warned, “this path is so difficult that many people feel if you can do anything else go and do it. Don’t try to come this way unless nothing else holds any meaning for you.” (TMS, 147). “What makes it all seem so rough is that there is nothing in this work from which the ordinary ego gets any satisfaction. It comes as a steady grind one gets on with. This is why Krishna Prem used to say to people, that if there is anything else you think you can do, go and do it. Don’t do this thing. It’s because so long as you think you can get any satisfaction from anything else in the sense that any other ordinary activity in life feels or promises you fulfillment, then you must go and do it and learn the hard way that it won’t. There has to be the sense that we’ve got no other way.” (TMS, 55-6) In fact, we try because we come to a point in life by experience that the fulfilling of desires no longer holds meaning for us.

“The leap we have to make to the sixth [race] cannot be made without intentional effort. Against our will we can neither be thrust upwards from below nor pulled upwards from above. (MSM, 284). It is only when we begin to challenge the validity of our out-turned self-gratifying instinctual drives that we begin to grow in the new dimension of the sixth race. (MSM, 288). What effects the transformation of the fifth race into the sixth? Nothing new is added ... yet something has to happen, and that something is best expressed as a change of view or a change of heart. (MSM, 290). Grow we must, or perish. And the way of growth now lies not towards personal stature but in self-transcendence. Our further evolution as men depends on our ability to turn inwards to the real being of the qualities seemingly inherent in objective forms. (MSM, 293). If we would travel higher, we must transform the outer light of the senses to an inner light of understanding. We have to lighten the inner darkness, to turn within ourselves and adventure behind the façade of personality.” (MSM, 294)

Deathlessness. “There has never been a time when ‘some wise man, seeking deathlessness, with reversed gaze’ has not seen the ‘inner Self’.” (MSM, 282). We have to be careful not to take this to the ego, the personality. There is no deathlessness for the personality of fifth race man. But essence is deathless and survives in sixth race man. His facility in inturned meditation gives him a stable inner (astral or keshdjan) body that exists in the watery mid-region between the unmanifest transcendent and the materialization (see diagram). The work to stabilize or crystalize this inner body is the reason that we engage in the inturned meditation of which Ashish speaks, in the direction and bliss of unity.

The connection between self-remembering and meditation in sixth race man was expressed by Ashish as the seventh requirement in his listing of requirements for direct self-initiation. “Keeping yourself centered at all times makes it easier to get into meditation at special times. Then, as you go deeper into meditation, you may find the need to modify your idea of what it is that self-remembering is supposed to be remembering. Too many people are stuck with a purely mental, aloof detachment.” (TMS, 151-2). “The state of inturned meditation is in itself an androgynous condition, to which fact it owes the bliss that accompanies it. The dullness or dryness associated with much so-called meditation is due to the rejection of its emotional components.” (MSM, 214). But how can we establish the emotional component?

Anecdotal descriptions of the necessary emotional component in meditation.

Ashish often spoke of the necessary emotional component. Here are three anecdotes as recalled by some of his pupils.

- (1) The case of a very ardent aspirant comes to mind who had devised some kind of a ‘method’ of his own. Ashish asked him once “Does your meditation glow?” Ashish was pointing out that the ‘emotional component’ brings in the ‘glow’.
- (2) During an informal tea time chat Ashish had said something like ‘Don’t we all remember how it felt when we fell in love’. Someone had hastened to reply “but I have forgotten”. “Precisely”, he proceeded as if delighted, “that is what happens, we forget”. Perhaps he was trying to say that the taste of this mystical ‘emotional component’ is given to us in many ways and it is for us to make the most of it by making effort to:
 - (a) Not forget that taste.
 - (b) Remove obstacles in the way of flow of feelings through means like self-observation of negative identifications.
 - (c) Identify a ‘focal point’ towards which feelings tend to, or can may be directed to, flow. This could be an ordinary person, man or woman, a pair of dolls like those at the center of the Mirtola temple sanctuary, an ‘extraordinary’ person who embodies and validates all the teaching about love, or simply the body.
- (3) Talking about his early days in the Ashram, Ashish had said once that he used to try all kind of ‘tricks’ for experiencing a ‘good’ meditation till he realized that ‘the real thing was meditation itself’. He was, it seems, pointing to the ‘unifying power of love/eros’ another name for the ‘emotional component’.

The One Became Two. “The primary creative impulse arising in absolute, undifferentiated Being can be described as a desire within Being to know itself, a desire which begins by producing a distinction between the subjective Knower and the desired object of knowledge, both separated and linked by the desirous act of knowing, and which ends by a multitude of knowing units being clothed in the objective garments of apparent form. There is, in other words, a purposeful striving within the unmanifest source of all things to make its inherent qualities apparent to itself—a necessary effort, because the diffused consciousness of Absolute Being cannot become aware of its own qualities until both a separation has been made between Knower and Known, and its qualities have been objectively represented.” (MSM, 5) “The creative desire longs to discover itself through all possible media of knowledge and feeling. To achieve this externalization of all its qualities the primal duality [the division into subject and object, male and female] must be reflected not merely between a sensitive knower and a sensible object, but more importantly in a mutual relationship between two similar creatures, each of whom can discover in the other all the qualities of nature, affect, and intelligence that circumstances prevent each from discovering in himself. This means that in any such pair each must complement the other by making manifest those modes of being predominantly associated with one or the other pole of primal duality.” (MSM, 209).

The intent of inturned meditation is to re-unite the two: subject & object into the Unity of being

“The division of the sexes, [is] the mainspring of our social organization. But this mating of two creatures, similar in essence though dissimilar in form, does not constitute the fulfillment of the divine intention. What was found outwardly has again to be discovered inwardly. Each one of a pair contains the other within himself. Each is both lover and beloved. Only when this inner union of essential natures is brought about does the divine Eros joy in the full knowledge of his real being. And of all created things, only man has both the intelligence and the power to realize such a goal.” (MSM, 209-10). “Our task is therefore to re-find that inner unity in which subject and object, man and woman, are once more fused in the blissful mingling of complementary natures. ... we have once again to bring our two halves together.” (MSM, 213). “Any man or woman wishing for success on the path to self-knowledge must come to terms with his bi-sexuality.” (MSM, 214).

The Atlantean allegory in Gurdjieff's *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*

I keep a copy of Gurdjieff's *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* on my desk because of weekly participation with a group of students who discuss the book, parsing it sentence by sentence. In thinking about how to present in this paper the meditational effort required to bring our two halves together, I chanced to open this book, and it opened to exactly the pages in which Gurdjieff suggests the method to do this. In those pages Gurdjieff describes as an allegory three types of buildings into which certain types of Atlantean beings were required to spend time. He writes: “In the male temples ... beings of the male sex ... while in the special state called self-remembering ... gave themselves up to active and conscious contemplation the whole time. ... In [buildings] built for beings of the female sex ... they passed their whole time ... in a state of complete passivity, trying consciously not to think about anything ... And as regards the third kind of the buildings ... the beings of the ‘third sex’ for whom these buildings were erected, were already entirely deprived of the possibility of ever consciously contemplating” (*Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, 1108-11).

Suddenly, I saw the meaning of the allegory as it applies to contemplation/meditation. (No attempt is made here to distinguish between the three allied states of concentration, contemplation and meditation). This allegory is a description of our inner state, the watery mid-region between the unmanifest transcendent and the materialization (see diagram of the Unmanifest Transcendent, the Watery mid-region, and the Materialization). In the materialization, we human beings are materialized in the vibrancy of one or the other of the two poles, one or the other of the two sexes, the other pole being relatively dormant. But in our inner state, the watery mid-region also known as the astral body in theosophy and the kesdjan body in Gurdjieffianism, both poles are vibrant in us and it is our task to bring them together to re-find that inner unity of which Ashish speaks. Gurdjieff suggests that in our female pole we sit quietly trying to stop thought while at the same time in our male pole, in the state called self-remembering, we engage in active and conscious contemplation/meditation. In this sitting, the male pole is attracted to and moves closer to the female pole which attracts the male pole, just as is our experience of how Ashish suggests it felt when we fell in love in the materialized plane. It is useful to recall here that the first Mirtola guru, Sri Yashoda Mai materialized as a female whereas the second and third Mirtola gurus, Sri Krishna Prem and Sri Madhava Ashish materialized as males. The materialized sex of the fifth race being is not relevant in the sixth race being because both male and female poles are vivified within the sixth race being.

In the division of the One into Two, a powerful energy is released. Gurdjieff calls it third force. It can be directed down (outward) in the involution of the creation or up(inward) in the return to unity. In the Atlantean allegory Gurdjieff gives examples of the energy being directed down but leaves it up to us to see that it can also be directed up (inward) to unity.

Meditation method. In a 1988 letter Ashish described the method of inturned meditation: “The first purpose of meditation is to still the mind by directly controlling thoughts, watching them detachedly, by tracing them back to their source, by forcing the mind to stick to a mantra ... If one holds quiet, the next thing to look for is a slight dissociation from the thinking process, which makes it relatively easy to stay in this quiet state. It is peaceful but eventually unsatisfying. This can deepen into the state I have described to you where the body passes into sleep and one is awake within it. Deliberately invoking sleep, while keeping in a position which discourages sleep, is an aid in this process. It also points to the fact that this movement is not, initially, anything you can achieve by intention. In practice, you have to hold yourself in the quiet state and let yourself get tired. [One must allow at least 60-90 minutes]. To pass beyond this requires:

- (1) Prolonged effort [the passive female polarity effort to sit quietly stopping thought].
- (2) Aspiration [the active male polarity effort to contemplate/meditate while in the state of self-remembering].
- (3) The help of the power [the powerful evolutionary force directed “upward” (inward) toward unity that can be experienced as an energy flowing through the body, the kundalini force. Jeanne de Salzmann, Gurdjieff’s pupil, also often spoke of a descending involutionary force with which the ascending evolutionary force must be balanced. (TMS, 225).
- (4) Grace – or what appears as grace because one has no control over it.” (TMS, 226).

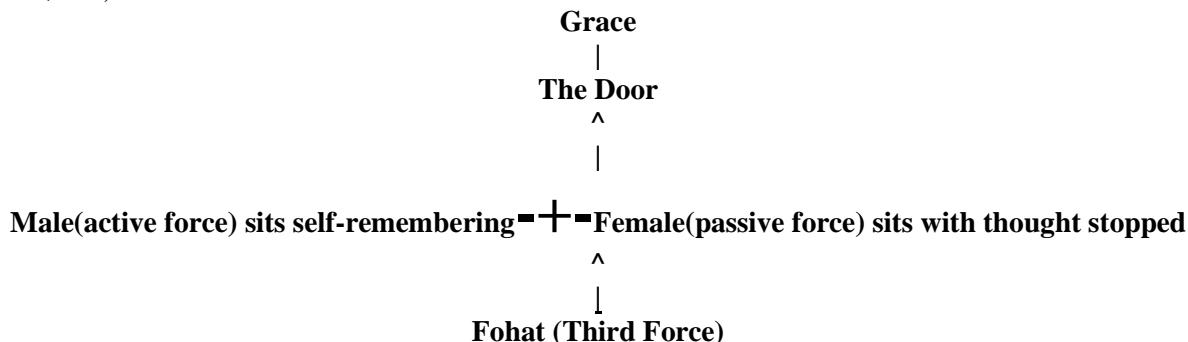
The door. In a 1979 letter Ashish described this aspect of meditation as “holding steady, holding steady all the time until you can turn back within. Holding, as it were, until the door opens of its own accord.” (TMS, 223). That door is the opening inward to standing in sixth race man. Thomas Merton the Christian mystic described his experience as a door that opens in the center of our being through which we fall to infinite freedom. Merton, (*New Seeds of Contemplation*, 226-8).

A Graphical Representation of Inturned Meditation in the Work of Becoming Sixth Race Man

The Watery Mid-Region

Sixth Race Man (inwardly directed). Active and passive forces are both vivified in the psyche’s watery mid-region.

“The way of growth [into the sixth race] now lies not towards personal stature but in self-transcendence. Our further evolution as men depends on our ability to turn inwards to the real being of the qualities seemingly inherent in objective forms.” (MSM, 293).



As the first and second forces are drawn closer together in inturned meditation, the third force energy which can be sensed as a rising evolutionary force in the body becomes more concentrated.

The Work in our male pole

Sitting in active and conscious contemplation/meditation while in the special state called self-remembering and actively attracted to the female pole.

The Work in our female pole

Sitting in a state of complete passivity trying to not think about anything, stopping thought and passively attracting the male pole.

The meditational effort toward becoming sixth race man begins here.

The Materialization

Fifth Race Man (outwardly directed). Active and passive forces are each vivified in separate biological forms.

The division of the sexes [in the fifth race], similar in essence though dissimilar in form, does not constitute the fulfillment of the divine intention. What was found outwardly has again to be discovered inwardly. (MSM, 209)

Subject (Male) in a separate physicality + Object (Female) in a separate physicality

References: MSM=Man, Son of Man; TSM=The Masters Speak; Brackets [] are the insertion of text by the presenter within quoted material.