
GURDJIEFF BLISS

A Cosmological Primer of the Fourth Way

DRAWN FROM BEELZEBUB'S TALES & THE FOURTH WAY
TRADITION

FOR THE SERIOUS SEEKER — HANDLE WITH WAKEFULNESS

◆ Prolegomena: On the Nature of These Symbols ◆

Georges Ivanovich Gurdjieff (1866–1949) — Greek-Armenian mystic, composer, and teacher of awakening — built one of the most complete and demanding cosmological systems of the modern era. His monumental *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, the first volume of his *All and Everything* trilogy, encodes within its deliberately difficult prose an entire vision of the universe: its genesis, its laws, its tragedy, and the narrow path of return available to the rare human being willing to suffer the truth about themselves.

At the heart of Gurdjieff's teaching stand two supreme laws: the *Law of Three* (Triamazikamno) — that every phenomenon arises from the simultaneous interaction of three forces: affirming, denying, and reconciling

— and the *Law of Seven* (Heptaparaparshinokh) — that every process unfolds through seven stages, encountering critical intervals where, without a deliberate shock from outside, it deviates, reverses, or dies. These laws govern everything from the vibration of a musical tone to the birth of galaxies, from the digestion of bread to the crystallization of a soul.

The twelve symbolic entries that follow constitute a journey through Gurdjieff's cosmological vision — from the unmanifest silence of the Absolute, through the grinding machinery of mechanicality, to the possibility of conscious return. Each symbol is a map. Each map is an invitation. The student is advised to remember: reading about awakening and actually awakening are separated by an abyss that only genuine self-effort can bridge.

“Without self-knowledge, without understanding the working and functions of his machine, man cannot be free, he cannot govern himself and he will always remain a slave.” — G. I. Gurdjieff

PART THE FIRST

THE DAWN OF CREATION



SYMBOL I — PAGE ONE

Theomathos

The Absolute — The Unmanifest Plenum

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

A raw, primal eye surrounded by an intense crown of black flames, centered perfectly within an interconnected web of geometric coordinates. The geometry is exact, unwavering — the lattice before the first vibration, holding everything and disturbing nothing.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

Theomathos represents the unmanifest source of all existence — the beginning of time before differentiation. It is the repository of infinite potential, holding the raw materials of reality in perfect, unbothered silence before the first cosmic breath. In Gurdjieff's cosmology, the Absolute is governed by a single law: its own will alone. Unlike every level below it, which is subject to multiple and increasingly coercive laws, the Absolute operates in total self-sufficiency. To contemplate Theomathos is to stand at the rim of what the mind cannot cross — a silence so complete it makes every sound seem like violence. It is not empty; it is the fullness that precedes form. The black flames that crown the primal eye are not destruction but potential — energy coiled before release, meaning compressed before utterance, being resting before becoming.

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SYMBOL II — PAGE TWO

Theomertmalogos

The Holy Affirming — The Creative Word

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

Three symmetrical arrows burst outward from a central eye, encircled by a rhythmic pattern of rotating energy tracks. The arrows do not flee the center — they radiate as deliberate emanations, each carrying an identical impulse in perfectly balanced divergence.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

Theomertmalogos is the primary cosmic emanation — the spoken “Word,” or sound-frequency, that shatters the silence of Theomathos. This force drives the universe into motion, initiating the downward descent of matter and the creation of worlds. In Gurdjieff’s terminology, the first force is always the *Holy Affirming* — the active, initiating principle that alone cannot create anything without meeting resistance. The three arrows radiating outward correspond to the triune nature of this emanation: the same primordial intention fractalized simultaneously into three dimensions of becoming. The rotating energy tracks that encircle it depict the first vibrations of the cosmic octave, the initial “Do” from which the entire descending scale will unfold — through suns, through planets, through organic life, through sleeping humanity, all the way to the cold Moon.

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SYMBOL III — PAGE THREE

Ethernokrilno

The Cosmic Stabilizing Law — The Architecture of Worlds

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

An eight-pointed star — an octagram — nestled inside an eye, flanked by wings and tethered to an orbiting cosmic path with distinct planetary nodes. The wings neither lift nor descend; they hold the entire structure in suspension, like a cosmic kite anchored to the invisible thread of law.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

Ethernokrilno is the cosmic stabilizing law. Once creation begins through the creative Word of Theomertmalogos, the descending energy requires a permanent framework to prevent its collapse back into undifferentiated chaos. This architecture establishes the cosmic octaves, the planetary spheres, and the structural laws that hold the universe together across vast intervals of time and space. The octagram — eight points — corresponds to the eight notes of the cosmic octave, including the two critical intervals (the *mi-fa* gap and the *si-do* gap) where descending or ascending energy falters and requires intervention. The wings are not angelic ornamentation; they are the paired forces of involution and evolution operating simultaneously, the universe breathing in and out through its own architecture. Without Ethernokrilno, creation would be a single flash — brilliant and immediately extinguished. With it, the cosmos persists.

PART THE SECOND

THE FRICTION OF EXISTENCE



SYMBOL IV — PAGE FOUR

Harnel-miatznel

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

A stylized triangle holding an inner flame, bounded by an arrow pointing straight down and dual side arrows cycling energy upward. The downward arrow is heavier — more deliberate — as if it bears the weight of intention from above, while the lateral arrows lean in like reluctant witnesses drawn into participation.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

Harnel-miatznel governs the *Law of Three* as it manifests in living process. It dictates precisely how a new arising takes place — how higher spiritual energy (the flame held within the triangle) flows downward to encounter and blend with dense, lower forces, producing between them a balanced, living middle ground that is qualitatively different from either parent force. Gurdjieff taught that human beings, in their ordinary state, perceive only two forces — affirming and denying — and are therefore perpetually locked in duality, in conflict, in mechanical oscillation. The third force, the reconciling or neutralizing principle, is invisible to the sleeping mind. Harnel-miatznel names what most people have never consciously seen: the bridge between yes and no, the note that transforms opposition into harmony. The triangle is not a static shape — it is a process, always becoming, always resolving.

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SYMBOL V — PAGE FIVE

Harnel-aoot

A stark geometric shift: heavy arrows crushing inward toward a central triangle, which then splits outward into divergent vectors. The geometry conveys pressure — immense, impartial, structural pressure — and within the compression, the triangle both resists and transforms.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

Harnel-aoot represents the hazardous gap or critical interval within a cosmic octave. Gurdjieff taught that in every process — whether the growth of a civilization, the digestion of food, the development of a musical phrase, or the evolution of a human soul — there are two specific points where the process loses momentum and risks deviating irreparably from its original direction. These are the *mi-fa* and *si-do* intervals, the half-steps in the cosmic musical scale where the usual full step of development cannot occur without external assistance. At Harnel-aoot, the crushing arrows represent this wall of friction — real, inexorable, built into the fabric of existence itself. No amount of ordinary momentum carries an octave through its interval. Something from outside the octave must be deliberately introduced: a new input of energy, a conscious shock, an intentional act. This is why, Gurdjieff taught, nothing important in life completes itself without effort that goes against mechanicality.

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SYMBOL VI — PAGE SIX

The Trogoautoegocrat

The Universal Law of Reciprocal Maintenance — Everything Eats and Is Eaten

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

A centralized eye flanked by wide, sweeping circular arrows looping symmetrically upward and downward in an endless cycle. The loops are generous, unbroken — one turning above, one turning below — with the eye resting at their shared axle, neither consuming nor consumed, but mediating.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

The Trogoautoegocrat — literally “self-governing by mutual feeding” — maps the universal law of reciprocal maintenance: everything in existence must eat and be eaten by something else, exchanging energies and substances to keep the organic balance of the entire Ray of Creation alive. Sun eats the Absolute; planets eat the Sun; Earth eats the planets; organic life eats the Earth; Moon eats organic life — and crucially, human unconscious suffering feeds this same chain. The circular arrows looping above and below represent this irreducible bilateral exchange: the descending stream of finer energies from above, and the ascending stream of coarser energies transformed below. No level is exempt, no creature stands outside the arrangement. In Gurdjieff’s radical anthropology, humanity’s choice is not whether to participate in this cosmic feeding — it is whether to participate consciously or mechanically. The sleeping person feeds the Moon involuntarily, with raw, undifferentiated suffering. The conscious person transforms energies intentionally, feeding higher levels rather than lower ones.

PART THE THIRD

THE ILLUSION & THE TRAP



The Mechanical Descent

The Material Shock — The Weight of 48 Laws

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

A pyramid enclosing an eye, capped with fire and surrounded by chaotic, uneven swirling vectors and drifting celestial particles. The fire above seems borrowed — an echo of the original flame, too distant now to warm the stone it rests on. The particles swirl without purpose or pattern.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

This symbol illustrates the descent of forces into the dense, mechanical levels of existence — the Earth level, subject to 48 simultaneous laws, and below it the Moon, subject to 96. The swirling chaos does not represent evil; it represents the sheer gravitational weight of multiplied law. The further from the Absolute, the more laws govern a given level, and the more mechanical, automatic, and predetermined behavior becomes. Ordinary human consciousness, embedded at the Earth level, is pulled by 48 laws simultaneously: the laws of accident, of association, of appetite, of vanity, of fear, of sleep. Gurdjieff described the average human being as a machine — not in contempt, but in precise observation. The pyramid is both prison and potential: its form is exact, its interior sealed, and yet at its apex burns a flame, however faint, that remembers something higher. The sleeping person does not see the flame; they see only the stone.

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The Djartklom

The Separation of Elements — Cosmic Filtration

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

The complex background lines disappear — a sudden stillness. The central eye is given expansive wings, an anchor pointing downward, and an arrow reaching toward an isolated circle floating above. The composition breathes. It is the only symbol in this sequence that opens instead of compresses.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

The Djartklom represents cosmic filtration or separation — the process by which the mixed, undifferentiated substance of ordinary existence begins to sort itself along qualitative lines. In the cosmological sense, it names the mechanism by which the descending Ray of Creation “sifts” substances at each level, allowing finer vibrations to ascend while denser ones fall further. In the human work, the Djartklom is the painful crystallization where a seeker begins to distinguish “Self” from “Not-Self” — recognizing for the first time that most of what they call “I” is borrowed, mechanical, conditioned, and impermanent. The wings that appear on the central eye in this symbol are significant: they do not yet lift the eye upward — it remains held by the anchor of physical density — but they have become visible for the first time. The isolated circle above is the possibility of a different level of being, close enough to aim for, far enough to require everything the seeker has.

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The Kundabuffer Spiral

The Hypnotic Maze — The Organ of Inverted Perception

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

A single, continuous serpentine path that loops inward like a labyrinth, trapping the central eye behind a wall of warning dots. There is no visible entrance and no visible exit. The eye at the center does not appear distressed — it appears unaware that it is trapped at all.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

The *Kundabuffer* is one of Gurdjieff's most provocative and original cosmological inventions — a special organ said to have been implanted at the base of the human spine by a commission of higher beings who needed humanity to remain passive and compliant while a cosmological adjustment was being made. The organ was subsequently removed, but its effects — the tendency to perceive reality upside-down, to take the unreal for real, the imaginary for actual, the present fantasy for permanent truth — remained crystallized in the human psyche. The spiral is the structure of this trap: self-reinforcing, self-referencing, seductively comfortable. Each loop of the spiral is a layer of subjective imagination — the person who believes they are awake because they have sophisticated thoughts, the person who believes they are spiritual because they feel spiritual emotions, the person who mistakes the map for the territory at every scale of their life. The warning dots that wall off the central eye are the countless “buffers” Gurdjieff described: the psychic shock-absorbers that prevent contradictory aspects of a person's self-image from ever meeting and producing the friction of genuine self-knowledge. Breaking free of the Kundabuffer Spiral is the precondition for all real work.

THE WAY OF RETURN



SYMBOL X — PAGE TEN

The First Intentional Shock

Self-Remembering — The Rupture of the Mechanical Loop

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

A visual echo of the primary emanation — familiar, almost soothing in its symmetry — but with three bold, intentional dots injected into the lower-left quadrant, breaking the pattern. The disruption is not violent; it is precise, like a surgeon's incision in exactly the right place.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

This marks the first major breakthrough on the path of return: *Self-Remembering*, which Gurdjieff identified as the First Intentional Shock — the effort to be simultaneously aware of oneself as the observer and of the thing observed, without merging completely into either. The three bold dots are a calculated, conscious injection of attention into the mechanical flow. They are not accidental and they are not emotional; they are deliberate. In Gurdjieff's system, Self-Remembering is the most difficult, most necessary, and most constantly forgotten practice available to the human being. It cannot be performed by the ordinary "I" — it requires a different quality of attention, one that must be cultivated painstakingly against the full inertia

of sleep. When genuine Self-Remembering occurs, even briefly, it injects an entirely new energy into the human organism — the same kind of external shock that the cosmic Law of Seven requires at its critical intervals. The seeker becomes, in that moment, their own missing note. The mechanical loop cracks. Light enters. And then, invariably, sleep returns — until it is tried again.

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SYMBOL XI — PAGE ELEVEN

The Sacred Heptaparaparshinokh

The Law of Seven — The Harmonized Ascending Octave

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

A burning flame inside a wide-awake eye, surrounded by a perfectly closed, clockwise wheel of seven flowing arrows. The arrows are not straining — they move with the ease of something that has found its natural rhythm. The flame is steady. The eye is open.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

This symbol represents the *Law of Seven* — Heptaparaparshinokh — working harmoniously on the ascending path. Having crossed its critical intervals through intentional effort, the octave now flows: the seven arrows form a completed inner cycle, a self-sustaining movement that mirrors the structure of the universe itself. In human terms, this completed octave corresponds to the successful harmonization and synthesis of the lower centers — instinctive, moving, emotional, intellectual — into a coherent inner structure capable of sustaining increasingly higher vibrations. Gurdjieff described the ultimate fruit of this process as the crystallization of a

permanent, coherent “I” — what he called the *Soul*, understood not as a given but as an achievement, not as a birthright but as the result of sustained, intentional inner work. The flame within the awake eye in this symbol is steady in a way none of the earlier flames were: it does not flicker with potential, as in Theomathos; it does not strain with descent, as in the Mechanical Pyramid. It burns with the quiet certainty of something that has become what it is through effort freely chosen.



SYMBOL XII — PAGE TWELVE

Return to the Source

Re-Integration — The Completion of the Great Work

▷ SYMBOLIC VISION

The final, completed state. The central eye is crowned with majestic horns or wings pointing directly upward toward the Absolute, while the outer arrows form a completed, symmetrical triad. For the first time in the sequence, every element of the symbol faces the same direction: up.

▷ MEANING & SIGNIFICANCE

The ultimate completion of what the Fourth Way calls the Great Work. Having survived the traps of the Kundabuffer, crossed the critical intervals through self-remembering, harmonized the inner centers through the ascending octave, the conscious individual now participates in a different order of cosmic reality. The eye has climbed back up the Ray of Creation — not by escaping the world but by transforming its relationship to every law within it. Where the sleeping person is governed by 48 laws, the awakening person, through inner development, gradually

escapes successive layers of law until, at the furthest reachable limit of human development, only the most fundamental laws remain operative. The majestic wings or horns that crown the final eye are the signature of this attainment: not arrogance, not power over others, but the cosmic dignity of a being that has paid for its existence in the only currency the universe recognizes — conscious suffering, deliberate effort, and the slow, grateful transformation of received energy into something finer than what was received. The triad of outer arrows, now completed and symmetrical, echoes the original three arrows of Theomertmalogos — the beginning and the end rhyme. The eye that was opened in the unmanifest Absolute has traveled through the full arc of creation and returned, no longer as potential, but as actuality: a conscious participant in the life of the cosmos.

◆ CLOSING MEDITATION ◆

*You have walked through twelve rooms of a house that has no doors —
only thresholds that only open from the inside.*

The symbols do not teach. They point.

The finger is not the moon.

*If after reading this, you feel that you understand Gurdjieff's cosmology,
return to the beginning and read again — more slowly.*

Understanding is not the same as knowledge.

Knowledge is not the same as being.

*The Ray of Creation did not descend so that you could read about it.
It descended so that something, somewhere, might consciously climb back.*

“Remember yourself always and everywhere.”

— G. I. Gurdjieff

◆ FINIS ◆

Gurdjieff Bliss — A Cosmological Primer of the Fourth Way — Compiled for the
serious student of esoteric tradition — All symbols and meanings drawn from the
Fourth Way corpus