

Gurdjieff and de Hartmann's Music for Movements

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Between 1919 and 1924 Armenian-Greek spiritual teacher G. I. Gurdjieff (c.1866-1949) and his devoted Ukrainian pupil Thomas de Hartmann (1885-1956), two men of utterly distinct characters, backgrounds, and musical abilities, composed music to accompany Gurdjieff's 'Movements' or sacred dances. In following years they went on to compose more music for other purposes. This article attempts to establish basic academic groundwork on the music for Gurdjieff's Movements. It assesses the unique process of its composition, examines the sources and styles of the music, and analyses the various ways in which the music interacts with the physical gestures of the Movements. It also considers the orchestrations of this music, and the recordings and sheet music that have been released both publicly and privately. The distinctive role of the music in Movements classes and its significance in light of Gurdjieff's teaching will also be discussed. Finally, as Gurdjieff and de Hartmann worked together on music to accompany Gurdjieff's ballet *The Struggle of the Magicians* in the same period as their music for Movements, there will be an exploration of the ballet and its music.

Keywords: Gurdjieff, Thomas de Hartmann, Movements, Music for Movements, *The Struggle of the Magicians*

Introduction

A large body of music was composed in an unusual collaboration between eccentric Armenian-Greek spiritual teacher George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff (c.1866-1949), who had no classical music training, and his cultivated, aristocratic Ukrainian pupil Thomas Alexandrovich de Hartmann (1885-1956), who was classically trained in composition to the highest of standards. The music they jointly composed is generally overlooked in the vast majority of writings on Gurdjieff's life and teaching, which is surprising considering the unique nature of the collaboration, and the fact that music and its effects were not only recurring themes but also compulsive interests for Gurdjieff throughout his life. Gurdjieff and de Hartmann composed two types of music for piano: music for Gurdjieff's 'Movements' or sacred dances, and music for other purposes. Where the music for

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Movements was composed between 1919 and 1924, the other type of piano music, here designated the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music, was composed most intensively between 1925 and 1927. Both were composed in a similar fashion and are comparable in style and sound, though there are differences between the two due to their different functions. Scholarly work has recently been undertaken on the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music,¹ and on Gurdjieff's Movements themselves,² but not on the music for Movements. This study attempts to fill a significant lacuna by establishing basic academic groundwork on the music for Gurdjieff's Movements.

Gurdjieff and his different bodies of music are worthy of critical attention. The importance of Gurdjieff himself is attested by his crucial role in the trajectory of contemporary religion. Along with other key figures of his time, most notably Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891) and Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), Gurdjieff revived occult and esoteric traditions, synthesising these with Western contemporary thinking.³ In this way he not only contributed to bridging the gap between nineteenth and twentieth century modes of thought, but also to pioneering the New Age movement and thus influencing the course of religion in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Further verifying the significance of Gurdjieff is the impressive stream of influential artists, directors, musicians, choreographers, writers, actors, and thinkers who have paid tribute to him, such as J. B. Priestly, Aldous Huxley, Katherine Mansfield, P. L. Travers, Moshe Feldenkrais, Frank Lloyd Wright, Alan Watts, Peter Brook, Arthur Miller, and Bill Murray.⁴

¹ See Johanna Petsche, 'G. I. Gurdjieff's Piano Music and its Application In and Outside "The Work" Today', in *Handbook of New Religions and Cultural Production*, eds Carole M. Cusack and Alex Norman (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 271-295; Johanna Petsche, 'Music For Remembering: The Gurdjieff-de Hartmann Piano Music and its Esoteric Significance' (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sydney, 2012). Previous work on the Gurdjieff-de Hartmann piano music is limited to a small number of articles and chapters in Gurdjieff-centred publications, liner notes in recordings, and to the prefaces and notes of the four volumes of sheet music of the Gurdjieff-de Hartmann piano music published by German music publisher Schott Muzik International. These writings are generally by scholarly-oriented 'insiders', who were or are involved in Gurdjieff groups and have strong personal affiliations towards Gurdjieff's ideas.

² For the most comprehensive and up-to-date scholarly work on Gurdjieff's Movements see Joseph Azize, 'Gurdjieff's Sacred Dances and Movements', in *Handbook of New Religions and Cultural Production*, pp. 297-330.

³ Theodore Roszak, *Unfinished Animal* (London: Faber and Faber, 1976), pp. 115-151; Paul Heelas, *The New Age Movement: The Celebration of the Self and the Sacralization of Modernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), p. 48.

⁴ Mel Gordon, 'Gurdjieff's Movement Demonstrations: The Theatre of the Miraculous', *The Drama Review*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1978), p. 34; David Pecotic, "From Ouspensky's 'Hobby' to Groundhog Day: The Production and Adaptation of Strange Life of Ivan Osokin," in *Handbook of New Religions and Cultural Production*, p. 343.

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The fact that scholarship on Gurdjieff so frequently omits any serious study of his music and music theory is unjustifiable. Music was in no way an extra-curricular activity for Gurdjieff, though this is the commonly held view. Music was, on the contrary, a tool pivotal to his teaching and, considering his deep interest in the effects of music, particularly as they are portrayed in Western esoteric music theory, he must have considered it to be a particularly potent one.⁵ As will be discussed in this article, there are a number of ways in which one can conceptualise the significance of the music for Movements in relation to Gurdjieff teaching. It may have functioned to coordinate the ‘tempos’ or rhythms of the three ‘centres’ (intellectual, physical and emotional) of Movements practitioners, to stimulate the ‘emotional centre’, and/or to provide ‘shocks’, which in Gurdjieff’s cosmology relates to additional energy needed for spiritual development.

This article will begin with introductions to Gurdjieff and de Hartmann, centering on themes of music in their lives. This will be followed by an overview of Gurdjieff’s Movements. Focus will then centre on their music for Movements; the process of composition, the different styles and possible sources of the music, the role of the music in Movements classes, and the specific ways in which the music supports and reinforces the physical gestures of the Movements. Orchestrations of this music for the Movements demonstrations in Paris and America in 1923 and 1924 respectively, and Gurdjieff and de Hartmann’s specific roles in the process of orchestration, will also be considered. An analysis of recordings and privately circulated sheet music of the music for Movements will then follow. This analysis was made possible through the generosity of Sydney Movements instructor and pianist Dorine Tolley, who allowed the author access to private editions of the sheet music. There will also be a brief discussion of the improvised music that accompanied Gurdjieff’s later Movements, which were choreographed in the 1940s when de Hartmann was no longer a pupil. Finally, as Gurdjieff and de Hartmann worked together on music to accompany Gurdjieff’s ballet *The Struggle of the Magicians* in the same period as their music for Movements, the ballet and its music will also be explored.

G. I. Gurdjieff

Gurdjieff was born of Greek-Armenian parentage in the Greek quarter of the town Alexandropol (present-day Gyumri) in Russian Armenia, near the border of Turkey. According to his (admittedly unverifiable) autobiographical writings, in his youth, when

⁵ See Petsche, ‘Music For Remembering’, pp. 194-222.

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he and his family had moved to Kars in Turkey, Gurdjieff was fascinated by the musical abilities of the *ashokhs* or travelling bards,⁶ a profession of his father, and was a devoted chorister in the Kars military cathedral choir. Although Gurdjieff did not formally study music outside his experiences as a chorister, he helped verify the Cathedral Dean's vocal transcriptions of newly composed canticles by singing them to the Dean.⁷ Gurdjieff's accounts indicate that he was attracted to music at a young age, possessed musical skill, and was exposed to a variety of musical traditions in the cultural melting pots of Alexandropol and Kars. Later, on a lengthy expedition through Central Asia and the Middle East (biographer James Moore gives the dates 1887 to 1907)⁸ in frantic pursuit of esoteric knowledge, Gurdjieff described playing, singing, hearing, and recording music, as well as employing music as a gimmick in order to earn money.⁹ It is possible that music encountered during this expedition might explain the origins and influences of some of the music that Gurdjieff composed with de Hartmann, as Gurdjieff claimed,¹⁰ though his travel accounts are largely unsubstantiated.

Gurdjieff arrived in Moscow in 1913¹¹ with a body of teachings that he promoted as deriving from ancient, esoteric sources accessed on his extensive travels. He began gathering pupils and in 1918 in Essentuki in the Caucasus he founded an Institute that later became the 'Institute for the Harmonious Development of Man.' This provided conditions and methods that enabled pupils to work on themselves, with the aim of developing harmony between their three 'centres'. The Essentuki Institute moved to Tiflis then Constantinople, Berlin, and finally, in 1922, to the Chateau des Basses Loge in Avon in Fontainebleau near Paris, in the three-storey main building known as the Prieuré, where it functioned until 1932. From 1917 to 1924, Gurdjieff incorporated singing into

⁶ G. I. Gurdjieff, *Meetings With Remarkable Men* (New York: Penguin Compass, 2002 [1963]), pp. 32-33.

⁷ Gurdjieff, *Meetings*, pp. 50, 52, 54.

⁸ James Moore, *Gurdjieff: The Anatomy of a Myth A Biography* (Brisbane: Element, 1993), pp. 31, 321-323.

⁹ Gurdjieff, *Meetings*, pp. 103-104, 127, 161, 174, 236, 253-254.

¹⁰ Pupils' accounts demonstrate that Gurdjieff explained the origins of his music in this way, and that pupils accepted these claims. See Thomas de Hartmann and Olga de Hartmann, *Our Life With Mr. Gurdjieff*, eds T. C. Daly and T. A. G. Daly (London: Arkana Penguin Books, 1992), p. 44; P. D. Ouspensky, *In Search of the Miraculous* (San Diego: Harcourt Inc., 1977 [1949]), p. 386; J. G. Bennett, *Gurdjieff: Making a New World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 167.

¹¹ Moore, *Gurdjieff*, p. 324, gives 1912 as the year Gurdjieff arrived in Moscow but pupil A. R. Orage gives 1913 and Beekman Taylor also argues convincingly for 1913. See Paul Beekman Taylor, *G. I. Gurdjieff: A New Life* (The Netherlands: Eureka Editions, 2008), pp. 40-47, 225; C. S. Nott, *Teachings of Gurdjieff: A Pupil's Journal, An Account of Some Years With G. I. Gurdjieff and A. R. Orage in New York and at Fontainebleau-Avon* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978 [1961]), p. 1.

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his teaching methods, and challenged pupils with personalised musical exercises.¹² During this period he also choreographed and taught Movements, worked on his ballet *Struggle of the Magicians*, and collaborated with de Hartmann on music to accompany them.

In mid-1924 Gurdjieff had a serious car accident that marked a juncture in his life, affecting his Institute and teaching methods. He temporarily disbanded the Institute, stopped work on Movements, began writing his monumental work *Beelzebub's Tales To His Grandson*, and started composing a different type of music with de Hartmann, the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music, which continued until 1927. When de Hartmann left Gurdjieff in 1929, Gurdjieff no longer composed, preferring to improvise on his lap harmonium, which was a constant companion for at least twenty-three years; he played it up until four days before his death.¹³ Gurdjieff began teaching Movements again in 1940 and on 14 October 1949, days after choreographing his last Movement, he collapsed at a Movements class. Just over two weeks later, on 29 October, he died of pancreatic cancer at the American Hospital of Neuilly, after dictating final instructions to his pupil Jeanne de Salzmann days earlier.¹⁴

Gurdjieff's teaching is best described as a synthesis of Hindu, Buddhist, Judeo-Christian, and Islamic ideas, while drawing particularly strongly from Sufi,¹⁵ Western esoteric, and Theosophical¹⁶ discourses. He then filtered these influences through the sieve of Western modernity, pioneering the New Age movement and bridging the gap between nineteenth and twentieth century modes of thought. Gurdjieff essentially taught that modern-day human beings are dysfunctional machines that operate habitually. They are composed of three disparate parts or 'centres' (intellectual, emotional and physical) that are in constant disarray, where each centre struggles to dominate the others.¹⁷ This condition characterises the two lowest 'states of consciousness' in which most people carry out their lives; the first is sleep at night and the second is the sleep-like condition in which one lives; "a far more dangerous sleep"

¹² de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 53, 131, 139; Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 272, 304.

¹³ Gert-Jan Blom, *Harmonic Development: The Complete Harmonium Recordings 1948-1949* (Netherlands: Basta Audio Visuals, 2004), pp. 20-21, 113.

¹⁴ Moore, *Gurdjieff*, p. 336.

¹⁵ See Anna Challenger, *Philosophy and Art in Gurdjieff's Beelzebub: A Modern Sufi Odyssey* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2002).

¹⁶ See Johanna Petsche, 'Gurdjieff and Blavatsky: Western Esoteric Teachers in Parallel', *Literature & Aesthetics*, vol. 21, no. 1 (2011), pp. 98-115.

¹⁷ Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 53-54.

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than the former.¹⁸ Gurdjieff's teaching aimed to harmonise these disparate 'centres', elevating people from the lowest states of consciousness to higher states of consciousness where people become 'awake' and 'conscious'.¹⁹ The key to this transition is the all-important step from the second to third state of consciousness, which is known as 'self-remembering'.²⁰

'Self-remembering' means remembering to be aware of oneself in the present moment by 'dividing attention' so that one is simultaneously aware of the self and also the current exterior or interior event or situation experienced (for example a task or emotion).²¹ This was meant to enable practitioners to observe and correct their fragmented and mechanical conditions, and was considered an 'artificial' or 'outside' 'shock',²² it comes from outside of the human being's mechanical ways of living and 'identifying'.²³ Gurdjieff's goal was the setting into motion of an inner alchemical process in the individual's body that led to the formation of subtle bodies or soul-like substances,²⁴ and the attainment of the fourth and highest state of consciousness, the 'objective state of consciousness'. The Movements were one of Gurdjieff's methods for facilitating this process; by challenging and subverting the body's mechanical nature, the Movements aided 'self-remembering'.

Thomas de Hartmann

De Hartmann was born in 1885 in the Ukraine on his family's estate, which bordered the village of Khoruzhevka, east of Kiev. His parents were aristocrats of Russian-German ancestry; his father was a captain in the Imperial Household Guards. De Hartmann began improvising music at the age of four, and as a young child was fascinated by fairy-tales, which became a recurring theme in his compositions.²⁵ At eleven de Hartmann began studying harmony and composition with Russian composer Anton Arensky,²⁶ and this

¹⁸ Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 142-143.

¹⁹ G. I. Gurdjieff, *Views From the Real World* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), pp. 76-79.

²⁰ Ouspensky, *Search*, p. 141.

²¹ Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 118-120, 179.

²² Ouspensky, *Search*, 188; G. I. Gurdjieff, *All and Everything First Series: Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Co., 1964 [1950]), p. 770.

²³ Dorine Tolley, pers. comm. (12 March 2010).

²⁴ Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 189, 193, 256; de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 69.

²⁵ Thomas C. Daly and Thomas A. G. Daly, 'On Thomas de Hartmann', in *Our Life with Mr. Gurdjieff* (London: Arkana Penguin Books, 1992), p. xxi.

²⁶ Anton Arensky (1861-1906) was a pianist, conductor, and composer who had contact with many influential composers. He studied under Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, was a friend of Pyotr Tchaikovsky, and taught Sergei Rachmaninov, Alexander Scriabin, and Reinhold Gliere. Arensky was Professor of Harmony and Counterpoint at the Moscow Conservatoire of Music in 1882, and director of the Court Singing Chapel

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tutelage continued for ten years until Arensky's death in 1906. De Hartmann also studied piano technique with prominent Russian pianist Anna Esipova-Leschetzky, and in 1903 at age eighteen, received his diploma from the St Petersburg Imperial Conservatory under the directorship of composer Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov. In the same year he graduated from military school as a Junior Guards Officer. In 1906 de Hartmann began studying counterpoint with composer Sergei Taneiev, a pupil of Tchaikovsky and close friend of the Tolstoy family,²⁷ and married opera singer Olga Arkadievna de Shumacher (1885-1979).²⁸

In 1907 de Hartmann's four-act ballet, *La Fleurette Rouge (The Scarlet Flower)*, was premiered by the Imperial Opera of St Petersburg in the presence of Tsar Nicholas II. It was choreographed by Nicolai Legat, and included Anna Pavlova, Tamara Karsavina, Michel Fokine, and Vaslav Nijinsky in the cast.²⁹ Tsar Nicholas II, having been impressed by the ballet, released de Hartmann from active service as a reserve officer so that he could devote himself to music. From 1908 to 1912 the de Hartmanns lived mainly in Munich, where de Hartmann studied conducting with Felix Mottl, a pupil of Richard Wagner, and formed a close bond with Wassily Kandinsky that lasted for forty years until Kandinsky's death.³⁰ Kandinsky glorified music as the only truly 'abstract' art,³¹ just as de Hartmann believed that "music is a higher revelation than philosophy and science."³²

in St Petersburg from 1894 to 1901. See Alexandria Vodarsky-Shiraeff, *Russian Composers and Musicians: A Biographical Dictionary* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), p. 14; Donald Macleod, BBC Radio 3, *Composer of the Week: Anton Arensky*, Episode 2. At: <http://www.bbc.co.uk-programmes-b0132ncy>, 2011, accessed 7 January 2012.

²⁷ For more on Taneiev see de Hartmann's own article on the composer. Thomas de Hartmann, 'Sergeii Ivanovitch Taneieff', *Tempo*, New Series, no. 29 (Spring 1956), pp. 8-15. See also Alfred J. Swan, *Russian Music and its Sources in Chant and Folk-Song* (London: John Baker, 1973), pp. 131-134.

²⁸ Daly and Daly, 'On Thomas de Hartmann', p. xxii.

²⁹ Daly and Daly, 'On Thomas de Hartmann', p. xxii.

³⁰ Daly and Daly, 'On Thomas de Hartmann', p. xxiii.

³¹ Jelena Hahl-Koch, 'Kandinsky and Schoenberg', in *Arnold Schoenberg Wassily Kandinsky* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1984), p. 148.

³² de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 5. Kandinsky's aesthetic and spiritual values must have resonated with de Hartmann. At the centre of their convictions was the idea that art should be created from the "inner necessity" of the artist or, as Kandinsky also described it, the vibrations of the soul of the artist, which can cause "an almost identical vibration in the soul of the audience" depending on "the audience's level of development and on the influence of the times (the absorbed soul)." Kandinsky and de Hartmann also believed in the integration of the arts, the expression of spiritual truths through an intuitive, spontaneous artistic approach, and the value of foreign and ancient art forms, which facilitated a tracing back to the very sources of art. According to Kandinsky, "a link to the past" was a prerequisite for a "ray to the future." See Thomas de Hartmann, 'On Anarchy in Music', in *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, New Documentary Edition, ed. Klaus Lankheit (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), p. 113; Wassily Kandinsky, 'On the Question of Form', in *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, ed. Klaus Lankheit (London: Thames

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After the death of his mother in 1912 de Hartmann returned to St Petersburg and at this time he and his wife began searching for a spiritual teacher or group.³³ Through one such group in St Petersburg de Hartmann met mathematician Andrei Andreyvich Zakharov, and it was Zakharov who introduced de Hartmann to Gurdjieff in 1916.³⁴

Upon meeting Gurdjieff, de Hartmann was at the height of his career, which makes his decision to postpone his career to follow Gurdjieff all the more exceptional. Their relationship, which was close but remained hierarchical, is carefully traced in the de Hartmanns' memoir *Our Life With Mr. Gurdjieff*, a descriptive and heartfelt account of their epic twelve years with Gurdjieff. Where de Hartmann was Gurdjieff's musical amanuensis for eight years, Olga de Hartmann became Gurdjieff's personal secretary, translator, financier, and manager of the household at the Prieuré, and was the first person to collaborate with him on his first draft of *Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson*. Even after Gurdjieff quite brutally terminated his relationship with the de Hartmanns,³⁵ de Hartmann remained utterly loyal to Gurdjieff, devoting the last years of his life to organising publications, recordings, and concerts of their music, and writing accounts of their time together in *Our Life With Mr. Gurdjieff*. It was reported that de Hartmann regularly played the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music to his dying day.³⁶

and Hudson, 1974), p. 153; Wassily Kandinsky, 'On Stage Composition', in *The Blaue Reiter Almanac*, ed. Klaus Lankheit (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), pp. 190-191; A. Rüdinger, 'Wassily Kandinsky', in *History of Modern Painting*, Vol. 3, ed. Maurice Raynal (Geneva: Albert Skira, 1950), p. 96; Klaus Lankheit, 'A History of the Almanac', in *The Blaue Reiter Almanac* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), p. 35.

³³ Daly and Daly, 'On Olga de Hartmann', in *Our Life with Mr. Gurdjieff* (London: Arkana Penguin Books, 1992), p. xxix.

³⁴ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 5.

³⁵ Pupil J. G. Bennett, *Gurdjieff: Making a New World*, p. 172, recounts a story told by Gurdjieff years later about why he sent the de Hartmanns away. Gurdjieff said that on his Name Day Feast of St George on 23 April 1928 he had expressed his desire for English kippers, and that Olga de Hartmann immediately arranged for a case of kippers to be sent to Paris and brought to the Prieuré. Gurdjieff made this a pretext for sending the de Hartmanns away, as they made his life too easy for him. For Gurdjieff's account of this see G. I. Gurdjieff, *Life is Real Only Then, When 'I Am'* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1981), p. 45. Years earlier, in 1923, Gurdjieff gave another reason for his discharging of pupils. In an article for the *Daily News* journalist E. C. Bowyer wrote that Gurdjieff wished to send pupils away when they had reached a certain stage of development so that they could "pursue a further course through life unaided." See Gert-Jan Blom, *Oriental Suite: The Complete Orchestral Music 1923-1924* (Netherlands: Basta Audio Visuals, 2006), p. 67.

³⁶ Thomas C. Daly [liner notes] 'Introduction', in *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series* (Holland: Channel Classics Records, 2001), p. 3.

Gurdjieff's Movements

Gurdjieff's Movements are dances and exercises characterised by unusual and symbolic gestures of the body, usually placed in unpredictable sequences. They are intended to highlight and challenge the body's mechanical nature, and to facilitate 'self-remembering'.³⁷ The philosophy behind the Movements is that the three centres of the individual are closely bound to each other, so that if one's mechanical forms of moving are altered through Movements, changes in one's mechanical forms of thinking and feeling will follow.³⁸ Gurdjieff taught the Movements in two distinct periods of his life, from 1917 to 1924 and from 1940 to 1949, though between these periods they were practiced and taught by Gurdjieff's pupils. From 1925 the Movements were practiced by Orage's groups in New York,³⁹ and from 1936 to 1938 they were also practiced by Ouspensky's groups in England,⁴⁰ and by de Salzmann's groups in France.⁴¹ It was only

³⁷ Gurdjieff, *Views*, pp. 167-170; Marthe de Gaigneron, 'Sacred Dances', in *Gurdjieff: Essays and Reflections on the Man and His Teaching*, eds Jacob Needleman and George Baker (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1996), p. 298.

³⁸ Gurdjieff, *Views*, p. 168; Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 352-353.

³⁹ Alfred Richard Orage (1873-1934) met Gurdjieff in London in 1922. He had been a public speaker for a number of groups and societies in England, such as the Theosophical Society, and co-editor of the influential literary review, *The New Age*, but abandoned his successful literary life to follow Gurdjieff. In New York in 1924 Orage formed a number of Gurdjieff-centred groups, and these provided funds that sustained Gurdjieff's Institute. Orage's network of literary connections in England and America also brought much of the English-speaking literary world in contact with Gurdjieff. In New York in 1930, Gurdjieff repudiated Orage and the two permanently separated. See Andrew Rawlinson, *The Book of Enlightened Masters: Western Teachers in Eastern Traditions* (Illinois: Open Court, 1997), p. 306; Paul Beekman Taylor, *Gurdjieff and Orage: Brothers in Elysium* (York Beach, MN: Weiser Books, 2001), pp. 163, 167.

⁴⁰ Pyotr Demianovich Ouspensky (1878-1947) was one of Gurdjieff's earliest and most famous pupils. He became a devoted follower of Gurdjieff after their meeting in 1914, but from 1917 Ouspensky began to separate from Gurdjieff. In 1919 Ouspensky started lecturing on Gurdjieff's ideas, and two years later he moved to London where he mustered a circle of devoted pupils. By 1935 he had about one thousand pupils. See Rawlinson, *The Book of Enlightened Masters*, p. 293; James Webb, *The Harmonious Circle: The Lives and Work of G. I. Gurdjieff, P. D. Ouspensky and Their Followers* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), pp. 400, 405.

⁴¹ See Jessmin Howarth, 'Remember Inner Work', *Gurdjieff International Review*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2002), pp. 38-39. Prior to meeting Gurdjieff, Jeanne de Salzmann, née Allemand, was a trained Eurhythmic instructor who had worked with Emile Jaques-Dalcroze at his Institute in Hellerau near Dresden between 1911 and 1914. In 1919 de Salzmann and her husband Alexandre became close pupils of Gurdjieff and remained so for the rest of their lives. In 1931 Alexandre formed a small group in Paris devoted to Gurdjieff's teaching and, after his death in 1933, Jeanne de Salzmann took over the group. She established another group in Sèvres near Paris in 1934. Some members of the Sèvres group became leading figures in the London and Paris 'Foundation' Gurdjieff groups established by de Salzmann after Gurdjieff's death. See Webb, *The Harmonious Circle*, pp. 433-434; Rawlinson, *The Book of Enlightened Masters*, p. 311.

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in Gurdjieff's first Movements period that Gurdjieff and de Hartmann composed the accompanying music.

Gurdjieff first taught Movements between 1917 and August 1924,⁴² and around twenty-seven of these Movements are remembered and practiced today.⁴³ These include the six 'Obligatories,' which are preparatory Movements traditionally practiced at the beginning of Movements classes,⁴⁴ rhythmic 'dervish' dances, fluid 'women's' dances, several elaborate ritual dances like 'The Great Prayer' and 'Initiation of the Priestess,' as well as 'occupationals,' which imitate traditional occupations of peasant communities like carpet weaving, shoemaking, and spinning wool. These Movements were practiced by Gurdjieff's pupils for up to six hours a day during their time in Tiflis, Constantinople, Berlin, and at the Prieuré in Fontainebleau. At the Prieuré Movements were taught in the large Study Hall, which was decorated in an opulent Orientalist style and open for visitors to view five-hour sessions on Saturdays.⁴⁵ Celebrated ballet impresario Sergei Diaghilev attended some of these sessions, taking time off from work on Stravinsky's ballet *Les Noces*, and apparently wished to incorporate Gurdjieff's Movements as a novelty item in his Ballet Russes season.⁴⁶ Gurdjieff's Movements were presented to the public on a much grander scale with lengthy demonstrations given in 1923 at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, and in 1924 in several American cities, which included performances at New York's Carnegie Hall and Neighbourhood Playhouse.⁴⁷

These early Movements contrast with the more abstract and geometrical Movements of Gurdjieff's later phase. The later Movements, which are between one and two hundred in number,⁴⁸ were choreographed between 1940 and 11 October 1949, eighteen days before Gurdjieff's death.⁴⁹ Pupil and Movements instructor Solange Claustres reported

⁴² de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 51. De Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 51, 122, 168, terms Gurdjieff's earliest Movements 'Sacred Gymnastics' and 'Sacred Dances', both being different facets of, and precursors to, the 'Movements', a term that de Hartmann first uses in 1922. Nowadays all of these are collectively referred to as 'Movements', as has been the convention throughout this article.

⁴³ Wim van Dullemen, [liner notes] *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series* (Holland: Channel Classics Records, 2001), p. 12.

⁴⁴ See Dushka Howarth and Jessmin Howarth, *It's Up To Ourselves: A Mother, A Daughter, and Gurdjieff* (New York: Gurdjieff Heritage Society, 2009), p. 53.

⁴⁵ Bennett, *Gurdjieff: Making a New World*, p. 140.

⁴⁶ Moore, *Gurdjieff*, 192; James Moore, 'Gurdjieff, George Ivanovitch', in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, vol. 1, eds Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Antoine Faivre, Roelof van den Broek, and Jean-Pierre Brach (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), p. 447.

⁴⁷ See Blom, *Oriental Suite*.

⁴⁸ Wim van Dullemen, 'A Taste of the Sacred: The Gurdjieff Movements', *Stopinder* 4 (Spring 2001), pp. 26-27.

⁴⁹ Moore, *Gurdjieff*, 352; Blom, *Oriental Suite*, p. 251 note 3.

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that during this period Gurdjieff taught at least one new Movement in every class, which were given weekly.⁵⁰ The thirty-nine Movements of this later phase that Gurdjieff accepted as complete became known as the *39 Series*, though on his last trips to America he added seven new Movements to this list. These forty-six Movements are known playfully as the ‘American 39’, though in Europe only the original thirty-nine Movements are acknowledged as a part of the set.⁵¹ Singing parts were added to some of the later Movements.⁵² Today Foundation groups almost only teach the Movements of this later phase.

Pupils Jeanne de Salzman and Jessmin Howarth were leading figures in the preservation and teaching of many of the Movements after Gurdjieff’s death. Under de Salzman’s direction ten archival films were made of the Movements by French, English, and American Foundation groups in Paris from 1960 to 1974. These were based on the meticulous choreographic notes of Howarth, and made to document the Movements for posterity. They are not available to the general public.⁵³ The Movements continue to be taught in a process of choreographic transmission today both in closed, orthodox Gurdjieff ‘Foundation’ groups, established after Gurdjieff’s death by successor de Salzman, and ‘independent’ Gurdjieff groups (independent of the Foundation network). These groups rarely stage public performances. In fact, most Foundation groups guard the Movements scrupulously; teaching long-term members only fragments to ensure that knowledge of the Movements is retained within these groups.⁵⁴

The only officially released footage of Movements appears in the closing sequence (between 1 hour 29.28 and 1 hour 38.24 minutes) of Peter Brook’s 1979 cinematic adaptation of Gurdjieff’s *Meetings With Remarkable Men*.⁵⁵ Here Brook depicts six different Movements performed by members of the Foundation network, some of whom

⁵⁰ van Dullemen, ‘A Taste of the Sacred’, p. 24.

⁵¹ For more on the *39 Series* see Azize, ‘Gurdjieff’s Sacred Dances and Movements’, pp. 302-303.

⁵² This is indicated in the sheet music of de Hartmann’s accompaniment to the Movement ‘No. 13’ of the *39 Series*, where there are lines of music for soprano and alto voices. Also, in the sheet music for the piece accompanying the Movement ‘Persian Waltz’ of the *39 Series*, parts are included for choirs 1 and 2. Dushka Howarth, *It’s Up to Ourselves*, pp. 220, 477, recalled a time when Gurdjieff required pupils to add a singing accompaniment to a Movement, repeating ‘Alleluia’ on each note of an ascending and descending scale. She also indicated that for the Movement ‘The Pointing Dervish’, practitioners were required to sing a long sustained note in order to become ‘centred’.

⁵³ Rawlinson, *The Book of Enlightened Masters*, p. 353.

⁵⁴ For more see van Dullemen, ‘A Taste of the Sacred’, pp. 33-39.

⁵⁵ See Carole M. Cusack, ‘An Enlightened Life in Text and Image: G. I. Gurdjieff’s *Meetings With Remarkable Men* (1963) and Peter Brook’s ‘Meetings With Remarkable Men’ (1979)’, *Literature & Aesthetics*, vol. 21, no. 1 (2011), pp. 72-97.

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were taught directly by Gurdjieff.⁵⁶ However, these performances, which were overseen by de Salzmann, were deliberately executed with slight alterations.⁵⁷ In any case only brief excerpts of Movements are shown. The fact that footage of the Movements is widely available on YouTube demonstrates that Foundation groups have not successfully concealed the Movements from public exposure. Many of these YouTube clips depict Movements performances given at ashrams devoted to internationally famous Indian mystic ‘Osho’ or Acharya Rajneesh, born Chandra Mohan Jain (1931-1990), who admired Gurdjieff and frequently referred to him.⁵⁸

The Music for Movements

When Gurdjieff first began teaching Movements in 1917, he himself provided musical accompaniments on a guitar borrowed from his landlord, since it was impossible to obtain a piano. He played waltzes and mazurkas that he said came from a study book for guitar,⁵⁹ and de Hartmann states that he “played very well.”⁶⁰ Pupil P. V. Shandarovsky also took part in these early musical accompaniments to the Movements on his Guarneri violin.⁶¹ De Hartmann was initially given no role in the music for the Movements, and was required to practice the Movements with the other pupils.⁶² In 1919 de Hartmann was given the small role of playing “accompanying chords”⁶³ in de Salzmann’s Dalcroze dance class, which she had left in Gurdjieff’s charge. Shortly afterwards, de Salzmann dropped her ties to Dalcroze to follow Gurdjieff. Gurdjieff taught this class his Movements and, later that year, used the class for his first Movements demonstrations.⁶⁴

It was at Gurdjieff’s Institute in Constantinople in 1920 that de Hartmann first began composing music for Movements with Gurdjieff, and playing the music regularly for

⁵⁶ Peter Brook, ‘A Film and a Legend’, in *The Inner Journey: Views from the Gurdjieff Work*, ed. Jacob Needleman (Sandpoint, ID: Morning Light Press, 2008), p. 330.

⁵⁷ Azize, ‘Gurdjieff’s Sacred Dances and Movements’, p. 321.

⁵⁸ Anthony Storr, *Feet of Clay: A Study of Gurus* (London: Harper Collins, 1997), p. 47.

⁵⁹ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 44.

⁶⁰ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 51. In *Meetings* Gurdjieff described playing guitar in his youth to impress a girl, stating that she thought that he “played the guitar well.” See Gurdjieff, *Meetings*, p. 201.

⁶¹ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 53.

⁶² de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 139-141.

⁶³ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 121-122.

⁶⁴ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 122-123.

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Gurdjieff's Movements classes.⁶⁵ De Hartmann continued to accompany the Movements through the growth of the Institute, though other pupils such as Rose Mary Nott and Carol Robinson are also said to have accompanied the Movements in Fontainebleau.⁶⁶ They may have replaced de Hartmann on the occasions when he was unavailable due to outside musical commitments. De Hartmann was only asked to notate the music for Movements from 30 May 1923,⁶⁷ no doubt in preparation for orchestrating pieces for the upcoming Movements demonstrations in Paris. Before this he must have been required to arrange and play the music in classes completely from memory, based on Gurdjieff's dictations. In a similar way, pupils always practiced the Movements from memory as no choreographic notes were allowed. Solange Claustres, who attended Movements classes from 1941, explained: "We were never allowed to take choreographic notes, because this activity would reduce our first and complete impression to an analytical or rational attitude."⁶⁸ This same philosophy may relate to the music prior to 1923. By 1923 de Hartmann had dropped most of his own musical commitments teaching and composing, and was largely at Gurdjieff's disposal.

Collaboration

In de Hartmann's memoir, and those of other pupils, Gurdjieff and de Hartmann's unusual collaborative compositional process is described; Gurdjieff would whistle, sing, tap, and play on piano or harmonium, melodies and rhythms and de Hartmann would piece together these indications on the piano, adding harmonies.⁶⁹ The process of composition was similar for both the music for Movements and Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music, though where the latter was composed in the evenings in front of an audience of attentive pupils⁷⁰ the former was composed within the context of dynamic Movements classes. Pupil J. G. Bennett gives an account of a Movements class in 1923,

⁶⁵ de Hartmann and Bennett give accounts of the process of composing music for Movements; see de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 155-156; J. G. Bennett, *Witness: The Autobiography of J. G. Bennett* (London: Turnstone Books, 1975), p. 112.

⁶⁶ See Paul Beekman Taylor, *Gurdjieff's America: Mediating the Miraculous* (UK: Lighthouse Editions, 2004), p. 32; Roger Friedland and Harold Zellman, *The Fellowship: The Untold Story of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Taliesin Fellowship* (New York: Regan, 2006), p. 423.

⁶⁷ Thomas C. Daly and Thomas A.G. Daly, 'Chronology', in *Our Life with Mr. Gurdjieff*, eds Thomas C. Daly and Thomas A. G. Daly (London: Arkana Penguin Books, 1992), p. 268.

⁶⁸ van Dullemen, 'A Taste of the Sacred', p. 30.

⁶⁹ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 245-246; Bennett, *Witness*, p. 112; Fritz Peters, *Boyhood with Gurdjieff and Gurdjieff Remembered* (London: Wildwood House, 1976), p. 73.

⁷⁰ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 245.

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describing Gurdjieff dictating Movements music and choreography almost simultaneously with de Hartmann arranging and harmonising the music immediately:

Gurdjieff would begin to tap a rhythm on the piano top. When it was clear to all he hummed a melody or played it with one hand on the piano and then walked away. Hartmann would develop a theme to fit the rhythm and the melody. If he went wrong, Gurdjieff would shout at him and Hartmann would shout furiously back.⁷¹

After Gurdjieff placed pupils in the desired positions, there were “a few words of explanation, and de Hartmann would begin to play the theme, which by then he had worked out into a rich harmony.”⁷²

De Hartmann gives a detailed account of composing music in a Movements class in Constantinople in 1920. The two pieces alluded to in this account can be identified as music for the Movements ‘Ho-Ya’ and ‘The Great Prayer.’⁷³

[Gurdjieff] gave me the tempo of the exercise and a melody he himself had written on paper, from which I was expected to improvise the music on the spot. But then he gave me also a separately written upper voice, which was meant to sound as if played on sonorous little bells. It was now impossible to play everything with two hands, so he told Madame de Salzmann to play the lowest part and me the upper part. I struggled feverishly to get it all down on paper and we began to play ...

Copying and editing the music of the dance was very interesting. Everything had to be done then and there, according to his instructions. The main melody was now in my left hand with the added voice above it. He told Madame de Salzmann to double the main melody one sixth lower with her right hand, and play the rhythm with her left. It was amazing how the accompaniment, the little high voice, and the two main voices a sixth apart, blended together like parts of a single machine.

⁷¹ Bennett, *Witness*, p. 112. For a similar account of the process see Nott, *Teachings*, p. 62.

⁷² Bennett, *Witness*, p. 112.

⁷³ Dorine Tolley, who is well-acquainted with all the music for Movements and possesses copies of the privately circulated sheet music, brought this to the author’s attention. Dorine Tolley, pers. comm. (26 June 2012). The author was able to confirm this by comparing de Hartmann’s accounts with the sheet music.

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Soon after that Mr Gurdjieff brought me another piece of music paper, with an unusual combination of flats in the key signature – the notes of an Eastern scale. The melody, with a monotonous beat in the bass, was music for another big dervish dance, for which he began to show the positions.⁷⁴

This account illustrates that, at least on occasion, Gurdjieff himself notated music, and that he was capable of constructing an “upper voice” or counter-melody (usually Gurdjieff is credited only for the melodic and rhythmic elements of pieces. A counter-melody can, however, be considered a form of harmony in the music as it creates counterpoint with the primary melody). De Hartmann also indicates that Gurdjieff was in control of all stages of composition, and another account by pupil C. S. Nott supports this. Nott states that when de Hartmann “fill[ed] in harmonies” Gurdjieff stood over him “until it was as he wished. He would give Hartmann no respite until he got it as it should be.”⁷⁵ Once, de Hartmann even “found the situation so impossible when Gurdjieff was going for him that he got up from the piano and left the Study House.”⁷⁶ These accounts contradict James Webb’s theory that the music was “interpreted by Thomas de Hartmann from Gurdjieff’s skeletal indications of melody, rhythm and harmony” just as, Webb asserts, senior pupils were left to work out Gurdjieff’s intentions for Movements choreography after Gurdjieff gave the “bare bones of a Movement.”⁷⁷ At the end of his account de Hartmann describes a piece with an “unusual combination of flats in the key signature – the notes of an Eastern scale ... with a monotonous beat in the bass.”⁷⁸ This can be identified as the music to the Movement ‘The Great Prayer,’ which has an unconventional key signature that reads A flat, B natural, E natural and D flat.⁷⁹ This key signature indicates that Gurdjieff was not concerned with complying with the rules of Western music theory, which do not, in any case, easily accommodate Eastern-style music.

⁷⁴ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 155-156.

⁷⁵ Nott, *Teachings*, p. 62.

⁷⁶ Nott, *Teachings*, p. 62. See also Bennett, *Witness*, p. 112.

⁷⁷ Webb, *The Harmonious Circle*, p. 240.

⁷⁸ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 155-156.

⁷⁹ The sheet music for the music for Movements is difficult to access as it is circulated privately within Gurdjieff groups. The author was able to view this piece courtesy of Dorine Tolley. Dorine Tolley, pers. comm. (22 October 2010).

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Sounds, Sources, and the Interplay Between Music and Gesture

The music for Movements reflects the diverse folk,⁸⁰ classical, and religious sounds that characterise the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music,⁸¹ though the music for Movements is more repetitive, and structured in a way that interacts with, reinforces, and supports the physical gestures of the Movements. Often each chord, note, or first beat of a bar corresponds with a new physical gesture, and trills, tremolos and glissandi faithfully serve body movements. For example, in the ‘Second Obligatory,’ also known as the ‘First March,’ there is a moment where the hands brush gently up the body as if drawing energy to the neck, and then come down again to rest at the right knee. This is reinforced in the music by a series of ethereal-sounding arpeggiated runs up and down the piano.

As many Movements are based on the numbers three, seven, and nine, in line with Gurdjieff’s cosmic Laws of Three and Seven, and nine-sided enneagram symbol,⁸² the music often reflects these numbers in rhythms, metres, and structures. For example, music to the ‘First Obligatory’ is composed mainly in 3/2 and 3/4 metres, and is to be repeated three times at three different tempi, and the ‘Canon of 15 November’ emphasises the seventh note of melodic motifs, and later features a series of slow triplet semiquavers. Due to the strong link between the Movements and music, opinions differ on whether this music has any value when separated from corresponding Movements (see below).

The music for Movements, like the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music, is largely modal, though some pieces are in major and minor keys. Often what seem like almost tokenistic characteristics of traditional Asian and Middle Eastern music are employed,

⁸⁰ The term ‘folk music’ is problematic, being a Romantic notion that only gains meaning through its dialectical relation to another Romantic notion, ‘art music’. Both portray themselves as timeless categories and signal the Romantic fixation on origins and originality in art. See Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”: Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 5-7, 209. For present purposes, folk music is here defined as an orally transmitted music that arises and evolves organically from within indigenous communities, from the communal singing of songs. See Percy A. Scholes, *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 366.

⁸¹ See Petsche, ‘G. I. Gurdjieff’s Piano Music’, pp. 277-279.

⁸² In Gurdjieff’s cosmology, two laws penetrate the functioning of all macrocosmic and microcosmic processes and entities: the Laws of Three and Seven. Where the Law of Three governs the causality of every phenomenon, the Law of Seven governs the trajectory of every process or series of phenomena. The enneagram was a model used by Gurdjieff to demonstrate the perpetual motion of these two Laws. It is composed of a circle encompassing a triangle representing the numbers 3, 6, and 9, and a six-sided figure representing the numbers 1, 4, 2, 8, 5, 7. Gurdjieff choreographed Movements that enacted this motion through displacements made both by individuals and the entire ensemble. See Moore, *Gurdjieff*, pp. 44, 344.

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such as the Arab *hijaz* mode with its augmented second interval between the second and third scale degrees, repetitive drum-like motifs in the bass, and melodic elaborations such as appoggiaturas,⁸³ trills, and quick repetitions of notes that give the taste of vocal embellishments and sounds produced by traditional Asian and Middle Eastern wind and stringed instruments. Their music must have come across as quite extraordinary to Gurdjieff's pupils, who were mostly Russian, English, and American. Ouspensky even speculated that Gurdjieff and de Hartmann's dervish music marked the first occasion that Europe heard such music, reporting that it produced "a very great impression on all who were able to hear."⁸⁴

Some of the melodies that Gurdjieff dictated might have originated from music he heard on his travels through Central Asia and the Middle East, which is what is implied in an introductory talk given at his 1923 Paris Movements demonstrations. It was then stated that the 'Obligatories' originated from the Temple of Medicine at Sari, Tibet and the artificial caves of Kidjera in Kafiristan.⁸⁵ This suggests the same or related sources for the accompanying music to these Movements (Gurdjieff certainly explained the origins of the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music, and his harmonium improvisations, in this way).⁸⁶ However, some evidence contradicts these claims. First, the music to some of the Movements, such as music for the second, fifth, and sixth 'Obligatories,' is undeniably Western sounding, with the music for the 'Sixth Obligatory' composed in the style of a Polish mazurka.⁸⁷ In fact de Hartmann recounted Gurdjieff admitting to having taken waltzes and mazurkas from a study book for guitar (waltzes and mazurkas indicate Western sources), and that these were used to accompany his Movements.⁸⁸ Second, it seems unlikely that Gurdjieff could have remembered music heard so many years beforehand, and that Gurdjieff could have precisely dictated the original music considering the spontaneous, swift, and somewhat improvisatory nature of the compositional process.⁸⁹

If the music Gurdjieff dictated to de Hartmann did not originate from Gurdjieff's travels, it must simply have been inspired by the patchwork of musical influences to

⁸³ *Appoggiaturas* are 'ornamental' notes or dissonant melodic decorations that seek to be resolved by 'leaning' toward another note in close proximity.

⁸⁴ Ouspensky, *Search*, p. 386.

⁸⁵ Blom, *Oriental Suite*, p. 186.

⁸⁶ See de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 44; Ouspensky, *Search*, p. 386; Bennett, *Gurdjieff: Making a New World*, p. 167; Blom, *Harmonic Development*, pp. 28, 59, 63.

⁸⁷ Blom, *Oriental Suite*, p. 186.

⁸⁸ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 44.

⁸⁹ See de Hartmann's accounts of the process in de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 245-246.

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which Gurdjieff was exposed in his early life, such as from his hometowns of Alexandropol in Russian Armenia, and Kars in Turkey. Many pieces of music for Movements, for example, reflect the sounds and forms of Church hymns, which Gurdjieff would have heard in the Russian Orthodox Church services attended in his youth. Music to the Movements ‘Slow Second Obligatory,’ ‘Women’s Prayer,’ ‘Greek Letters,’ ‘Forty Positions,’ and ‘I am Father, Son,’ are solemn, entirely or partly chordal, and written in four voices as if sung by a church choir. These pieces do not exhibit the formal structure of any one style of Church hymnody but are reminiscent of the sounds and ceremonial character of both Western and Russian Orthodox hymnody.

Gurdjieff also lived in Constantinople, Turkey and Tiflis, Georgia from 1919 to 1921, and at this time attended Mevlevi dervish ceremonies (which are accompanied) and heard Turkish music.⁹⁰ This music must also have been an influence, though the most likely source for much of the music must be Gurdjieff’s native country of Armenia, as Gurdjieff was interested to acquaint de Hartmann with Armenian music, instructing him to give concerts in Armenia in 1919⁹¹ and introducing him to the music of contemporary Armenian priest, ethnomusicologist and composer Komitas Vardapet (1869-1935). De Hartmann interpreted this to be an attempt at priming him for the composition of the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music that followed years later.⁹² An ethnomusicological study of the music for Movements and Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music is necessary for a definitive statement on the direct origins of pieces.⁹³

Orchestral Music for the Movements Demonstrations of 1923 and 1924

Gurdjieff’s Movements were presented to the public in a string of demanding demonstrations given in Paris in 1923 and America in 1924. Gurdjieff required orchestral music for the demonstrations in Paris, and de Hartmann carried out the majority of the orchestration work, which largely consisted of notating and orchestrating pieces they had already composed on piano for the Movements.⁹⁴ De Hartmann was challenged in that he had only thirty-five musicians at his disposal yet their venue, the Théâtre de Champs

⁹⁰ Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 382-383; de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 157-158.

⁹¹ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 136.

⁹² de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 136.

⁹³ In a stand-alone analysis, Gert-Jan Blom, *Oriental Suite*, p. 42, compared the Gurdjieff-de Hartmann piece ‘Kurd Melody for Two Flutes’ with a field recording of traditional flute music by Kurdish shepherds, arguing that the structure, mode, and rhythm was identical in each. Unfortunately he does not reference the recording and, in any case, only put one Gurdjieff-de Hartmann piece to the test.

⁹⁴ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 203, 216.

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Elysées, was designed for a one hundred piece orchestra.⁹⁵ De Hartmann faced another challenge with the music in New York. Two days before their first demonstration there, Gurdjieff asked de Hartmann to adapt their Paris orchestral music for an even smaller ensemble of musicians. This was due to financial constraints, though de Hartmann found the task unnecessary as he could have simply accompanied the demonstrations on the piano.⁹⁶ De Hartmann states that he hired five musicians for this smaller ensemble – a violinist, cellist, double-bassist, clarinetist and percussionist⁹⁷ – though researcher Gert-Jan Blom argues that there must have been eight in the ensemble. Blom accessed original instrumental parts, finding parts for flute, clarinet, two violins, cello, bass, and percussion. As de Hartmann also played with the ensemble, it would have consisted of eight players. No separate piano part was found but Blom argues that de Hartmann would have known the music by heart.⁹⁸

De Hartmann describes a time when Gurdjieff contributed to the orchestration process. Gurdjieff had asked de Hartmann to add to the melody for the Movement ‘The Great Prayer’ *pianissimo* sub-voices, to be constructed on the same scale as the melody. These sub-voices were to represent dervishes who were not active in the dance, but who, in low, muffled voices, chanted prayers.⁹⁹ Later in rehearsal Gurdjieff asked the orchestral players to pay particular attention to the *pianissimo* when performing the sub-voices and de Hartmann found this “strikingly effective.”¹⁰⁰ By specially requesting the addition of sub-voices and specifying a dynamic it seems that Gurdjieff was particularly interested in the texture and quality of the orchestral sound. Gurdjieff did describe in his writings his intense curiosity, from a young age, in the effects of the vibrations of sound on different types of people and on other phenomena.¹⁰¹ This became a lifelong interest for Gurdjieff, as is indicated in his stories of Vitvitskaia and the Bokharian Dervish Hadji-Asvatz-Troov, both of whom were captivated by the affects of the vibrations of musical sound on living things.¹⁰² Gurdjieff once even stated that by

⁹⁵ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 205.

⁹⁶ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 212-213.

⁹⁷ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 213.

⁹⁸ Blom, *Oriental Suite*, pp. 181-182.

⁹⁹ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 156.

¹⁰⁰ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 156.

¹⁰¹ Gurdjieff, *Meetings*, p. 208.

¹⁰² Gurdjieff, *Meetings*, pp. 122-135; Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub's Tales*, pp. 891-897. In Gurdjieff's time there was a general fascination, and much experimentation, with vibration and energy. From the seventeenth century, culminating in the twentieth century with quantum physics, the concept of what is now called ‘energy’ became established in the West, and ‘matter’ became understood as a vibration of electrons, positrons, and neutrons; see Otto Gonzalez, ‘The Transformation of Substances and Human Meaning’, in

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mastering an understanding of vibration, one might come to comprehend the meaning of organic life on earth, and in particular, “the aim of human life.”¹⁰³

It is also reported that in rehearsals for the demonstrations Gurdjieff would sometimes specify which instrument would play which line. Pupil Jessmin Howarth interpreted this as an indication of Gurdjieff’s concern,

with the effects of different instruments, their individual tones and special vibrations, not so much on the ears of the audience, but much more importantly, on different parts of the performers’ bodies. His music was exactly “right” in every way to help inspire the necessary physical responses.¹⁰⁴

Gurdjieff also directed the musicians in rehearsals; sometimes joining the percussionist on tambourine,¹⁰⁵ and in the last demonstration in Paris he even took over the baton and conducted the orchestra himself.¹⁰⁶ De Hartmann comments that for the American demonstrations, “we had five good Russian musicians with whom Mr Gurdjieff could communicate,”¹⁰⁷ indicating that Gurdjieff was eager to engage with the musicians.

The Role of the Music

In Movements classes given today, as in Gurdjieff’s day, the music for Movements is played live by a pianist, whose role in the class is considered fundamental. Esteemed Movements instructor Claustres states, “it is the sound produced by the pianist that determines everything, it is this sound that has to complete the inner process brought into action by the movements of the dancers.”¹⁰⁸ Sydney Movements instructor and pianist

G. I. Gurdjieff: Armenian Roots, Global Branches, ed. Michael Pittman (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), p. 86. By the end of the nineteenth century the discovery of electricity had been joined by discoveries of a number of other previously unheard of fluids and forces, with new technologies such as cathode ray tubes, radio transmitters, and X-ray photographs. Scientists such as Oliver Lodge and William Crooke speculated that the latest electric wave technology could be used to model the body, where the sense organs were receivers of vibrating ethereal impulses. See Iwan R. Morus, *When Physics Became King* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2005), pp. 158-159, 177.

¹⁰³ G. I. Gurdjieff, *The Herald of Coming Good* (Edmonds, WA: Sure Fire Press, 1988), 13.

¹⁰⁴ Howarth and Howarth, *It’s Up To Ourselves*, p. 476.

¹⁰⁵ Dushka Howarth, pers. comm. (16 April 2009). De Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 213, also mentions Gurdjieff playing the tambourine in rehearsals for the American demonstrations. He indicates that Gurdjieff communicated messages to pupils through his tambourine rhythms.

¹⁰⁶ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 207.

¹⁰⁷ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 213.

¹⁰⁸ van Dullemen, ‘A Taste of the Sacred’, p. 30.

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Dorine Tolley explains that the music for Movements should not distract or carry away practitioners, but instead should enable a transformation to take place, where the group comes to realise and eventually overcome their mechanical behaviours. Through tempo, articulation, phrasing, tone colour, and *rubato*, the Movements pianist can provide the group with the greatest possible opportunity for spiritual development.¹⁰⁹ Tolley's comments reflect Gurdjieff's statements that Movements practitioners should refrain from allowing attention to stray to the accompanying music, that the music for Movements is an aid for drawing away ones "mechanicalness," and that the music should centre individuals during Movements: it "diverts the movements innate in us which in life is the chief source of interference."¹¹⁰

There are different ways in which one can conceptualise the significance of the music for Movements in relation to Gurdjieff teaching. Joseph Azize proposes that the tempo of this music facilitates the coordination of the 'tempos' of the three 'centres' of practitioners, so that a new and unifying tempo then enters the individual. Azize points out that Gurdjieff taught that the three 'centres' of the individual function at three independent 'tempos', resulting in their disconnected status; Gurdjieff spoke of the need for the "tempo of my mentation" to harmonise "with the other tempos of my common functioning,"¹¹¹ and argued, "a man can never be a man if he has no right rhythms in himself."¹¹² Gurdjieff also implied that there is an appropriate or central 'tempo' for each individual, which is the tempo of the blood circulation, and that if this tempo falls into an appropriate range, 'essence' (one's core self) manifests, the three centres align, and subtle bodies or *soul-like substances* are cultivated.¹¹³ Celebrated Movements instructor Pauline de Dampierre, who met Gurdjieff in 1942, gives an account of the music for the later Movements, which supports Azize's idea. She states: "Its structure, its harmonies, its melody, and its rhythm must accompany not only the outward movements but also the inner impulses which develop progressively in the course of the exercise. If the quality of

¹⁰⁹ Dorine Tolley, pers. comm. (27 October 2009).

¹¹⁰ Gurdjieff, *Views*, p. 220.

¹¹¹ Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub's Tales*, p. 1162.

¹¹² Gurdjieff, *Views*, pp. 82-83. See also Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub's Tales*, p. 1172; Gurdjieff, *Meetings*, p. 189; Gurdjieff, *Life is Real*, p. 128.

¹¹³ Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub's Tales*, pp. 564-566, 763-768; G. I. Gurdjieff, *An Objectively Impartial Criticism of the Life of Man or Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* (New York, privately circulated mimeographed copyists' typescript edition, 1930-1931), no page numbers indicated, page 7 of chapter; Joseph Azize, 'A Hundred Chapters on Tempo and Gurdjieff's Teaching', unpublished article (2009), pp. 8, 11. See also Azize, 'Gurdjieff's Sacred Dances and Movements', pp. 319-320. These ideas on tempo were inspired by a number of meetings with Joseph Azize between June and September 2009. The author thanks him for making his unpublished article available.

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vibration is right, it will awaken its counter-part in the dancers; it will not carry them away nor distract them.”¹¹⁴

It could also be argued that the music relates to the three centres in a different way. While one’s physical and intellectual centres are engaged or activated when carrying out Movements (the Movements involve one’s intellect in that they require practitioners to memorise complex sequences of positions and sometimes repeat difficult series’ of numbers or words), the emotional centre is stimulated by the accompanying music. This is consistent with Gurdjieff’s statement:

If our aim is a harmonious development of man, then for us, dances and movements are a means of combining the mind and the feeling with movements of the body and manifesting them together. In all things, we have the aim to develop something which cannot be developed directly or mechanically – which interprets the whole man: mind, body and feeling.¹¹⁵

The music for Movements could also be understood as a tool for provoking the ‘shock’ of ‘self-remembering’ in practitioners. (In Gurdjieff’s intricate cosmological system, all processes in the universe require ‘shocks’, or additional energy, so that they can continue and ultimately come to completion.¹¹⁶ Gurdjieff described ‘self-remembering’ as an ‘artificial’ or ‘outside’ ‘shock’.¹¹⁷ For example, in the ‘First Obligatory’ a sequence of nine gestures are to be carried out, where each gesture occurs on a new chord of the music. However, one is required to remain completely still on the strong beginning chord of each sequence, even though the instinct is always to move on this chord. These first chords could be considered ‘shocks’, abruptly reminding practitioners that at the very outset of each sequence of the Movement (and indeed of everyday tasks and situations) one must remember the self and be present to the moment, rather than launching blindly into activities. There is another way in which the music may be seen to function as a ‘shock’. In Foundation groups today, practitioners often learn Movements before hearing the accompanying music. The final, sudden addition of the music in these classes might then be meant as a ‘shock’. There is no evidence, however, that Gurdjieff himself taught Movements in this way.

¹¹⁴ Pauline de Dampierre, ‘Sacred Dance: The Search for Conscious Harmony’, *Gurdjieff International Review* vol. 5, no. 1 (2002), p. 44.

¹¹⁵ Gurdjieff, *Views*, p. 183.

¹¹⁶ See Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 123-129; Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub’s Tales*, pp. 753-754.

¹¹⁷ Ouspensky, *Search*, p. 188; Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub’s Tales*, p. 770.

Sheet Music and Recordings

Due to the secretive atmosphere surrounding Gurdjieff's Movements, there is no publicly available edition of the sheet music for the music for Movements. In 1950 the music was released in three volumes by Janus, the volumes overseen by de Hartmann, entitled *Music Pour les Mouvements de G.I. Gurdjieff*. These were only privately circulated within Gurdjieff Foundation groups.¹¹⁸ These volumes are also known as the 'white', 'grey', and 'black' books, due to the colour of their covers. The 'white' book contains twenty-eight pieces, including some of the earliest pieces for Movements and some of de Hartmann's own compositions for the later Movements composed after Gurdjieff's death. The 'grey' book combines de Hartmann's music for the *39 Series*, which is discussed below, and the music composed by Gurdjieff and de Hartmann for the six 'Obligatories.' The 'black' book comprises seven pieces, though it is uncertain as to why these were separated from the others. In 1990 the music was republished in two volumes, again privately, by Triangle Editions in Canada, and called *Music for the Gurdjieff Movements and Exercises*.

Two unpublished, privately circulated collections of sheet music for the music for Movements also exist, and are known as the Study Society manuscript (thirty-four pieces) and the Coombe Spring manuscript (twenty-seven pieces). They are connected to offshoot groups formed by Gurdjieff's pupils P. D. Ouspensky and J. G. Bennett respectively, and contain small variations to the Triangle edition. In his recording *Music for the Movements*, Wim van Dullemen demonstrates the subtle ways in which these two manuscript collections differ to versions in the Triangle edition. He recorded three different versions of one piece, which in the Triangle edition is entitled 'Rug Weaving,' in the Coombe Springs manuscript is 'The Carpet,' and in the Study Society manuscript, 'Carpet Weaving.' Slight differences in the rhythm of the melody and in the voicing of the harmony can be detected. He also recorded two versions of the piece for the Movement 'The First Dervish Prayer,' one from the Triangle edition, and one being a combination of the ostinato added by the Study Society manuscript and the changed tremolos from the Coombe Springs manuscript.¹¹⁹ As the music for Movements is so closely guarded, if someone wished to obtain a copy of the music they may have been required to copy it out by hand. Some of the variations in the music of these private collections may represent, then, simplifications and abbreviations made as it was being laboriously hand-written.

¹¹⁸ Walter J. Driscoll and Gurdjieff Foundation of California, *Gurdjieff: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985), p. 8.

¹¹⁹ See van Dullemen [liner notes] *Gurdjieff's Music for the Movements*, pp. 29-30, 32.

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Although the sheet music for the music for Movements is privately circulated, three odd Movements pieces found their way into volumes three and four of the Schott edition of the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music. These are: No. 32, also known as ‘The Big Group’ (Vol. 3, 84-85), ‘Prayer’ (Vol. 3, 99) and ‘Initiation of a Priestess’ (Vol. 4, 72-79).¹²⁰ Two other pieces in the Schott volumes, ‘Assyrian Women Mourners’ (Vol. 1, 82-84) and ‘Women’s Prayer’ (Vol. 3, 109), are commonly considered to be pieces for Movements, as Movements with these titles exists. However, there is no record of the music for ‘Assyrian Women Mourners’ in any of the original manuscripts of the music for the Movements, and de Hartmann published the piece in a volume of Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music, *Songs and Rhythms from Asia*. It seems originally to have been a non-Movements piano piece. Similarly, evidence suggests that ‘Women’s Prayer’ was originally a piano piece, and only later was a Movement attached to it.

The Schott volumes were organised from within the Foundation network; in 1983 Jeanne de Salzmann and Henry John Sinclair, 2nd Baron Pentland, the President of the Gurdjieff Foundation of New York from its inception in 1953, proposed that musicians Linda Daniel-Spitz, Charles Ketcham, and Laurence Rosenthal, along with meticulous archivist Thomas C. Daly, the possessor of the manuscripts, assume the task of editing a ‘definitive’ edition of the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music. This marked the first time that Gurdjieff’s music was made accessible to the public in sheet music form. It might seem curious, then, that these three Movements pieces were included, as Foundation groups are so conscientious in guarding the Movements and music for Movements from the public. This could be explained by the fact that at least two of the pieces, ‘The Big Group’ and ‘Initiation of the Priestess,’ belong to Movements that are now lost, so they could not have been used to accompany those Movements. This suggests that the Foundation’s concern for guarding the music for Movements is not about the music itself, but about the possibility of it being used by the ‘uninitiated’ to accompany Movements.

Unlike the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music, the music for Movements is rarely recorded commercially. This is due to the philosophy, generally held by Foundation groups (who guard the sheet music, which is necessary for making recordings), that the music for Movements has little value when separated from corresponding Movements. This argument is articulated by Thomas C. Daly, a student of the de Hartmanns and executor of their estate, who states that the music for Movements cannot be considered a “thing-in-itself” without accompanying Movements, and that a “recording of the piano score at best is a suddenly fixed and partially deadened form of a musical adjunct that

¹²⁰ It was confirmed that these pieces represent music for Movements by Blom, *Oriental Suite*, p. 252, note 29, and Wim van Dulleman, pers. comm. (23 April 2012).

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needs to be capable of shifting tempo and volume according to the teacher's needs and depending on the pupils' capabilities and the mood of the day."¹²¹ On the other hand, others argue that, while the Movements themselves cannot function without the accompanying music (this would be difficult to dispute),¹²² much of the music can stand alone without the Movements. In the liner notes to *Gurdjieff's Music for the Movements* pianist/researcher Wim van Dullemen asserts, "it seemed appropriate to present this music independently and let it speak with its own voice."¹²³

The only piano recording devoted entirely to the music for Movements, as far as the author is aware, is Wim van Dullemen's two-CD set *Gurdjieff's Music for the Movements*, which was overseen by Gurdjieff's daughter Dushka Howarth. In the liner notes van Dullemen warns that this recording can never replace a live pianist in a Movements class as "only he or she can feel what a class needs at a particular moment."¹²⁴ Small selections of Movements pieces are sometimes included on recordings that feature the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music. One of the most valuable of these recordings is Rose Mary Nott's *Music for the Prieure*, with renditions of the music made in 1974 and 1975 in her West London home. Rose Mary was a pupil of Gurdjieff from the 1920s, and played for some of his Movements classes.¹²⁵ More recordings are available of the music to Gurdjieff's *39 Series* (see below), which was composed by de Hartmann after Gurdjieff's death. Notable recordings are Wim van Dullemen's *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series*, supervised by Thomas C. Daly,¹²⁶ and Cecil Lytle's *Words for a Hymn to the Sun*.¹²⁷ Also worth noting here are the four CDs included in Gert-Jan Blom's *Oriental Suite: The Complete Orchestral Music 1923-1924*.¹²⁸ These feature all the orchestrations of the music for Movements for the Paris demonstrations of 1923, all arrangements of the music for the smaller ensemble

¹²¹ Thomas C. Daly [liner notes] 'Introduction' in *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series*, p. 3.

¹²² This became clear to the author when practicing the Movement 'Greek Letters' in Tolley's Movements class. Here a series of gestures of the arms, legs, and head are grouped in sets of four, and at the beginning of each set a Greek letter of the alphabet is recited. At first the class practiced the Movement without the music, and it felt incomplete and almost nonsensical. Later, when Tolley added the accompanying music the Movement immediately came together. Afterwards the class commented on the noticeable difference that the music made to their experience of the Movement.

¹²³ van Dullemen [liner notes] *Gurdjieff's Music for the Movements*, 17.

¹²⁴ van Dullemen [liner notes] *Gurdjieff's Music for the Movements*, p. 21.

¹²⁵ Rosemary Nott, *Music of the Prieuré* (Canada: Dolmen Meadow Editions, 2011).

¹²⁶ van Dullemen, *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series*.

¹²⁷ Cecil Lytle, *Words for a Hymn to the Sun* (Tucson, AZ: Celestial Harmonies, 1992).

¹²⁸ Blom, *Oriental Suite*. These CDs join a comprehensive 255 page book that examines the Movements demonstrations in Paris and America and includes illustrations, historical documents, press articles, pupils' recollections of the demonstrations, photographs, and copies of orchestral manuscripts.

accompanying some American demonstrations in 1924, and fourteen orchestrated pieces composed before 1922 for the Tiflis and Constantinople demonstrations and for *Struggle of the Magicians*. The recordings were made in 2003 and 2005 by the Metropole Orchestra.

Music for Gurdjieff's Later Movements

As Gurdjieff did not compose any music after de Hartmann left him in 1929, music for the later Movements (1940-1949) was improvised on piano by pupils such as de Salzman, Jessmin Howarth, Carol Robinson, Rose Mary Nott, and Claustres. Gurdjieff gave a rhythm to the pianist and his instructions were limited to, "now, just do it!"¹²⁹ One account suggests that Gurdjieff's choice of a particular rhythm for the music often provided the basis for the structure of a new Movement.¹³⁰ Claustres, who won a Premier Prix for her piano playing, described these improvisations as "a living part of the inner work that takes place in the classes."¹³¹ Interestingly, pupil Pierre Schaeffer remarked that the music for the later Movements was sometimes improvised on "a piano tuned to augmented seconds."¹³² In his writings Gurdjieff demonstrates his interest in altering, specially tuning, or adding quarter-tone possibilities to, pianos and other musical instruments.¹³³ After Gurdjieff's death, music was composed for the later Movements by, most notably, Thomas de Hartmann, Edvard Michael, Alain Kremski, Helen Adie, and Laurence Rosenthal, all of whom were, or are, affiliated with Foundation groups.

Two days before his death Gurdjieff sent a message to de Hartmann requesting compositions for the *39 Series*.¹³⁴ De Hartmann composed thirty-seven pieces for the *39 Series* (the other two were to be improvised), as well as pieces for fifteen other later Movements.¹³⁵ This must have been a strange task for de Hartmann, who had had no contact with Gurdjieff for twenty years and who had not participated in these Movements, which were radically different to the earlier Movements. To acquaint himself with these later Movements, de Hartmann relied on written instructions by Jessmin Howarth and personal demonstrations by Solange Claustres, Josee de Salzman, and Marthe de Gaigneron. Claustres contended that, as de Hartmann had not witnessed a

¹²⁹ van Dullemen [liner notes] *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series*, p. 41, note 10.

¹³⁰ van Dullemen, 'A Taste of the Sacred', p. 29.

¹³¹ van Dullemen, 'A Taste of the Sacred', p. 30.

¹³² Pierre Schaeffer, 'A Session of "Movements" The Old Man and the Children of the Age', *Gurdjieff International Review*, vol. 5, no. 1 (2002), p. 35. The interval of the augmented second is a widening of the interval of the major second by one semitone. The augmented second, then, spans three semitones.

¹³³ See Gurdjieff, *Beelzebub's Tales*, pp. 847, 852, 867, 884, 893; and Gurdjieff, *Meetings*, p. 132.

¹³⁴ Moore, 'Gurdjieff, George Ivanovitch', p. 449.

¹³⁵ van Dullemen [liner notes] *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series*, p. 13.

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class carrying out these Movements, some of his compositions are not optimal.¹³⁶ De Hartmann's music for the later Movements is characterised by angular melodies, syncopation, polyrhythms, whole-tone tonalities, and melodies played in consecutive octaves. These techniques are most noticeable in 'The Automaton,' 'The Three Tableaux,' 'Dance,' 'Stop Exercise,' and 'March N26.'¹³⁷ This music reflects the style and forms of the later Movements, and contrasts with the simpler music of the earlier Movements, composed with Gurdjieff in the 1920s. In July 1950 de Hartmann played many of these new compositions at a Movements demonstration at Colet Gardens in London, which indicates that he could not have spent much longer than six months composing the music.¹³⁸

The Struggle of the Magicians

As stated earlier, in the period in which Gurdjieff choreographed his early Movements and composed music for these with de Hartmann, he was also choreographing, and composing music for, his ballet *The Struggle of the Magicians* (henceforth *Struggle*). As the ballet and accompanying music have been given little attention in previous work on Gurdjieff,¹³⁹ they will be briefly considered here. *Struggle* was an ongoing conception for Gurdjieff from 1914, when he first advertised it in the newspaper *Golos Moskvi* (Voice of Moscow), to 1948, when he rehearsed it in New York.¹⁴⁰ The ballet was mainly a focus from 1919 to 1921.¹⁴¹ It was never performed in its entirety, though a programme from Gurdjieff's Movements demonstration in Tiflis in 1919 includes a "fragment of a round dance from the 3rd Act of *The Struggle of the Magicians*,"¹⁴² so at least this one 'fragment' had been exhibited to the public. The de Hartmanns interpreted the ballet essentially as a spiritual exercise in attention and effort, where the end product was somewhat irrelevant.¹⁴³ One morning Gurdjieff was found destroying props pupils had made for the ballet with an axe, explaining, "we have done it, so we don't need it anymore. Now it can go to the dump."¹⁴⁴

At times, however, Gurdjieff appears to have been serious about its performance, announcing to pupils his intentions to have it performed at the Tiflis State Theatre in

¹³⁶ van Dullemen [liner notes] *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series*, p. 16.

¹³⁷ van Dullemen, *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series*.

¹³⁸ van Dullemen [liner notes] *Music for Gurdjieff's 39 Series*, p. 16.

¹³⁹ For the only substantial account of the ballet and its music see Blom, *Oriental Suite*.

¹⁴⁰ Moore, *Gurdjieff*, p. 349.

¹⁴¹ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 141-147, 153.

¹⁴² Blom, *Oriental Suite*, p. 36.

¹⁴³ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 147.

¹⁴⁴ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, p. 147.

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1920, and asking de Hartmann to give up music work outside the Prieuré to devote himself entirely to the project. De Hartmann declined at the time, as this was not possible financially.¹⁴⁵ Much later, Gurdjieff also wished to have the ballet performed in New York, as stated above, though there are no details of these plans. He also said that the ballet should become a school.¹⁴⁶ The homily given at the high requiem mass at his funeral concluded with a quotation from the ballet: “God and all his angels keep us from doing evil by helping us always and everywhere to remember our Selves.”¹⁴⁷

Set in the Middle East, the plot of *Struggle* centres on the efforts of Gafar, a wealthy Parsi prince, to win the affection of the beautiful Zeinab, a devoted disciple of a white magician. Gafar engages the services of a black magician to help him achieve his aim, and the struggle between these opposing forces forms the basis of the ballet. A rough scenario of the ballet survives,¹⁴⁸ along with several descriptive paintings of scenes by pupil Alexandre de Salzmann.¹⁴⁹ Ouspensky explains *Struggle* as a series of scenes “accompanied by music and intermixed with songs and dances” that Gurdjieff had recalled from memory from his travels throughout Central Asia and the Middle East.¹⁵⁰ Gurdjieff and Ouspensky wrote verses for the scenario, Alexandre de Salzmann painted the stage designs, and Gurdjieff and de Hartmann composed the music, which was first conceived in 1919 and thus represents some of their earliest compositions.

Music for *The Struggle of the Magicians*

De Hartmann gives brief accounts of their collaboration on the ballet music, reporting that Gurdjieff whistled music for the second act, which de Hartmann transcribed spontaneously. Gurdjieff also gave de Hartmann different modes (or scales) corresponding to the different nationalities of the people in the dances. These modes later served as music for exercises,¹⁵¹ and some of the ballet music was later used for the Movements demonstrations of 1923 and 1924, augmented by new orchestrations by de Hartmann.¹⁵² Recordings of these orchestrations were made in 2003 and 2005 by the

¹⁴⁵ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 141-142, 147.

¹⁴⁶ Ouspensky, *Search*, p. 382.

¹⁴⁷ Moore, *Gurdjieff*, p. 349.

¹⁴⁸ G. I. Gurdjieff, *Scenario of the Ballet The Struggle of the Magicians* (Cape Town: Stourton Press, 1957).

¹⁴⁹ Howarth and Howarth, *It's Up To Ourselves*, p. 41. To view these paintings see Howarth and Howarth, *It's Up To Ourselves*, pp. 43, 47.

¹⁵⁰ Ouspensky, *Search*, pp. 16-17.

¹⁵¹ de Hartmann and de Hartmann, *Our Life*, pp. 141, 145-146.

¹⁵² Blom, *Oriental Suite*, p. 34.

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Metropole Orchestra and can be heard as part of Gert-Jan Blom's *Oriental Suite*.¹⁵³ It is likely that most of the fifteen pieces comprising the addenda of Blom's second CD are from *Struggle*.¹⁵⁴

De Hartmann must have originally memorised the music for *Struggle* as it was not notated for piano until late 1925, though one musical fragment, fragment six, was notated between 1920 and 1924.¹⁵⁵ After Gurdjieff's death, the 1925 batch of original final manuscripts could not be found.¹⁵⁶ For this reason, when de Hartmann recorded music from *Struggle* in the 1950s, he worked from the skeletal musical indications from original draft manuscripts. As the original draft manuscripts consist only of melodies, these renditions probably demonstrate the way in which he approached Gurdjieff's melodic dictations during the composing of the music for Movements and Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music. That is, he was to spontaneously add harmonies to Gurdjieff's melodic indications. Some of de Hartmann's renditions of the music from *Struggle*, which appear on his recording *The Music of Gurdjieff/de Hartmann*,¹⁵⁷ were transcribed for the Schott edition of the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann piano music. These are 'fragments' three, four, and five according to the Schott edition, and 'excerpts' one, two, and three according to the recording.

The Schott edition includes three more piano 'fragments' from *Struggle*: fragments one, two, and six. Fragments one and two were taken from copies that were made of some of the 1925 original final manuscripts before they went missing.¹⁵⁸ Fragment six was composed some time between 1920 and 1924 so unlike fragments one and two, an

¹⁵³ Blom, *Oriental Suite*.

¹⁵⁴ For a list of these pieces and information about them see Blom, *Oriental Suite*, pp. 196-203, 213.

¹⁵⁵ See Linda Daniel-Spitz, Charles Ketcham, and Laurence Rosenthal, 'Chronological Order of Compositions', in *Gurdjieff-de Hartmann: Music for the Piano*, vol. 4 (Germany: Schott, 2005), pp. 109-110.

¹⁵⁶ Original manuscripts are divided into draft and final manuscripts. The draft manuscripts represent the first sketches of the music, where de Hartmann roughly notated in pencil Gurdjieff's melodic and rhythmic dictations while adding harmonies almost simultaneously. These manuscripts appear in pre-bound hardcover notebooks with different coloured covers. The final manuscripts are pieces in their final form, neatly notated by de Hartmann in black or blue ink. They were organised into four batches of folded loose pages. Throughout the four Schott volumes there are twenty facsimiles of both types of manuscript, and one can see a draft and final manuscript of the same piece in *Gurdjieff-de Hartmann: Music for the Piano*, vol. 4 (Germany: Schott, 2005), p. 44.

¹⁵⁷ Thomas de Hartmann, *The Music of Gurdjieff-de Hartmann* (New York: Triangle Editions, 1989).

¹⁵⁸ Linda Daniel-Spitz, Charles Ketcham, and Laurence Rosenthal, 'Critical Notes', in *Gurdjieff-de Hartmann: Music for the Piano*, vol. 1 (Germany: Schott, 1996), p. 115.

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original final manuscript for it exists.¹⁵⁹ It is interesting to compare Schott's fragments two and four, as fragment two represents the final version from 1925, where fragment four is a transcription of de Hartmann's later version of the piece, which he could base only on the melody he had at his disposal from the original draft manuscripts. These fragments share the same melody, but different harmonies.

Conclusion

Between 1919 and 1924 G. I. Gurdjieff and Thomas de Hartmann, two men of utterly different characters, backgrounds, and musical abilities, composed music to accompany Gurdjieff's Movements. Later they went on to compose more music for other purposes. This article marks the first comprehensive, scholarly examination of the music for Movements; their earliest body of music. It assessed their unique process of composition, examined and questioned the sources and styles of the music, and described the various ways in which the music interacts with the physical gestures of the Movements. The distinctive role of the music in Movements classes and its significance in light of Gurdjieff's teaching were considered, and it was argued that the music can be understood to affect the three 'centres' of the individual, and to facilitate 'self-remembering'. Orchestrations of the music for the Movements demonstrations of 1923 and 1924, and Gurdjieff's specific role in the process of orchestration, were considered. Recordings and privately circulated sheet music were then analysed. Finally, as Gurdjieff and de Hartmann worked together on music to accompany *The Struggle of the Magicians* in the same period as their music for Movements, the ballet and its music were also explored to supplement this overall examination.

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¹⁵⁹ Linda Daniel-Spitz, Charles Ketcham, and Laurence Rosenthal, 'Critical Notes', in *Gurdjieff-de Hartmann: Music for the Piano*, vol. 4 (Germany: Schott, 2005), p. 94; Daniel-Spitz et al., 'Chronological Order of Compositions', pp. 109-110.