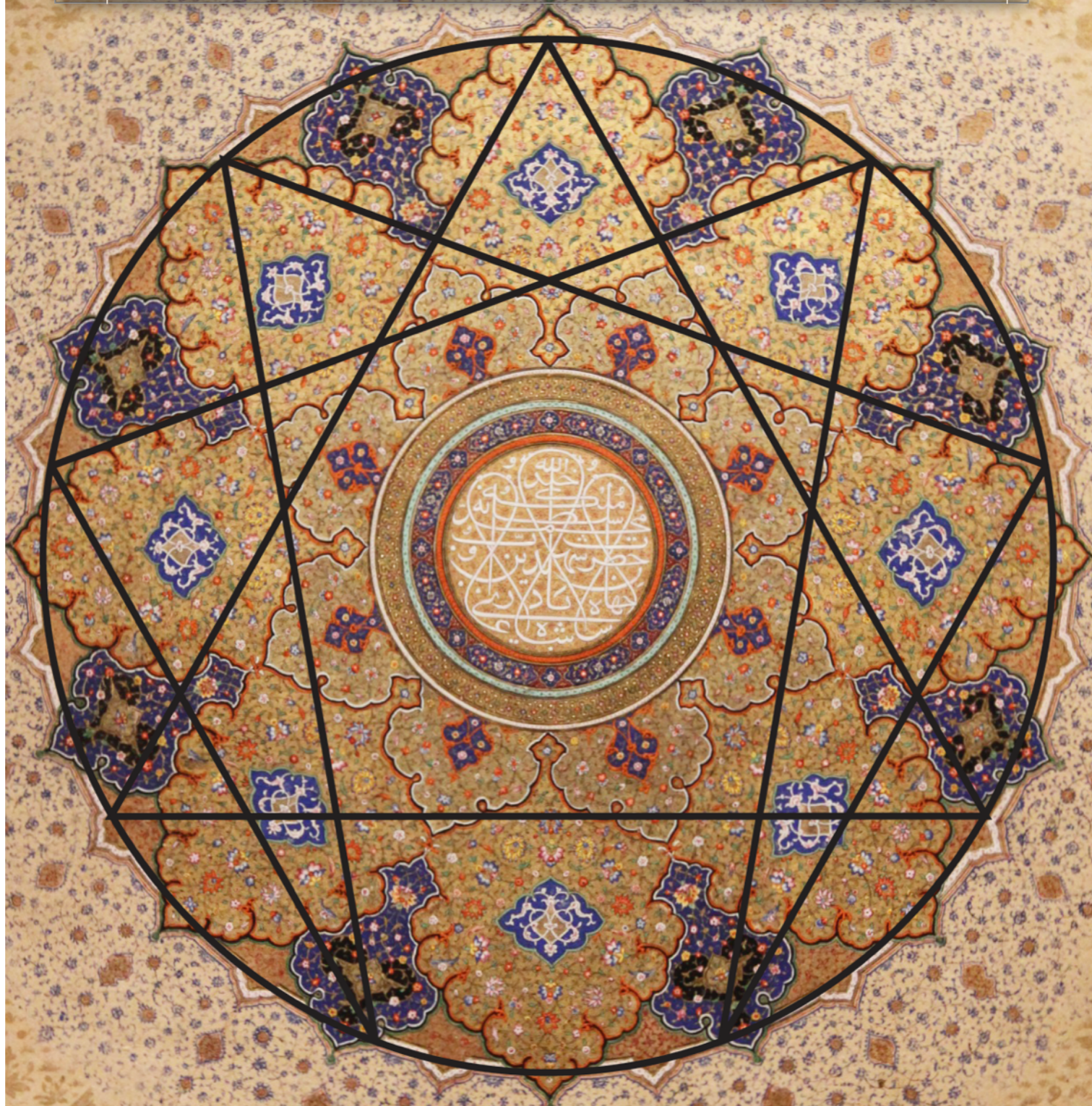


THE UNIVERSAL ENNEAGRAM



LEE VAN LAER

The Universal Enneagram



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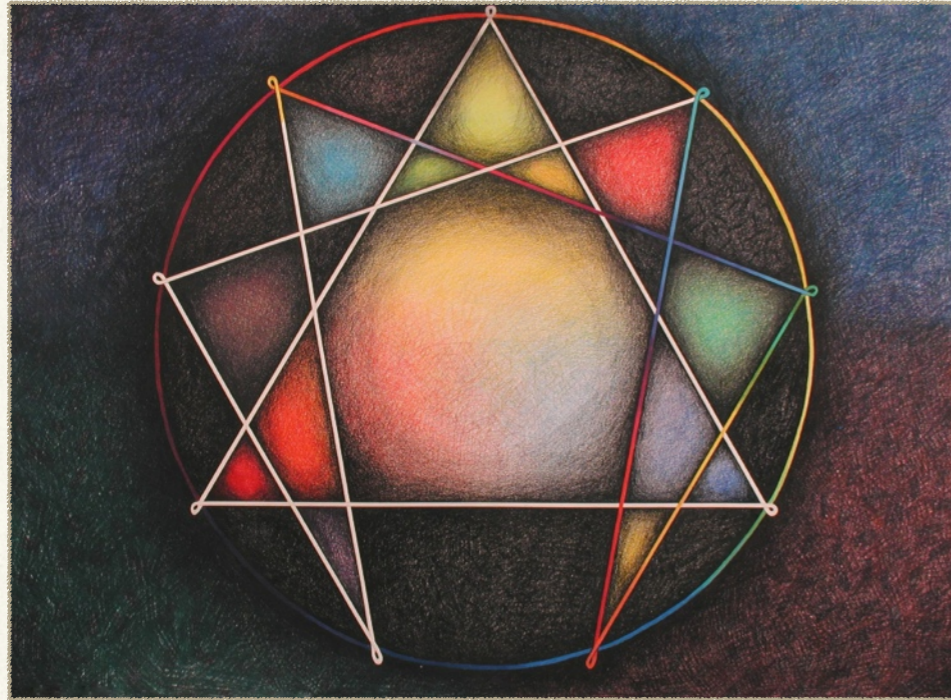
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The universal enneagram:
origins and meaning



Foreword



The principal sources for interpretation of the enneagram you'll find here are based on its relationship to the early yoga schools it originated in. The material is synergistic, and all of the diagrams are interrelated under a single overarching premise about the nature of the diagram and its function.

Gurdjieff told Ouspensky,

“Speaking in general it must be understood that the enneagram is a universal symbol. All knowledge can be included in the enneagram and with the help of the enneagram it can be interpreted. And in this connection only what a man is able to put into the enneagram does he actually know, that is, understand. What he cannot put into the enneagram he does not understand. For the man who is able to make use of it, the enneagram makes books and libraries entirely unnecessary. Everything can be included and read in the enneagram. A man may be quite alone in the desert and he can trace the enneagram in the sand and in it read the eternal laws of the universe. And every time he can learn something new, something he did not know before.

“If two men who have been in different schools meet, they will draw the enneagram and with its help they will be able at once to establish which of them knows more and which, consequently, stands upon which step, that is to say, which is the elder, which is the teacher and which the pupil. The enneagram is the fundamental hieroglyph of a universal language which has as many different meanings as there are levels of men.”

—Excerpt taken from *In Search of the Miraculous* by P. D. Ouspensky, pub. Paul H. Crompton Ltd, 2004, pp 293–294.

I think it's fair to ask ourselves, what did he mean by this? The material that follows is an effort to investigate that question. Gurdjieff, after all, indicated that one of the five essential (obligolnian) strivings of man was "...the conscious striving to know ever more and more about the laws of world creation and world maintenance." And this is exactly what the enneagram provides us with: a tool to conduct that investigation. The tool, however, like all tools, must be properly understood if it is to be used effectively.

To me, studies of this kind are a joy — because in undertaking them, the beauty and wholeness of the system becomes increasingly evident.

Following a few introductory essays about overall principles, this book will investigate a wide variety of diagrams used to interpret an extensive range of ideas drawn from various esoteric works, as well as real-world situations, in an attempt to demonstrate the deep interconnectedness of the ideas that the enneagram embodies.

I should warn the reader who expects to discover here a logical progression of some kind: there is no particular order to the essays, since the diagram represents not a progression, but a three-dimensional interaction that is always taking place. Each essay is a unique meditation of its own; but they inevitably weave together as one absorbs the material.

If you wish to skip around the book, feel free to do so. In the end, all of the material is connected; so no matter what direction you read it in, you will eventually find your way home.

It will be necessary, at the beginning of this book, to devote a couple of chapters to direct quotes from the famous original work on the diagram, *In Search of the Miraculous* by P.D. Ouspensky. Readers will discover, however, that the vast majority of the following text material is original, representing my own inner research into this diagram over the last 10 years.



The Enneagram and the Names of God

When Gurdjieff presented the enneagram to Ouspensky, he made a number of what appear to be extravagant claims about its potential for explaining the universe... and everything that happens in it.

In today's world, we are left with the legacy of an apparently impenetrable diagram, most of whose meaning is ensconced in complicated discussions about hydrogens and so on, and an inner work which has taken a direction that now largely eschews any explanations of the kind that Gurdjieff and Ouspensky originally explored together.

There are, however, logical reasons for believing that the diagram represents certain overarching concepts that are found in both the yoga tradition and in [Ibn al 'Arabi's](#) teachings.

The enneagram's notes, and the attendant shocks, definitely represent influences on a progressive scale. We absolutely know the names of two of the influences, because they apply to the shocks: conscious labor and intentional suffering. Knowing this, it would be illogical to assume that the notes themselves do not represent specific concepts of one kind or another. One can't

have shocks that represent specific concepts, and notes that represent nothing. The force of the shocks can only be actionable in relationship to corresponding conceptual forces embodied in the notes; the shocks, in other words, must be active in relationship to other specific and equally recognizable principles of manifestation.

Hence, although Gurdjieff chose to indicate all of the other influences “objectively,” that is, using only the notes of the musical scale, they undoubtedly must relate to attributes or qualities of one kind or another, not just abstract chemical notations or mathematical ideas.

To presume we are unable to discern these attributes or qualities would be unreasonable. If other men in the past have done so, as Gurdjieff maintained, it must be possible. And if they exist, they must embody a set of universal principles.

Looking to elements of the yoga tradition and to Sufi understandings, we can see that such hierarchies of development between various “attributes of divinity”—aka manifestations of reality—are well-known entities. Both of these major traditions, which have been contiguous in both geography and time from the original spread of Islam until the present day, assign specific qualities of God, or motive forces, to the development of material reality.

In yoga, the concepts are mapped out in the chakras, which are said to be a microcosmic model of the universe. This description is more or less identical to Gurdjieff's description of man; so the two must be related, especially considering the

innumerable other points of contact between his work and yoga.

More importantly, perhaps, al ‘Arabi’s [Names of God](#) — the attributes, or influences, which exert themselves upon material reality — must inevitably have some place in any system that presumes to serve an interpretive function of the kind that Gurdjieff assigned to the enneagram. The interaction of forces such as Material, Desire, Power, and Knowledge, all principal levers in al ‘Arabi’s cosmic mechanism, can be easily linked to the ideas of Being and Purification (or, as he called it, Speech) — rendering a set of six concepts, or attributes, very nearly identical to the six lower chakras found in the yoga tradition. These names, along with the shocks, are universal principles— orders of the lawful expression of energy which are found throughout the universe at all levels.

So we have a diagram which purports to explain the universe by indicating the interaction of influences, according to a ranked hierarchy. We have two different major theoretical systems that share a common view of a very similar hierarchy, and discuss its interaction in terms that can be readily mapped to the enneagram.

Applying Yoga and Sufi understandings of influence takes the diagram well beyond abstract numeric interpretations. We have here motive forces, directly linked to the highest levels of the cosmos by major schools, which exert their influences on the development of the octave. The motive forces have an emotive value and a physical force, as well as an intellectual rationale. They are, furthermore, universal, rather

than personal and idiosyncratic. The attributes of God, in other words, can be said, in so far as we understand them from yoga and Sufism, to have an objective quality.

This is exactly what one might expect if one were looking for principles, or influences, that represent the notes in the octave. If these are not the meanings of the notes, one would have to begin to presume that the notes do not in fact have any objective meanings, and judging from what Gurdjieff said, this can't possibly be the case.

If the enneagram does indeed contain the potentials which Gurdjieff said it had, the diagram must be a diagram of influences; and the influences must not only be tangible, but understandable, so that groups of men can discern universal principles in so far as they penetrate the meanings. In order for the principles to be universal, the concepts that the notes embody must be broad ones, indicating a progressive principle of development.

This is, in fact, exactly what we see in the map of the enneagram when interpreted according to the principles of the Sufi and yoga traditions.

SECTION 3

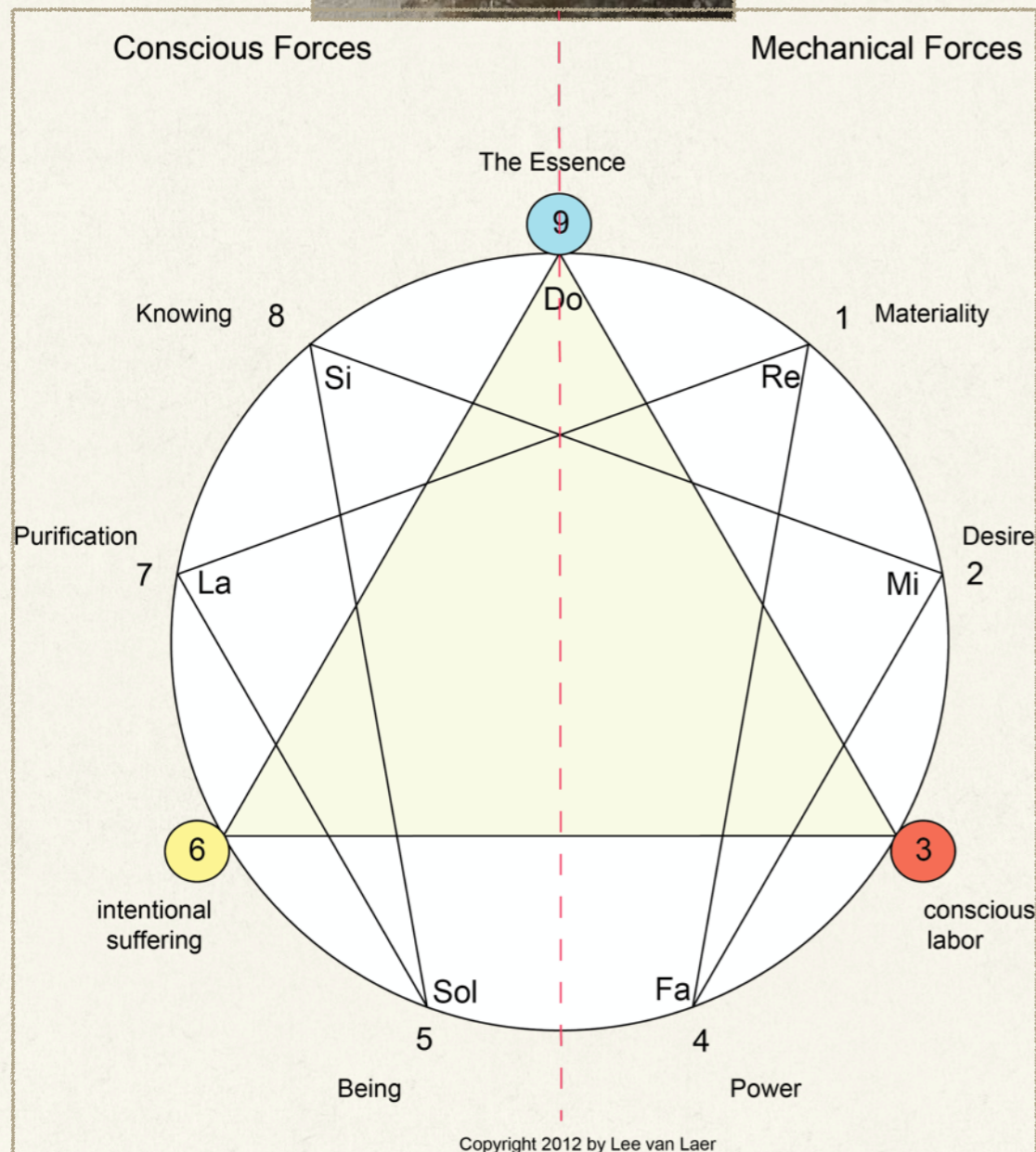
The Six Universal Principles

The names of God are universal principles, that is, forces which lawfully act in every octave, regardless of level.

The principle of action within any octave is always the same, because development must follow a lawful path that does not change just because a level is different. The path always recapitulates the same struggle, depicting the expression of matter as it emanates from the divine, and its wish to return.

Each octave is, in other words, a circulatory system with a set of specific demands placed upon it. The demands always begin from the lowest level of vibration, where the forces exerted upon them are primarily mechanical, and as they evolve through successively higher rates of vibration, and interact with one another, they evolve into an expression of less mechanical, or more conscious, forces.

The development of each octave is a dialogue between these universal principles. The two conscious shocks are what one would call "unique principles," since each one of them introduces an agency from a higher level into the equation. They alter the interaction of the universal principles.



Al 'Arabi, who well understood the principles but may not have been directly familiar with the diagram, [describes the system in this link](#).

The universal principles thus go under other, but analogous, names within different levels, And their subordination to names at higher levels of vibration is inevitable. Nonetheless, their essential properties remain the same. Each of the universal principles has subordinate principles related to it; and since each principal is the do for an octave of its own, taking into account the fact that each octave (and each position occupied by a shock) has nine notes under it, we can iterate 81 names, or attributes, of God.

Intriguingly, al 'Arabi indicates that God has 99 names, but none of the known lists are reliable. He consequently sites that only 83 of the names can be known with certainty. (ibid, p.44.) If one adds the iterated names in known octaves to his own two "supreme" names, the Essence and the Divinity, we would reach his number.

Ranked in order of vibration, the names of God in the form of the universal principles are as follows:

Material

This represents the first order of vibration at its lowest level after emanation from the absolute. All matter, animate and inanimate, arises from this foundational principle, and everything that is fundamentally material, that exists objectively is something that is (incorrectly) perceived as separate from di-

vinity originates from this universal principle and at this lowest level of order. At this level of awareness, there is no understanding of the separation from the divine, So the wish to return to it has not arisen.

Desire

This second order of vibration represents a higher level of awareness, which, the moment it becomes aware of its existence, inexorably manifests Desire. although the essential (and esoteric) wish of Desire is always to return to its origins, the moment that it realizes it exists, Desire at this level remains attached to Material, and thinks that it desires itself. This peculiar situation creates a paradox; for both Material and Desire are, in fact, a part of the Essence, and thus have no absolute need to return; they are already there. Nevertheless, the consequence of material manifestation is the perception of separation, due to the lowering of the order of intelligence by decrease in the rate of vibration, and it is this perception that must be overcome.

Unfortunately, the development of the octave — the lawful interaction of the forces—complicates the matter, before it resolves it, because lower levels of intelligence are unable to perceive, or sense, in the manner necessary to effect a return.

Power

The third order of vibration represents the acquisition of the means to return, without the proper will, or wish, to do so.

Power is thus turned towards egoistic purposes, rather than toward service of the Essence.

These first three universal principles, representing the mechanical, or material, side of the enneagram, have an ego, but no real "I." They are separated from the Essence by the very nature of their interaction itself, but cannot see its existence. Hence seeing is essential in order to correct the situation, and the forces must furthermore be of an order where the forces see themselves and see where they are. This is where Gurdjieff's entire practice of self remembering comes into play; the shock of conscious labor — the universal principle whereby Being recognizes, that is, re-cognizes itself for what it is: a fragment of God — being necessary in order for the manifestation of the names to acquire real Being. Real Being represents a return to a recognition of position as that which serves, the servant. This is the position that real "I" must always rediscover itself in before any further work can take place.

The lack of awareness of position is the lack that Jeanne de Salzmann asked her pupils to stand in front of, and it occupies its position on this side of the enneagram because of the described consequences and interactions of the forces, or names, of God in the mechanical portion of the diagram.

Being

The fourth universal principle represents the first manifestation of conscious forces, or, awareness of one's actual posi-

tion. This level of intelligence develops what Gurdjieff called "real will," because all of its will, once it sees where it is, is dedicated to returning to its origin, the absolute, by raising its level of vibration to the necessary point. All of the sacred individuals and societies in Gurdjieff's *Beelzebub* who reached this level inexorably turned all their efforts toward salvation.

Until this development takes place, all the efforts aimed at salvation, returned to be essence, are false ones, manufactured by the interaction of mechanical forces to keep possession of the energy at their own level.

Indeed, Al 'Arabi also well understood this principle, which is described in some detail in *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, in the chapter entitled *The Divine Roots of Hierarchy and Conflict*. In it, he specifically says that the levels of vibration compete with one another, in the same way that tones can either harmonize or disharmonize (see page 55.) The argument is brilliant but complex, and I will not repeat it here; suffice it to say that when a manifestation which appears to contradict an attribute of God, for example, a lack of compassion, appears, it is exactly because of this phenomenon,

Purification

This is perhaps (to me, at least) one of the most interesting characteristics, since its subordinate forms include the vitally important elements of speech and language.

Being, the fourth note or Sol, is a level that can exist in an unsullied state, so to speak, one without mind or language. It's

an exalted state; but an inherently limited one, since, without language, it can't form conscious (as opposed to mechanical) relationship in community. The emergence of language, which confers a different level of meaning, takes place on this next level, which is what the yogis call the throat chakra. Prayer, expressed through speech, including all mantras, hymns, and chants, are all forms of purification, and well understood as such in monastic, dervish, and yogic disciplines. This is the physical creation of vibration, the initiation and emanation of a fundamental divine principle which has now been turned to the use of the aspirant in order to refine their vibration in order to make it acceptable for return to the fundamental source.

There are, to be sure, multiple forms of purification, but this primary meaning becomes intelligible when one sees that it is subordinate to wisdom, or, what al Arabi called **Knowing**, the highest level of intelligence before returning to the Godhead.

Knowing (wisdom)

This universal principle reigns over all of the other principles. Each principal, whole unto itself and meaningful in the hierarchy, must be informed by knowing, or wisdom, in order to function properly; and indeed, in the iterations of octaves, each other attribute of God needs to complete itself to this level of understanding. Gurdjieff made direct reference to this near the end of Beelzebub, in the ceremony in which Beelzebub's horns are restored. We can infer, from what we know of the enneagram and the notes, that the reason Beelze-

bub has five points on his horns is that they represent the completion to the stage of "knowing" for the octaves of Material, Desire, Power, Being, and Purification. Only one stage is remaining: the knowing of the knowing, referred to as the sacred Anklad. And the stage is, indeed, precisely appropriate for him, since he has purged himself of the factors that caused his rebellion and fall from heavenly grace; It falls, in other words, exactly where one would expect it to in the diagram.

Summary

There might be a tendency to presume, because one attribute is subordinate to the other attributes in terms of rate of vibration, that one is inferior to another, and this is decidedly not the case, as Al 'Arabi explains. This is no more the case than the inference that Yogic chakras represent a hierarchy of superiority and inferiority. In the end, they are both inseparable systems where each element has an equal, though different, value. The paradox of apparent inequality is an incorrect perception.

Chapter 2

THE BASIC ENNEAGRAM

A starting point: Gurdjieff's original comments about the diagram, as reported by P. D. Ouspensky.

The quotes in this section are all taken from *In Search of the Miraculous*.



The seminal text about this diagram from *In Search of the Miraculous*, P.D. Ouspensky's famous book about his work with Gurdjieff, is below:

"G. returned to the enneagram many times and in various connections.

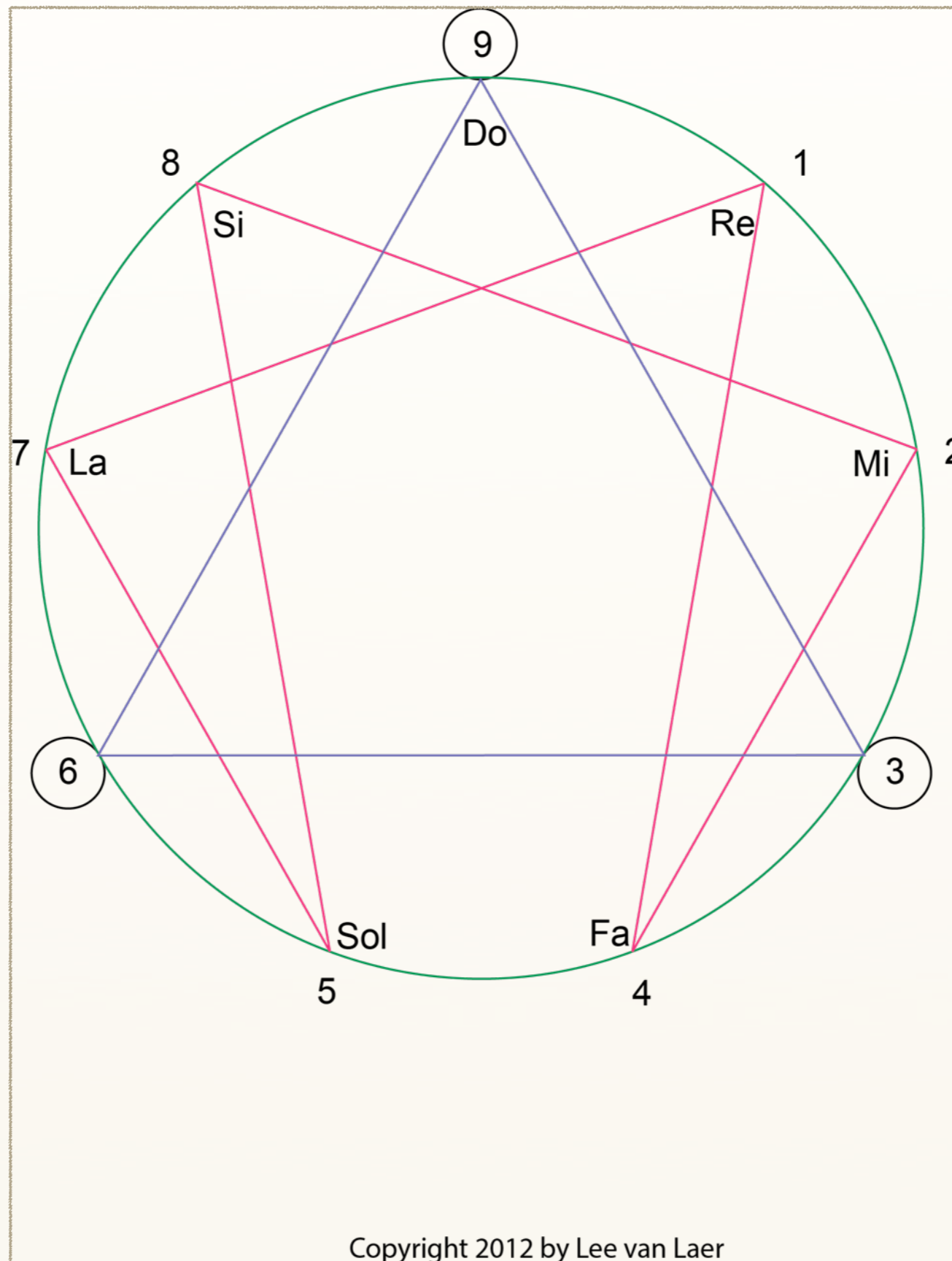
"Each completed whole, each cosmos, each organism, each plant, is an enneagram," he said. "But not each of these enneagrams has an inner triangle. The inner triangle stands for the presence of higher elements, according to the scale of 'hydrogens,' in a given organism. This inner triangle is possessed by such plants, for example, as hemp, poppy, hops, tea, coffee, tobacco, and many other plants which play a definite role in the life of man. The study of these plants can reveal much for us in regard to the enneagram.

"Speaking in general it must be understood that the enneagram is a universal symbol. All knowledge can be included in the enneagram and with the help of the enneagram it can be interpreted. And in this connection only what a man is able to put into the enneagram does he actually know, that is, understand. What he cannot put into the enneagram he does not understand. For the man who is able to make use of it, the enneagram makes books and libraries entirely unnecessary. Everything can be included and read in the enneagram. A man may be quite alone in the desert and he can trace the enneagram in the sand and in it read the eternal laws of the universe. And every time he can learn something new, something he did not know before.

"If two men who have been in different schools meet, they will draw the enneagram and with its help they will be able at once to establish which of them knows more and which, consequently, stands upon which step, that is to say, which is the elder, which is the teacher and which the pupil. The enneagram is the fundamental hieroglyph of a universal language which has as many different meanings as there are levels of men.

"The enneagram is perpetual motion, the same perpetual motion that men have sought since the remotest antiquity and could never find. And it is clear why they could not find perpetual motion. They sought outside themselves that which was within them; and they attempted to construct perpetual motion as a machine is constructed, whereas real perpetual motion is a part of another perpetual motion and cannot be created apart from it. The enneagram is a schematic diagram of perpetual motion, that is, of a machine of eternal movement. But of course it is necessary to know how to read this diagram. The understanding of this symbol and the ability to make use of it give man very great power. It is perpetual motion and it is also the philosopher's stone of the alchemists."

Excerpt taken from *In Search of the Miraculous* by P. D. Ouspensky, pub. Paul H. Crompton Ltd, 2004, pp 293–294.



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Chapter 3

THE FRACTAL ENNEAGRAM

This diagram, which generated considerable excitement the first time I showed it to anyone who understood these matters, presents a visual insight into one of the most essential features of the diagram, which is dynamic and works on multiple levels. Again, quotes from *In Search of the Miraculous* are used to introduce the basic concepts.

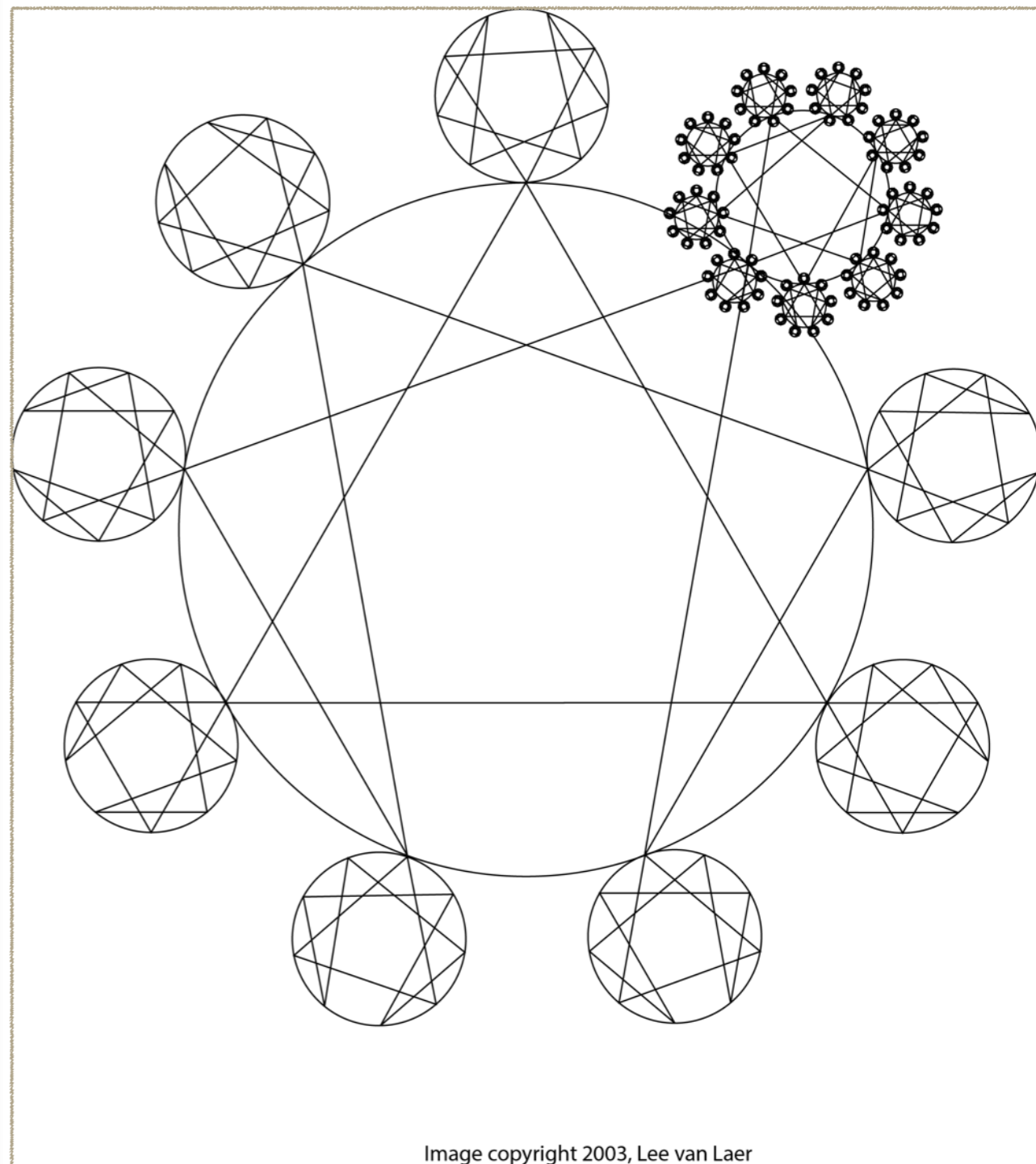


Image copyright 2003, Lee van Laer

Gurdjieff explained in some detail that in the enneagram, every note forms the "do" for a subordinate octave beneath it.

His original remarks to Ouspensky on this matter are as follows:

“In the study of the law of octaves it must be remembered that octaves in their relation to each other are divided into fundamental and subordinate. The fundamental octave can be likened to the trunk of a tree giving off branches of lateral octaves. The seven fundamental notes of the octave and the two ‘intervals,’ the bearers of new directions, give altogether nine links of a chain, three groups of three links each.

“The fundamental octaves are connected with the secondary or subordinate octaves in a certain definite way. Out of the subordinate octaves of the first order come the subordinate octaves of the second order, and so on. The construction of octaves can be compared with the construction of a tree. From the straight basic trunk there come out boughs on all sides which divide in their turn and pass into branches, becoming smaller and smaller, and finally are covered with leaves. The same process goes on in the construction of the leaves, in the formation of the veins, the serrations, and so on.”

...“In order better to understand the significance of the law of octaves it is necessary to have a clear idea of another property of vibrations, namely the so-called ‘inner vibrations.’ This means that within vibrations other vibrations proceed,

and that every octave can be resolved into a great number of inner octaves.

“Each note of any octave can be regarded as an octave on another plane.

“Each note of these inner octaves again contains a whole octave and so on, for some considerable way, but not ad infinitum, because there is a definite limit to the development of inner octaves.

“These inner vibrations proceed simultaneously in ‘media’ of different density, interpenetrating one another, they are reflected in one another, give rise to one another; stop, impel, or change one another.

“Let us imagine vibrations in a substance or a medium of a certain definite density. Let us suppose this substance or medium to consist of the comparatively coarse atoms of world 48, each of which is, so to speak, an agglomeration of forty-eight primordial atoms. The vibrations which proceed in this medium are divisible into octaves and the octaves are divisible into notes. Let us imagine that we have taken one octave of these vibrations for the purpose of some kind of investigation. We must realize that within the limits of this octave proceed the vibrations of a still finer substance. The substance of world 48 is saturated with substance of world 24; the vibrations in the substance of world 24 stand in a definite relation to the vibrations in the substance of world 48, namely, each note of the vibrations in the substance of world 48 contains a whole octave of vibrations in the substance of world 24.

“These are the inner octaves.

“The substance of world 24 is, in its turn, permeated with the substance of world 12. In this substance also there are vibrations and each note of the vibrations of world 24 contains a whole octave of the vibrations of world 12. The substance of world 12 is permeated with the substance of world 6. The substance of world 6 is permeated with the substance of world 3. World 3 is permeated with the substance of world 1. Corresponding vibrations exist in each of these worlds and the order remains always the same, namely, each note of the vibrations of a coarser substance contains a whole octave of the vibrations of a finer substance.

“If we begin with vibrations of world 48, we can say that one note of the vibrations in this world contains an octave or seven notes of the vibrations of the planetary world. Each note of the vibrations of the planetary world contains seven notes of the vibrations of the world of the sun. Each vibration of the world of the sun will contain seven notes of the vibrations of the starry world and so on.

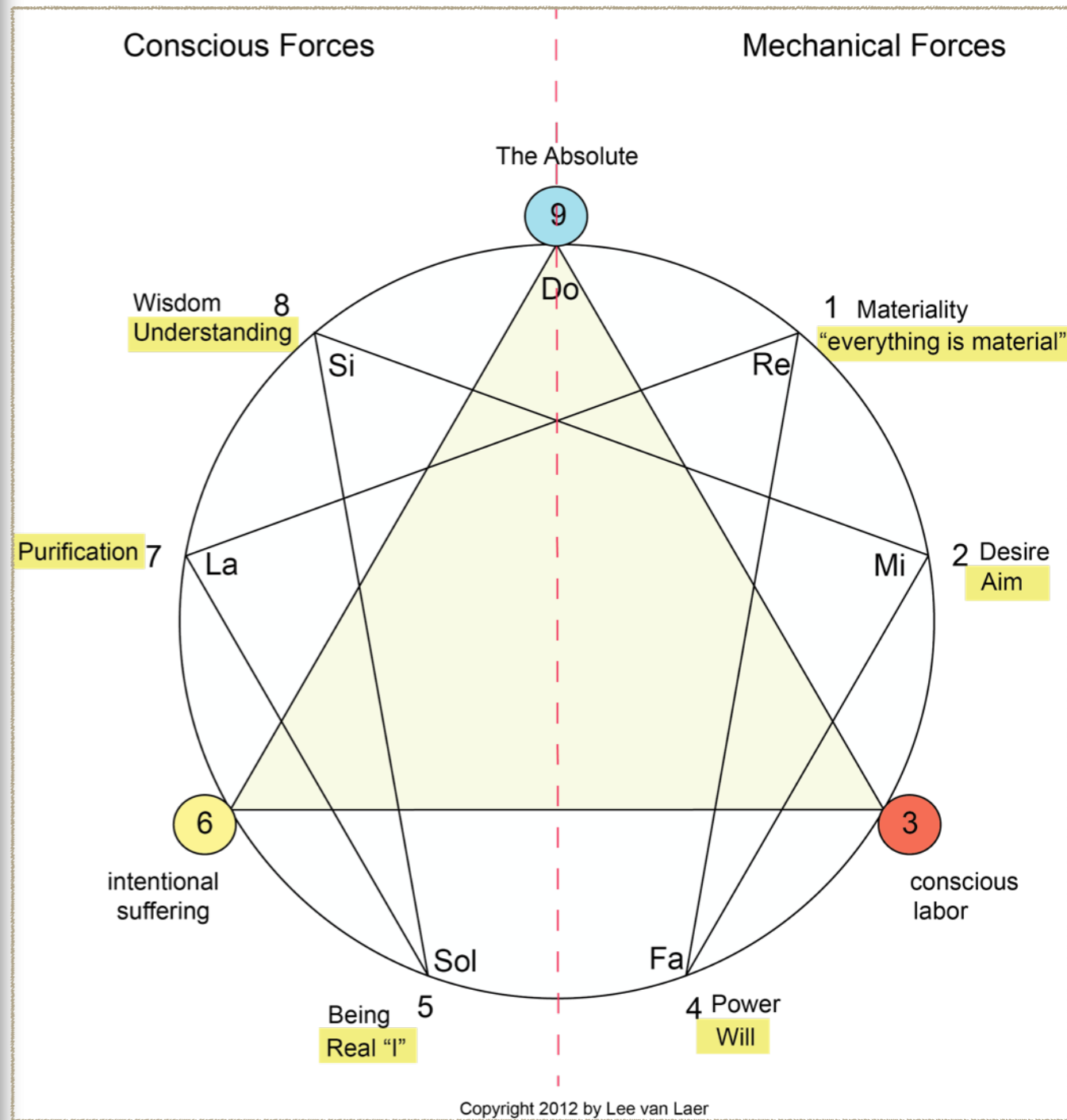
“The study of inner octaves, the study of their relation to outer octaves and the possible influence of the former upon the latter, constitute a very important part of the study of the world and of man.”

Excerpts taken from *In Search of the Miraculous* by P. D. Ouspensky, pub. Paul H. Crompton Ltd, 2004, pp 134-136.

Chapter 4

ENNEAGRAM WITH GURDJIEFF'S TERMINOLOGY

Correspondences between terms in the Gurdjieff work and terms on the universal enneagram.



This enneagram shows the various terms used in my other versions of the diagram, juxtaposed against Gurdjieff's words for the same general principles.

Gurdjieff's terminology follows the same overall thrust of each attribute.

Materiality is the foundation of all universal effort. Gurdjieff went to lengths to explain to Ouspensky that everything in the universe, even things mankind thinks of as ephemeral or ideal, are in fact material. This foundational building block is where everything begins; and although it has divisions within its own octave that apply to specific aspects of materiality, that is, quantum aspects, atomic aspects, molecular aspects and so on, it is always nothing more than material.

In the Gurdjieff system of inner work, materiality represents the impressions and associations a man has to work with.

Desire becomes what Gurdjieff called Aim in the context of inner work. A man who just wants to live has desires, which run within a range of levels; a man who wants to engage in inner work, or evolution, has an aim. Aim might be construed as conscious desire, although, unless its subordinate octave is developed at least to the level of sol, or real "I", it is not actually conscious. Part of the point of inner work is to make aim become conscious.

Power becomes what Gurdjieff called Will in his system. Both imply motive force. Power, like Desire, cannot acquire the properties of Will until it develops to the level sol in its subordinate octave.

Real I represents what Jeanne de Salzmann called Being. Unless development in a human being reaches this level, the forces of material, will, and aim remain mechanical.

Purification is one of the words that was not changed in this system. Both Gurdjieff and de Salzmann used this term in their systems.

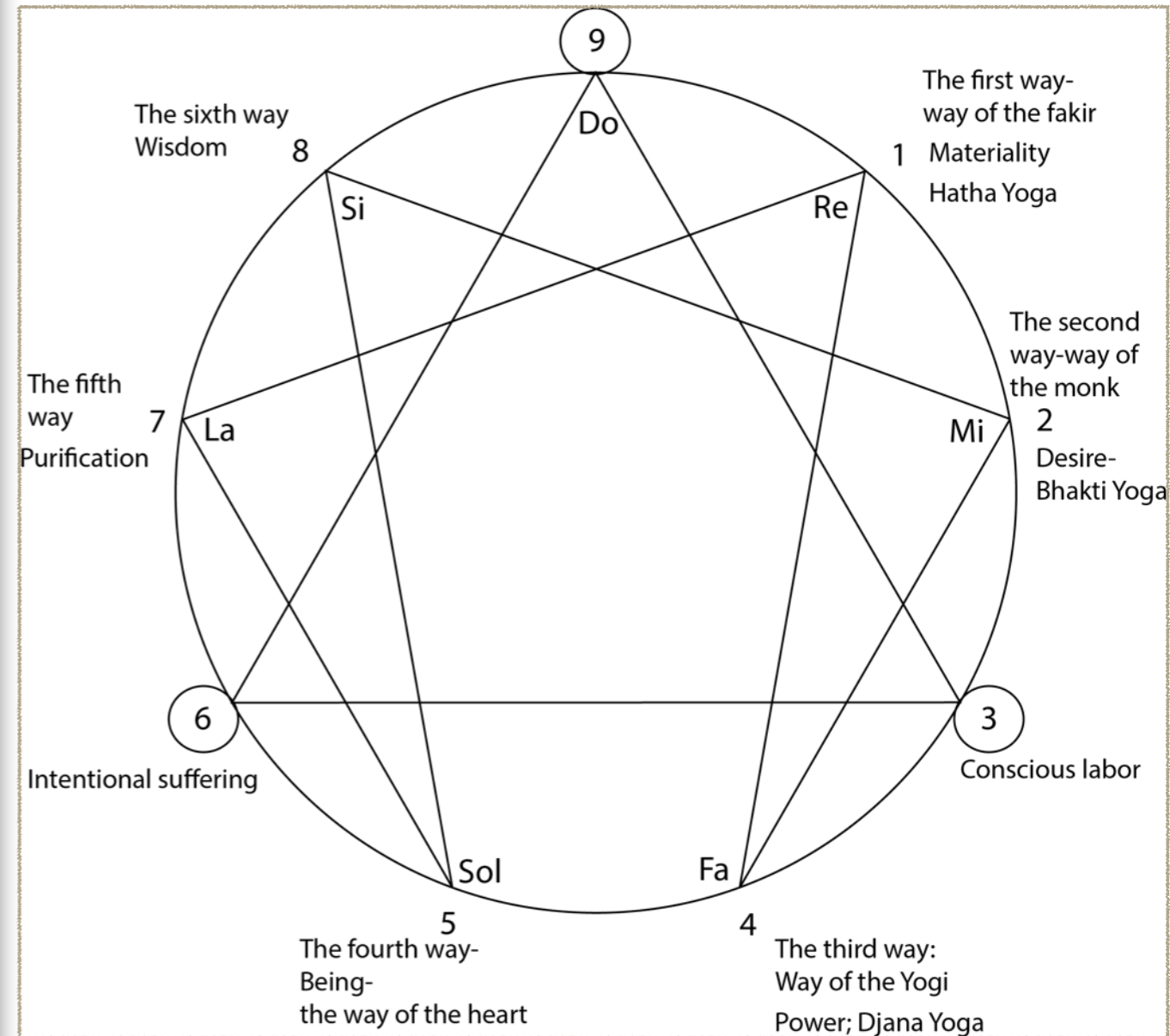
Wisdom was referred to as Understanding by Gurdjieff.

Because the properties of real "I", purification, and wisdom all belong to what is called the "conscious" side of the octave, once they are present, their influence already implies a level of development capable of imparting direction. This is not the case with any of the properties in the mechanical side of the octave. Both the conscious and mechanical sides of the octave, however, require a further conscious influence from outside their own action to help them develop further.

Chapter 5

ENNEAGRAM OF THE SIX WAYS

The Gurdjieff work is referred to as the fourth way, but we see from the diagram that there are actually six ways, two of which are at levels too high to be seen.



In the world of elements, once the scientific community realized that elements fit into a periodic table, it was possible, knowing identified elements, to predict elements which ought to fit in certain spots but hadn't been discovered yet. This led to a series of interesting discoveries about the nature of matter. Paleontologists have used similar inferences to identify locations in which [significant transitional fossil specimens](#) ought to be found, based on dating and geographical location.

In the same way, it's possible to understand that there are several ways which Gurdjieff never talked about, but which must exist.

The enneagram of the six ways lays out the reasons for this.

The first way is associated with materiality and hatha yoga, the physical yoga we are all familiar with. It is the way of the body. It is, in essence, the way of man number one.

The second way is the way of the emotions, of desire, essentially, one of the ways of love, as outlined in bhakti yoga. This is the way of man number two.

The third way is the way of the Yogi, associated with power, also known as djana yoga. This is the way of man number three.

The fourth way, which everyone who studies the Gurdjieff ideas is well familiar with, is interesting for several reasons. First of all, it falls on the left side of the diagram, in the realm of what are called spiritual or conscious forces. As such, it actually represents a higher order of work that cannot be approached before the first three ways have, in one way or another, been completed. In this sense, it stands apart from the other three ways for more than just conceptual reasons. Persons practicing the fourth way have stepped into a different realm.

Second of all, the fourth way lies in the position of the heart. This indicates that it is a higher path of love, informed by a compassion that may be present in the way of the monk, but has a transcendental nature to it. There will be a future essay explaining this relationship in some more detail.

The fourth way is the way of man number four. That is, a man who has already acquired conscious Being to some degree.

What we want to come to, however, is that the nature of the diagram shows us that there are two other ways: the fifth way, or the way of purification, and the sixth way, or the way of wisdom.

Why did Gurdjieff never mention this? And why is there no mention of these ways in the yoga schools?

These two paths lie at levels so high that they are unavailable to ordinary human beings. The fourth way, which exists "in life," is accessible to human beings, but the fifth and the six ways are only accessible to extraordinary adepts who have mastered the fourth way. These are the truly esoteric schools, the ones that are completely hidden from mankind, and whose knowledge only emerges into the world when they want it to. Because of the level of these schools, the information they are privy to can never be "leaked" or stolen; individuals who would undertake such action can be identified in advance, and are never allowed to enter the school. This is why the enneagram, which has existed for thousands of years, was never seen until they decided it should be. The fact that they chose Gurdjieff to reveal this diagram says something about him and his own level of work all in itself.

The sixth way is the way, or school, that the enneagram originated in. It was hidden from the world for thousands of years in exactly the same way that the two hidden ways themselves have been. But we can surmise that when they decided the diagram should be released, there was also a tacit admission that eventually it would be understood that these two additional ways existed.

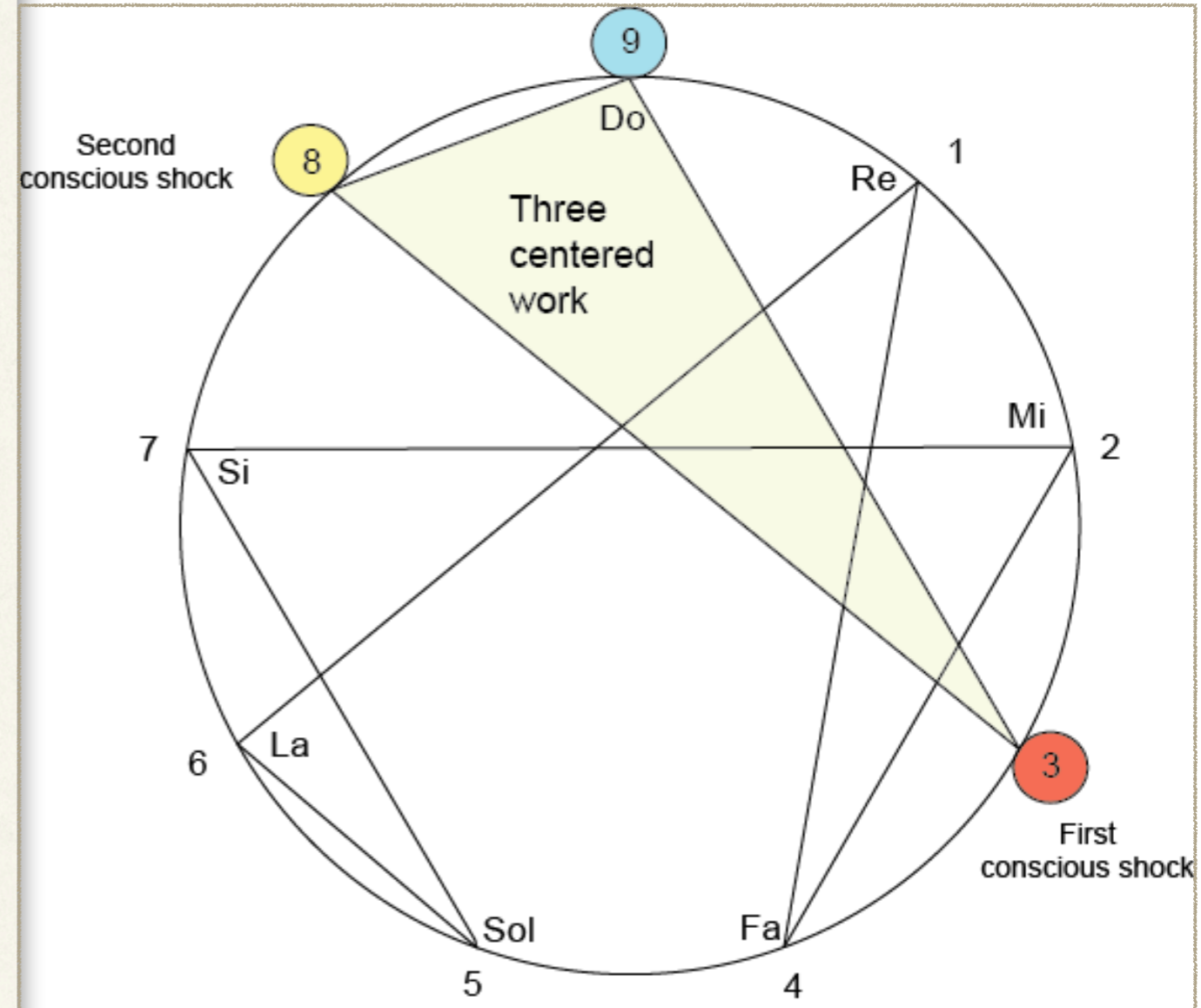
In the same way that intuiting the existence of an element one has never observed before is entirely theoretical, we can't do much with this information. But it is certainly interesting to realize this; and there must be a point and an aim to it, since the two hidden ways would not have made it possible to see them in this way unless they felt that it was time for mankind to be aware of the much higher influences that operate on this planet, where no one can see them.

The fifth way, the way of purification, is the aim of men who work in the schools of the fourth way. What this means is up to each individual to explore; but it shows that the path becomes more and more demanding.

Chapter 6

THE UNBALANCED ENNEAGRAM

The merits of harmony, and how things look when we lack it.



There are times when the master buries the bone deep.

There are other times when he implies he has buried the bone deep, causing all of his pupils to race around furiously digging holes, when actually, he left the bone right on the kitchen table.

One of the most essential principles in the Gurdjieff system is that an inner work must be a balanced work. Not only did he refer to his organization as the "Institute for Harmonious Development," he repeatedly emphasized the need for three centered work, a work in which all of the centers were balanced. And his protégés—most notably Jeanne de Salzmann—spoke about the need to balance inner work many times. For example, de Salzmann speaks in *The Reality Of Being* of getting the three centers to work at the same speed—something they don't do under ordinary circumstances, as Gurdjieff explained to Ouspensky in *In Search Of The Miraculous*.

Let's pause here for a moment and examine all of this information in the context of what Gurdjieff told Ouspensky about the wrong location of the second shock in the enneagram. The shock, he said, lawfully comes between the notes "Si" and "Do." The diagram, however, "wrongly" locates it between "Sol" and "La."

Aside from his cryptic remarks about the fact that the wrong location indicated the type of work that was necessary for the second shock, Gurdjieff never elaborated on this. Longtime readers of my material may recall that in the past, I've offered a few possibilities for what he meant by that remark.

Here, we're going to offer what is perhaps a simpler and more obvious one. Take a look at the diagram of what the enneagram looks like when we locate the shock in the correct place.

Let's take a brief excursion into what symbols are for. Symbols are meant to represent abstractions of principles; they are not literal, but, literally, figurative interpretations of ideas. Symbols commonly undergo manipulation in order to more effectively express ideas that cannot be expressed literally.

The simplest possible explanation of what Gurdjieff was trying to get Ouspensky to understand when he talked about the shock being located in the "wrong" place on the diagram is that the type of work that is necessary to pass from "Si" to "Do" is a balanced work. The placement of the shock, in other words, creates a symmetrical and balanced diagram that properly represents the law of three functioning in a balanced way, instead of indicating one-sided or lopsided development of centers.

One sees the symbol is worthless if you draw it literally. It isn't even a symbol anymore: it's a mish-mosh which conveys gibberish instead of harmony. So there is no choice in the matter: in order to create an effective symbol of inner work that is harmoniously balanced, the shock must be located where it is. There are no special esoteric secrets connected to this; the esoteric secret is right here on the kitchen table, where no one notices it—exactly like every other real truth in life.

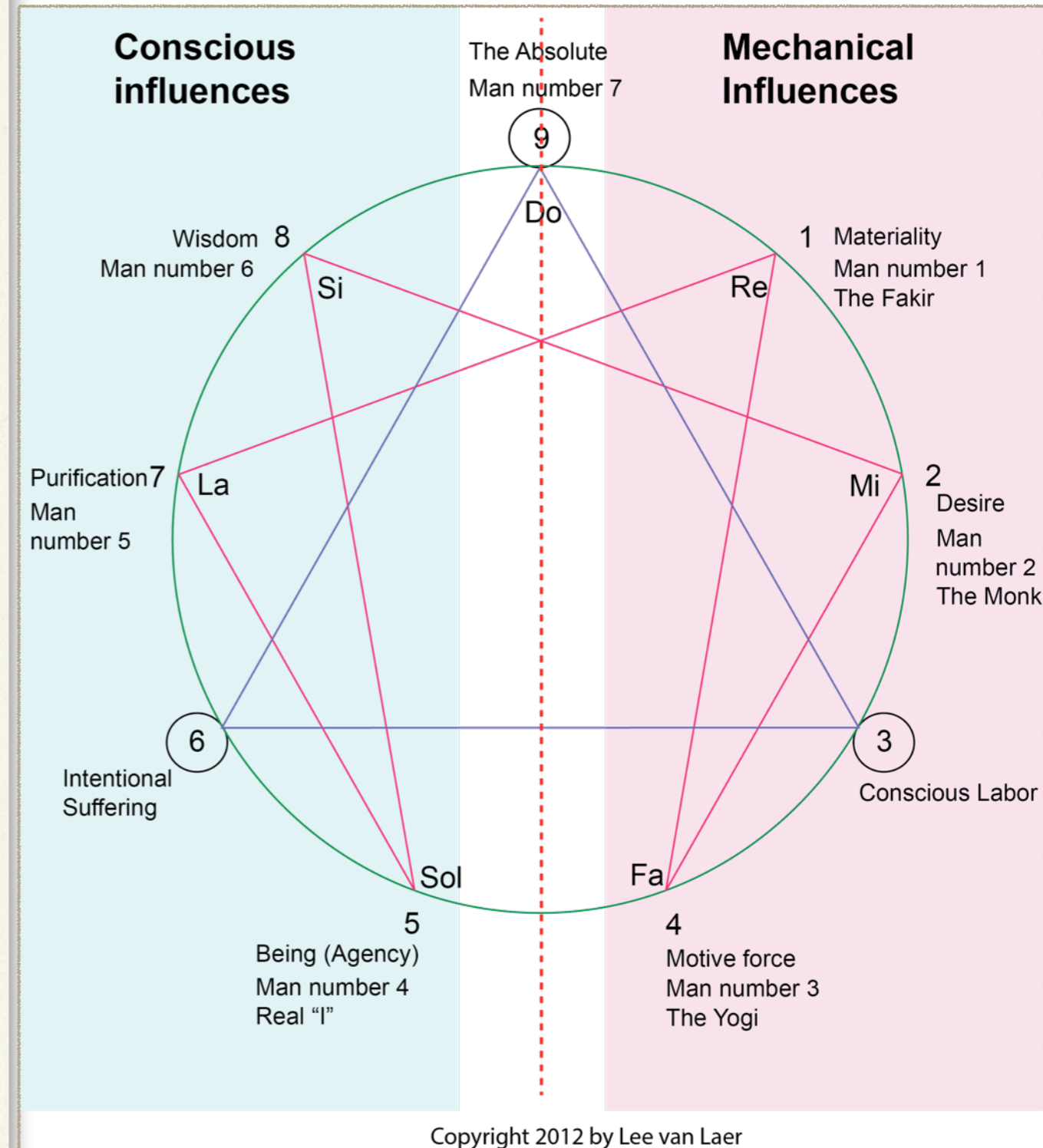
I suppose some may think it a bit sad to have to take this mysterious question and reduce it to such a simple point of view—especially those on an endless quest for secret magical knowledge— but it's actually not simple at all. The most essential problem we all have in our work is that we aren't well-balanced. We aren't harmonious. And we need to keep that question in front of us at all times.

Seeing our lack is, in part, observing that imbalance up close and first-hand.

Chapter 7

OUSPENSKY'S ENNEAGRAM

A somewhat classic look at a somewhat classic version of the diagram.



This particular version of the Enneagram was designed to clarify the relationship between the ideas Ouspensky presents in "In Search of the Miraculous" and the path of the Yogi by way of graphic integration into the lawful influences of the law of three and the law of seven.

The influences from the law of three — "do," the absolute, conscious labor, and intentional suffering — are higher influences that do not belong to the actions taking place on the ordinary level of the octave. They arrive — they assist — they participate. But the diagram graphically illustrates the fact that they emanate from a higher source.

This irrevocable fact puts their origin outside man's domain. He can receive these influences; he cannot generate or own them.

Because the first three ways, found on the right side of the diagram and within the first triad, come under mechanical influences, that is, remain attached to the circumstances of the material world (the first note struck in this progression is "re," materiality) only the higher influence of conscious labor can work to overcome the obstacles at this level of work. A man's initial aim must be to pass through these notes and the attendant interval, and get to the note "sol", at which point conscious influences become active.

A superficial reading of any of the three ways might presume that somehow it would be possible for them to achieve some form of inner completion by themselves; but, indeed, they prove themselves deficient in the same way that Gurdjieff indicated, because the interaction of all three of them is actu-

ally necessary in order to effectively move inner work forward to the note "sol;" and only a conscious, that is, higher, influence coming from outside the mechanical consequences of the material world can assist in this effort.

All of a man's efforts, his work at sensation, his attempt to complete tasks, set himself goals and aims, and so on, are merely preparation for conscious labor, and don't actually represent any conscious labor on his own. Man is he is incapable of conscious labor, because he isn't conscious. Conscious labor itself is an outside force, help sent from above, which a man or woman can only prepare for. As such, any effort a man or woman performs on their own, from what they presume to be their own volition, and which they think belongs to them, isn't conscious labor. It is merely a preparatory action, whose use is to help create conditions in which a force that makes conscious labor possible might arrive.

Misunderstandings about the nature of conscious labor abound, and the language and ideas regarding this question are often confused or vague. It's important to understand and remember that the force of conscious labor does not come from this level.

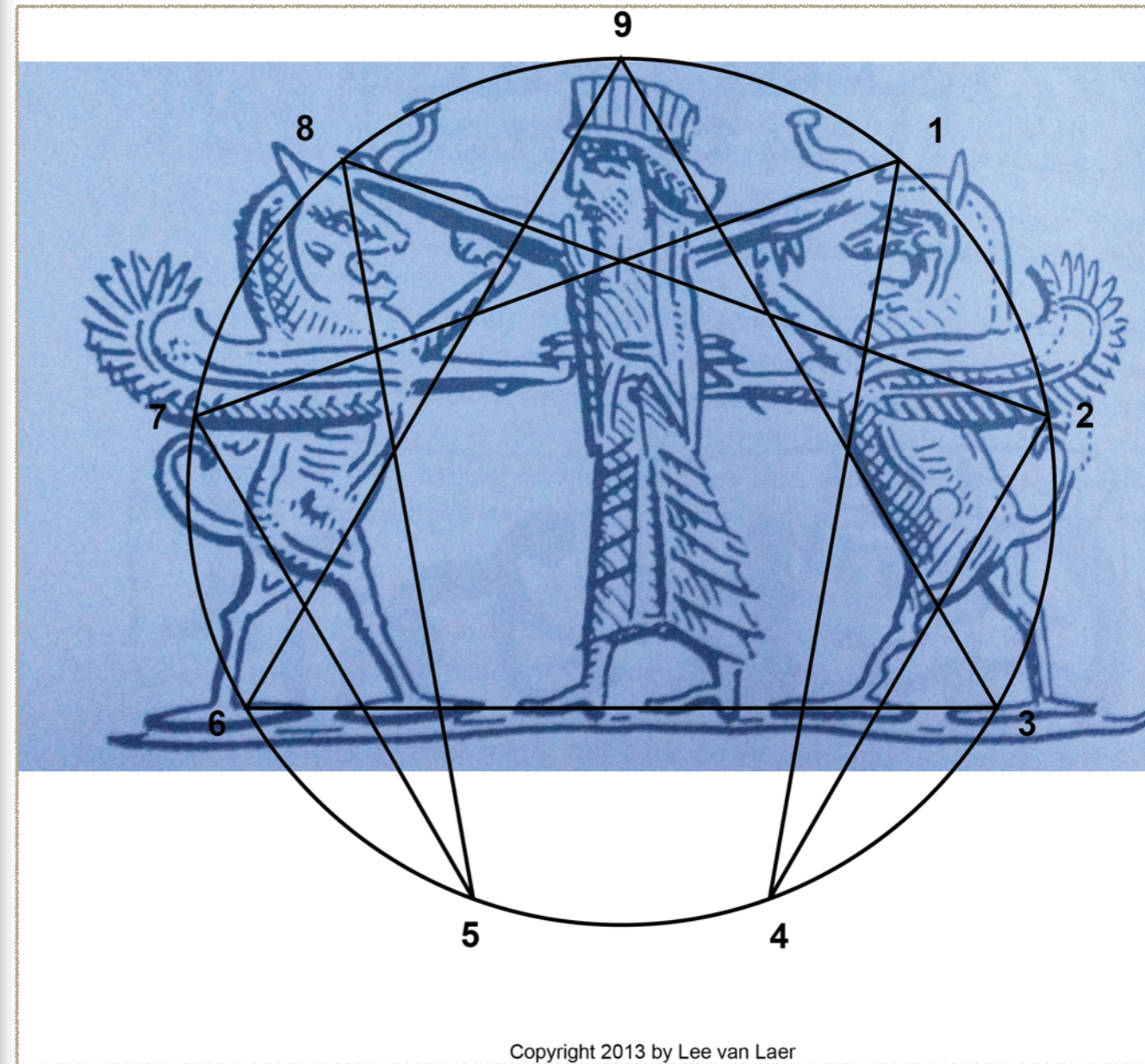
Those who fail to understand this invariably continue to believe they are in charge. This conviction is so thoroughly developed in us that it is nearly impossible to expunge, and may well be the final, nearly universal flaw that even Gurdjieff's Purgatory seems unable to fully redress.

Readers will also want to take a look at the structural relationships in the Ray of Creation.

Chapter 8

THE ENNEAGRAM AND ANCIENT ART

Versions of the diagram have existed throughout history.



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"This symbol cannot be met with anywhere in the study of 'occultism,' either in books or in oral transmission. It was given such significance by those who knew, that they considered it necessary to keep the knowledge of it secret.

"Only some hints and partial representations of it can be met with in literature.¹ Thus it is possible to meet with a drawing of it like this:

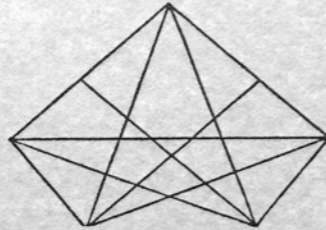


FIG. 45

"And another like this:

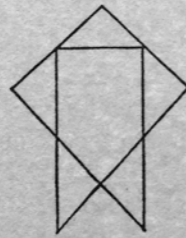


FIG. 46

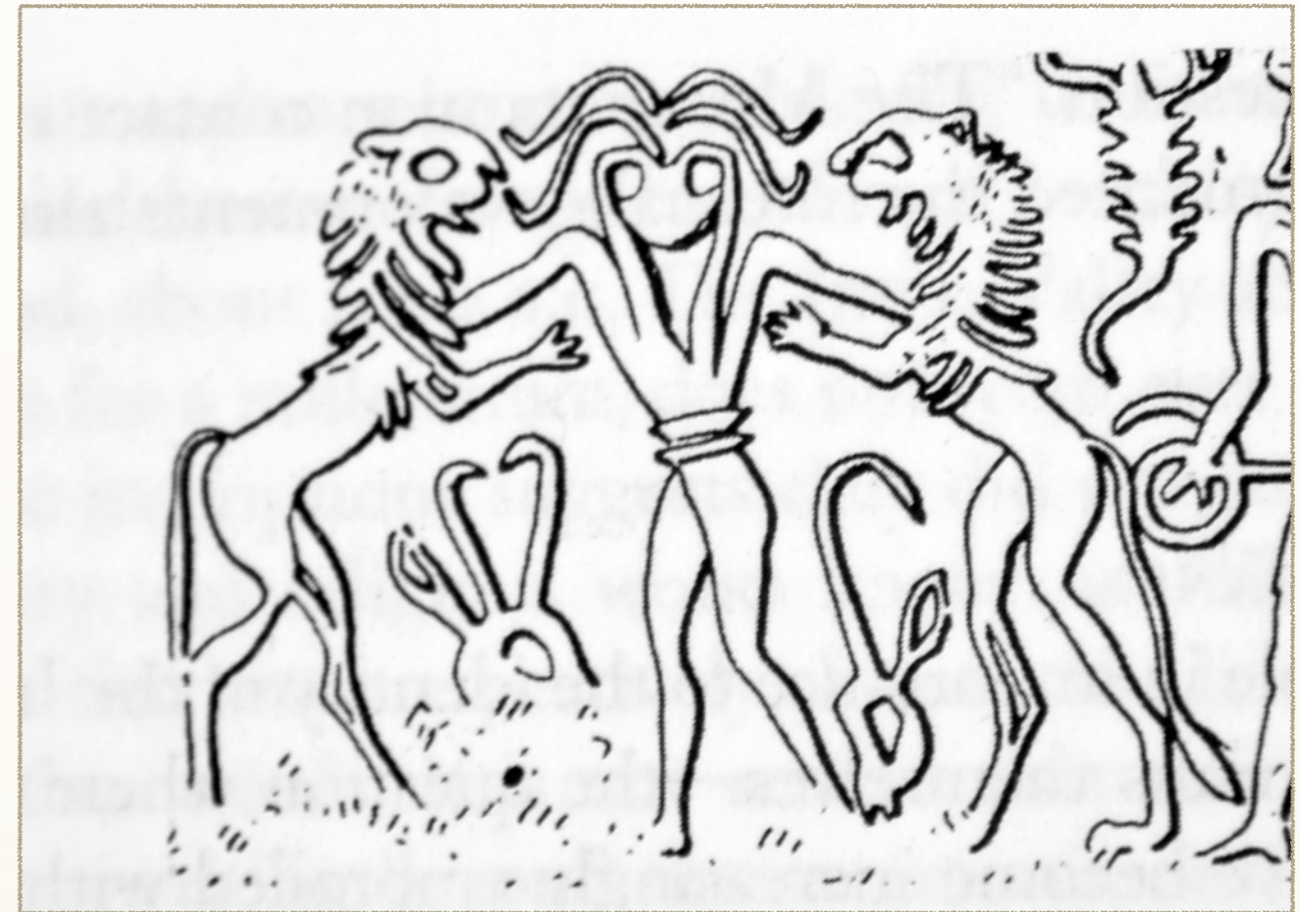
While the enneagram itself was hidden from mankind for thousands of years, we can glean some inferences as to just how long ago it was originally discovered and used in esotericism by taking a look at some of the imagery from the earliest cultures we know of.

Below is a picture of an Achaemenian seal, sixth century BC, showing "Gilgamesh" holding two winged lions or griffins and symmetrically flanking position. (The image is taken from [Thomas McEvilley's](#) *The Shape of Ancient Thought*, p. 248.)



Here's another version, this one from [Mohenjo-Daro](#), a city in the industry river valley civilizations which is probably approximately 5000 — and perhaps even more — years old.

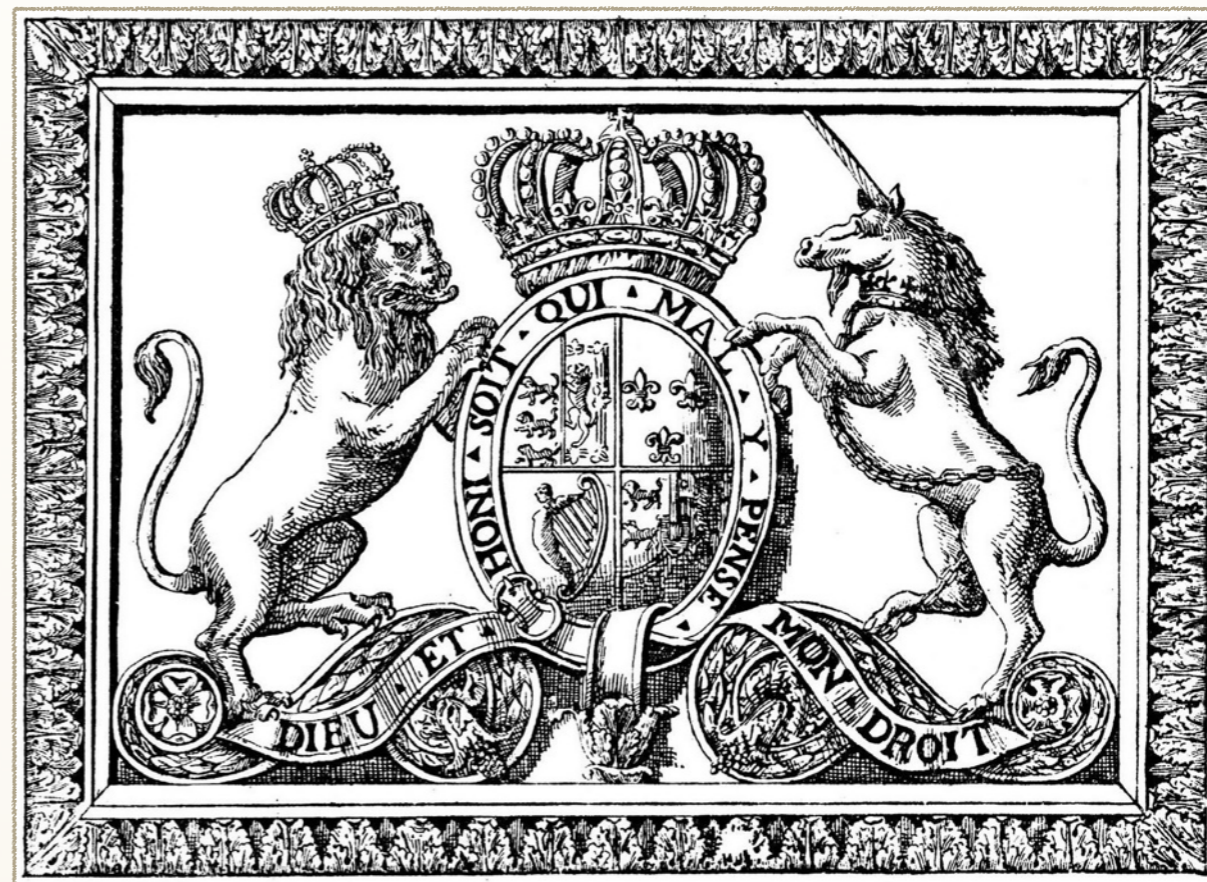
A [Sumerian](#) seal impression yields similar imagery.



Another fascinating variation on this heraldic device, used in a somewhat different form to depict a highly elaborated chakra diagram, is found on the walls of the Northwest palace of [Ashurnasirpal II](#) at [Nimrud](#) (present day Iraq,) circa 859 B.C.



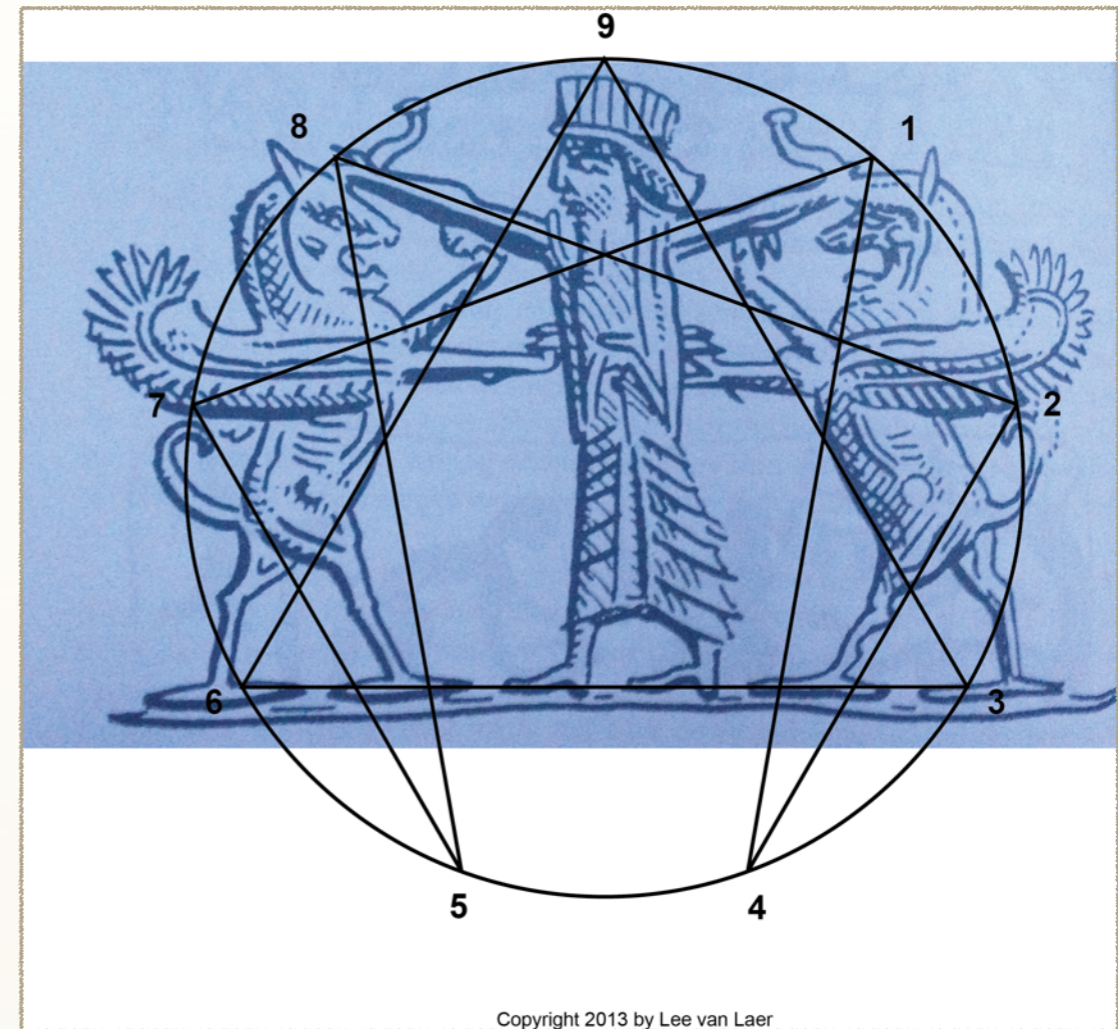
The heraldic motif, which we recognize in innumerable variations up through present time, originated in ancient esoteric schools. The original meaning, which is easier to see in the early variations, specifically shows a human being — often interpreted as a hero, or a king — between two forces.



Understanding this interpretation is especially important, because it specifically relates to the inner work that Jeanne de Salzman brought to her pupils during the 20th century as she deepened and broadened the understanding of the "forgotten" work Gurdjieff originally introduced to the West.

The symbol shows a human being between two sets of forces, acting as the intermediary. Even more important, the interaction between the human being in the arms of the animals indicates an interplay of forces; this, also, as a particular aspect of inner work that de Salzman mentions more than once in her notes. It's entirely appropriate to understand the figure standing between the griffins as a hero, but it's equally important to understand that he represents a Yogi: an individual who has dedicated their inner life to the mastery of the path of the Yogi.

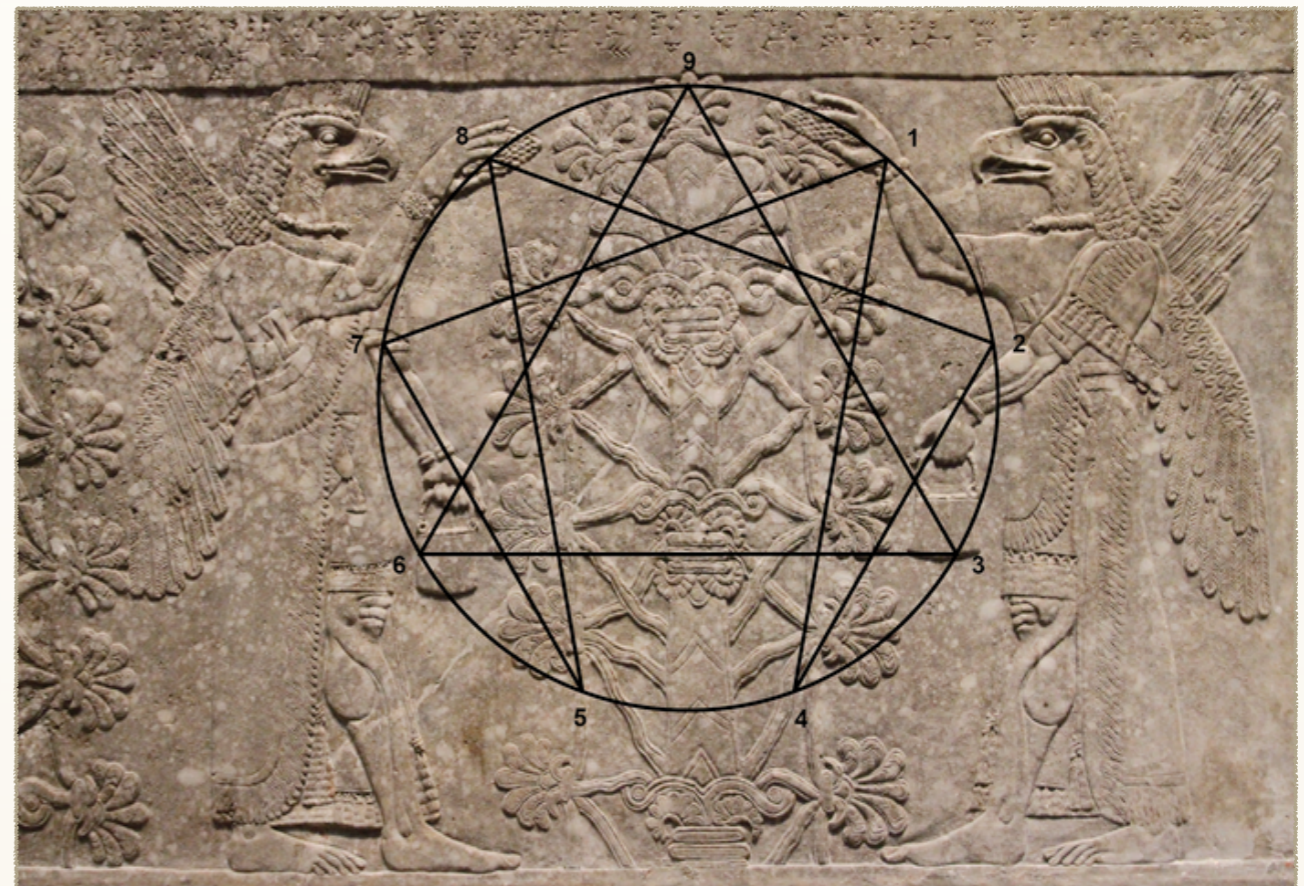
When I first encountered this image, the lines of force and the way they were arranged struck me. A few minutes later, I was looking at the following image rendered in Photoshop.



The image not only shows the law of three in action; its geometrical construction clearly follows the law, and the arms and legs of the figures map out the relationship of forces depicted in the enneagram. It is, furthermore, a direct illustration of the principle of standing between the higher and the lower, as is necessary in inner work. As such, images of this kind serve as a form of objective art: they embody and esoteric language that can only be understood by initiates, but have a broad appeal to those with no such ideas. In this manner, images of this kind can be passed down for centuries without the essential information at the being destroyed.

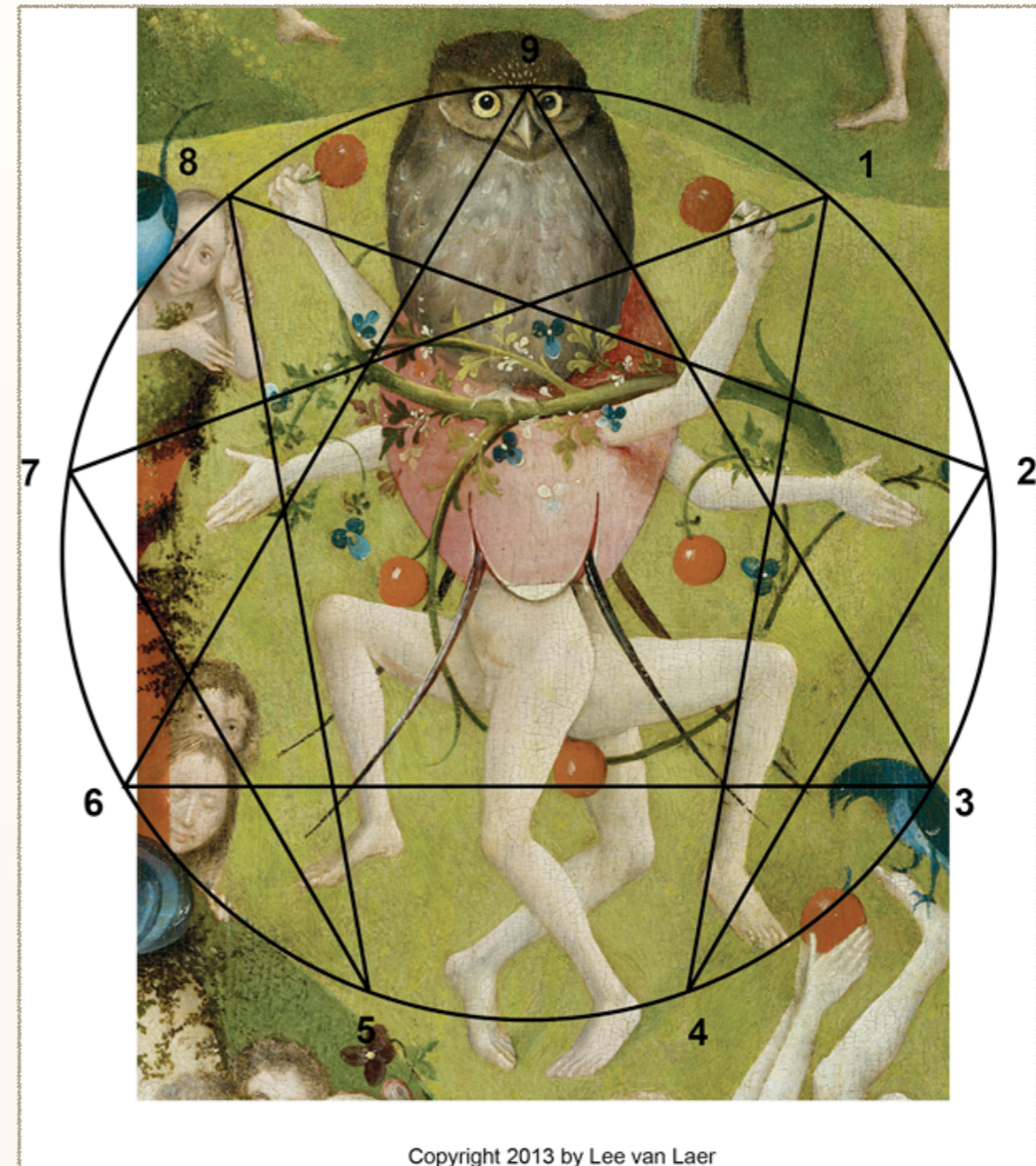
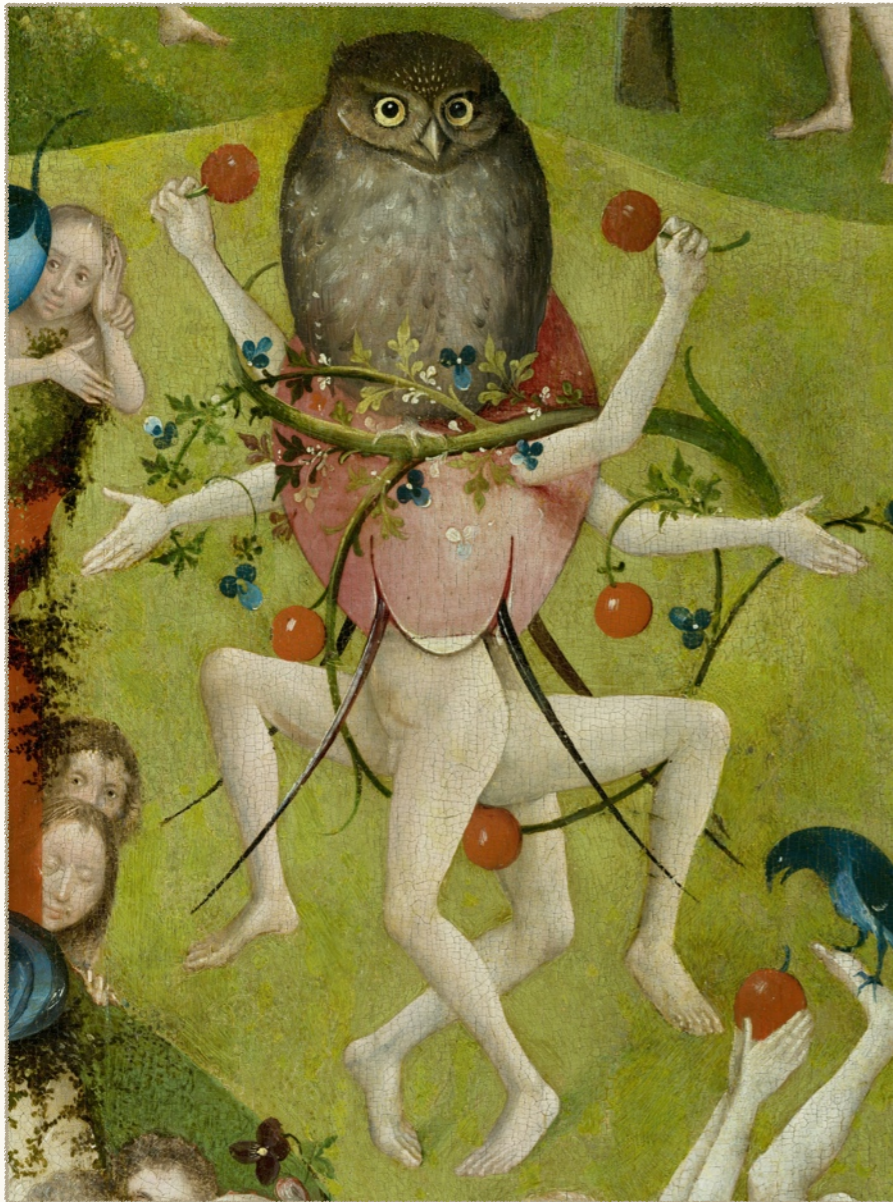
It turns out that the bas-relief from the palace of Nimrud is equally interesting when the enneagram is laid over it.

In both cases, it appears that an underlying structure related to Gurdjieff's diagram exists. Even more interesting, in this diagram, the positions occupied by the conscious shocks are represented by small buckets, or vessels, that is to say, containers for receiving energy.



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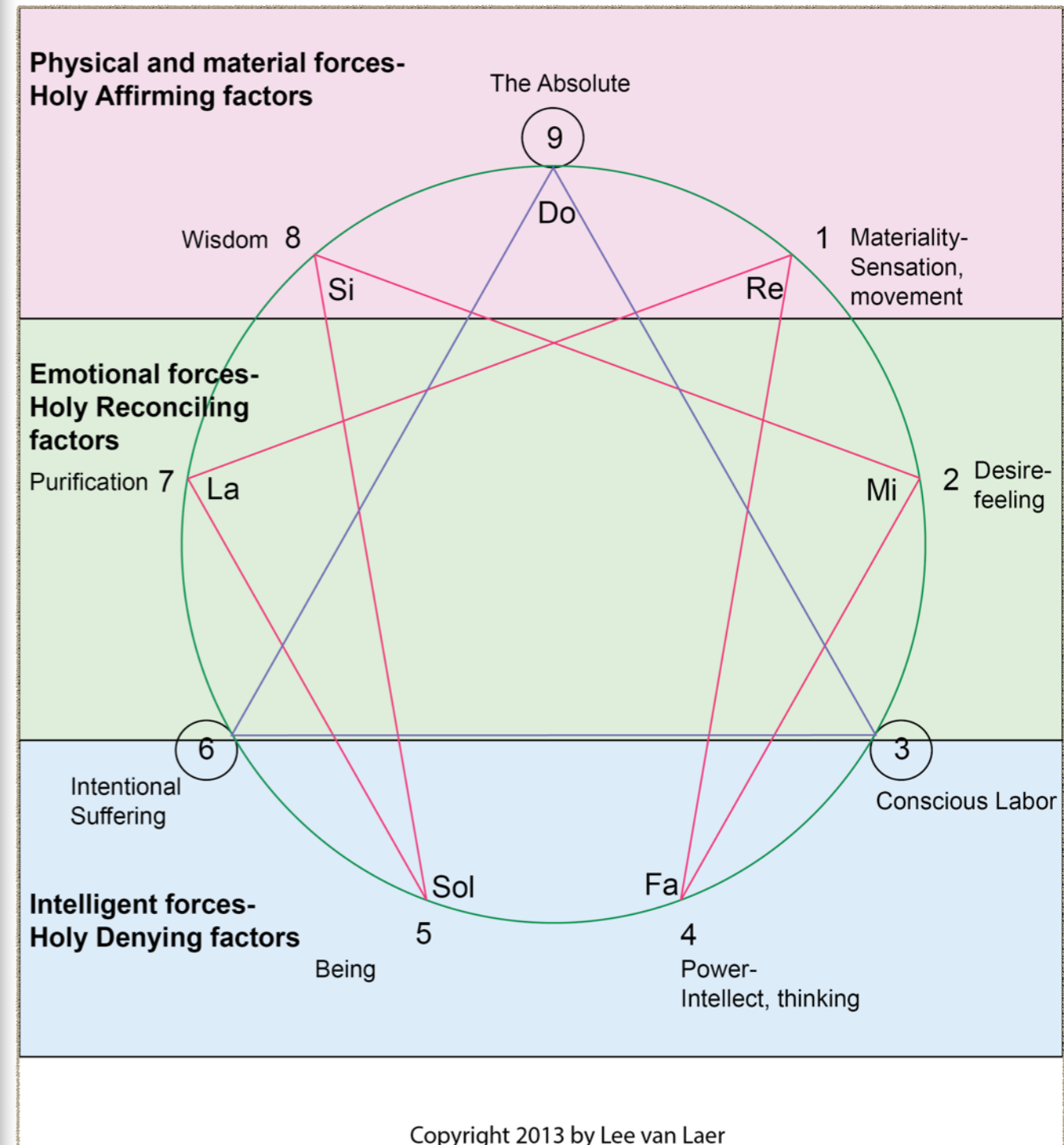
Another example of the enneagram concealed within an artistic symbol comes to light during the [Northern renaissance](#) in the art of [Hieronymus Bosch](#): The mysterious magus on the right side of the central panel neatly summarizes the positions of the notes, and shock, on the diagram. The indications are that the school Bosch studied in must have been familiar with the diagram, or a version of it.



Chapter 9

THE ENNEAGRAM OF AFFIRMING, DENYING, AND RECONCILING FORCES

The principle of mirrored forces, which is reflected in the multiplications and the movements, described in some detail.



Understanding the function of the universal principles as depicted in the enneagram, we can gain some basic insights into the nature of holy affirming, holy denying, and the holy reconciling forces.

As you can see from the above diagram, in addition to being divided in half vertically, there are three "zones" of horizontal influence. As energy circulates around an octave, it manifests specific characteristics depending on its proximity to the Divine.

In this diagram, the pink area is the closest to the divine — the note "do," or, the absolute. The green zone, the middle zone, which represents the heart, is a mediating zone that stands between the most holy absolute at the top of the diagram, and that which is furthest from the divine, at the bottom.

Interestingly, we note that the forces of thinking — on the right, or natural, side of the diagram — and Being — on the left, or spiritual, side of the diagram — each of which serves as a vehicle for comprehending identity, are located in the region of holy denying. This is because our thinking takes us away from God; thinking makes us believe that we are God. And Being — a much higher form of thinking, but nonetheless a unique expression of egoism which must ultimately be surrendered — also affirms ourselves at the expense of the

divine. There is an implicit irony here, because the acquisition of being, and absolutely necessary step on the spiritual path, also represents a concrete spiritual manifestation of the denying force, that is, an idiocy — or uniqueness — that sets us apart from God, which is an absolutely necessary step in order to begin the return towards the Divine.

Both the departure from the divine — the "downward" movement that takes place on the right side of the diagram — and the return, the upward movement on the left side, are mediated by emotive forces, that is, forces that are able to comprehend position or place, which is what emotion is for. They are also compassionate forces; and compassion, the ability to feel the passion of another, is the necessary mediating force in order to reconcile identity (the self) with God, who is, for us, the Other.

This gives us a hint as to why Gurdjieff asked us to practice external considering. It is actually an exercise or practice effort designed to help us reconcile identity of self with our separation from God.

The forces that are closest to the divine are, respectively, material manifestation — on the right side of the diagram, and wisdom, on the left. Material manifestation, being the emanation of God's influence into the material universe, naturally gives birth to that which is closest to God, that is, Reality. Sen-

sation of the body is thus actually very close to an affirmation of God's presence in the confirmation of the material nature of existence, which is an acknowledgment of God. On the other side of the diagram, wisdom is the closest man or any other Being can come to God; it represents the evolution of energetic forces to the point where they know their place and can come into right relationship with the Lord.

A few other inferences can be drawn here, although investigating them would take a much longer essay. For one thing, all physical ecstasy actually lies very close to God Himself, being a sensate manifestation related to godhood. This includes chemically induced ecstasies (drugs) and the human orgasm. The taboo nature of these ecstasies and almost every religious practice relates to the fact that they are so overwhelmingly close to divinity; it is an attempt to come back to God by the backward path, an attempt to ascend through descent — that is, a shortcut that represents a subversion of the universal requirement for participation and circulation.

Another point is that all manifestations of intelligence and awareness, since they perceive themselves as separate from God, ultimately end up being a Holy Denying force. There can be only one true awareness, and that is God's awareness; all awarenesses that set themselves apart from this are ultimately denying the absolute, no matter how well developed they may be.

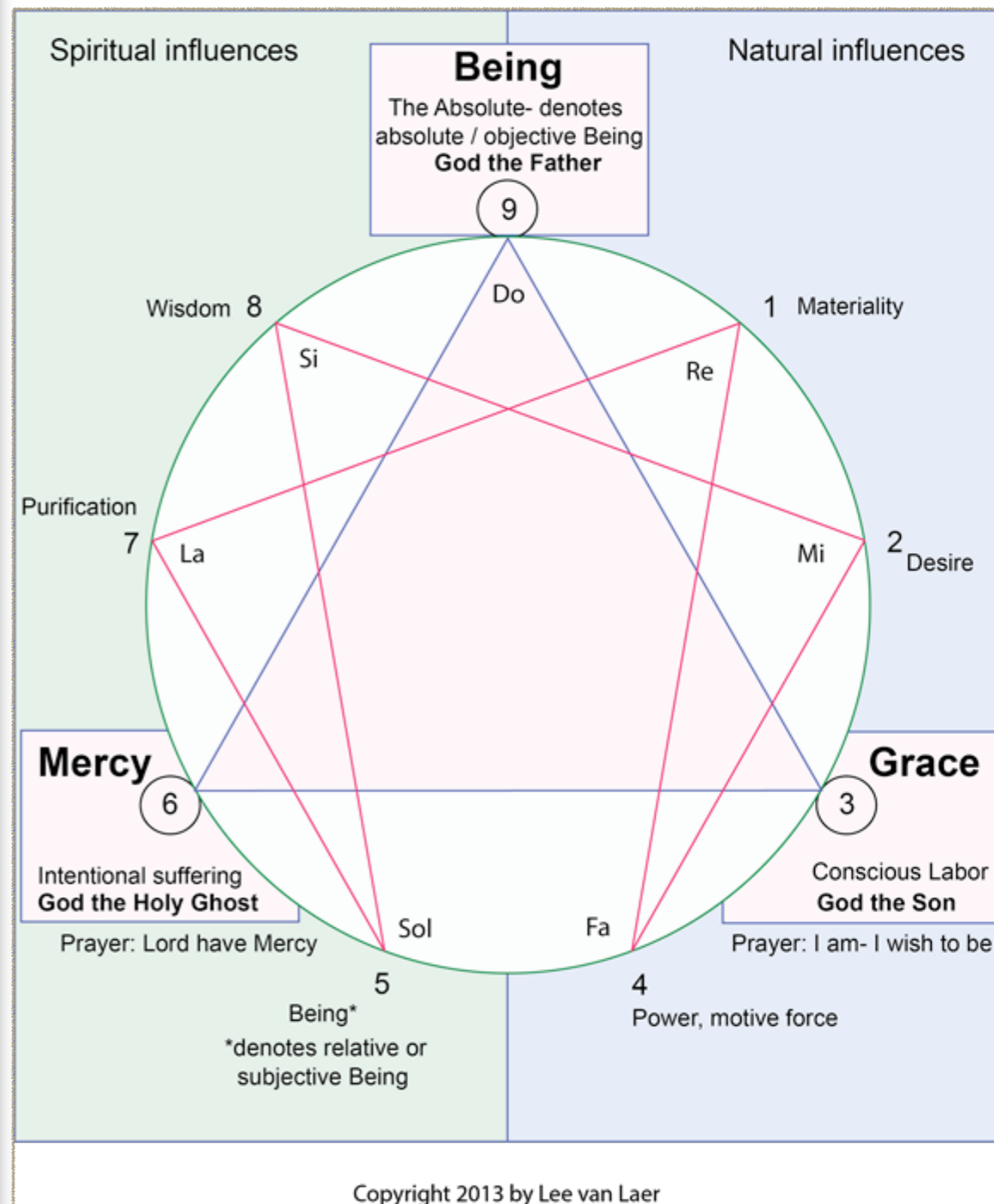
The third inference we can take away from this is that the feeling force — whether it expresses itself as desire or purification, which are reciprocal forces that act together — always plays the role of the mediator between the absolute affirmation of God through wisdom and materiality, and the relative affirmation of materiality through intelligence or Being. Readers who think carefully on this will now be able to understand a good deal about the nature of Buddhist teaching, which is intimately connected with the investigation of these questions through active Being. The delineation of these questions as shown in the enneagram furthermore casts light on the perpetual tension between transcendence and immanence as investigated by the Sufi schools and other religious practices which have existed since ancient times.

I'll leave readers with one final note. Because the left/right symmetry of the diagram creates correspondences between notes, wisdom and sensation, purification and desire, and Being and thinking form mirror images of one another. The lower forces of sensation, desire, and thinking share congruent and correspondent identities with wisdom, purification, and being. Sensation, in other words, is a form of wisdom; and we should note that it is wordless. Desire ultimately becomes a wish for purification; and thinking, and its higher form, manifests as Being. For thinking to begin to manifest Being is to take the first step into the higher order of these forces expressed on the left side of the diagram.

Chapter 10

THE ENNEAGRAM OF BEING, GRACE AND MERCY

The three Great Forces that inform the universe, post-creation



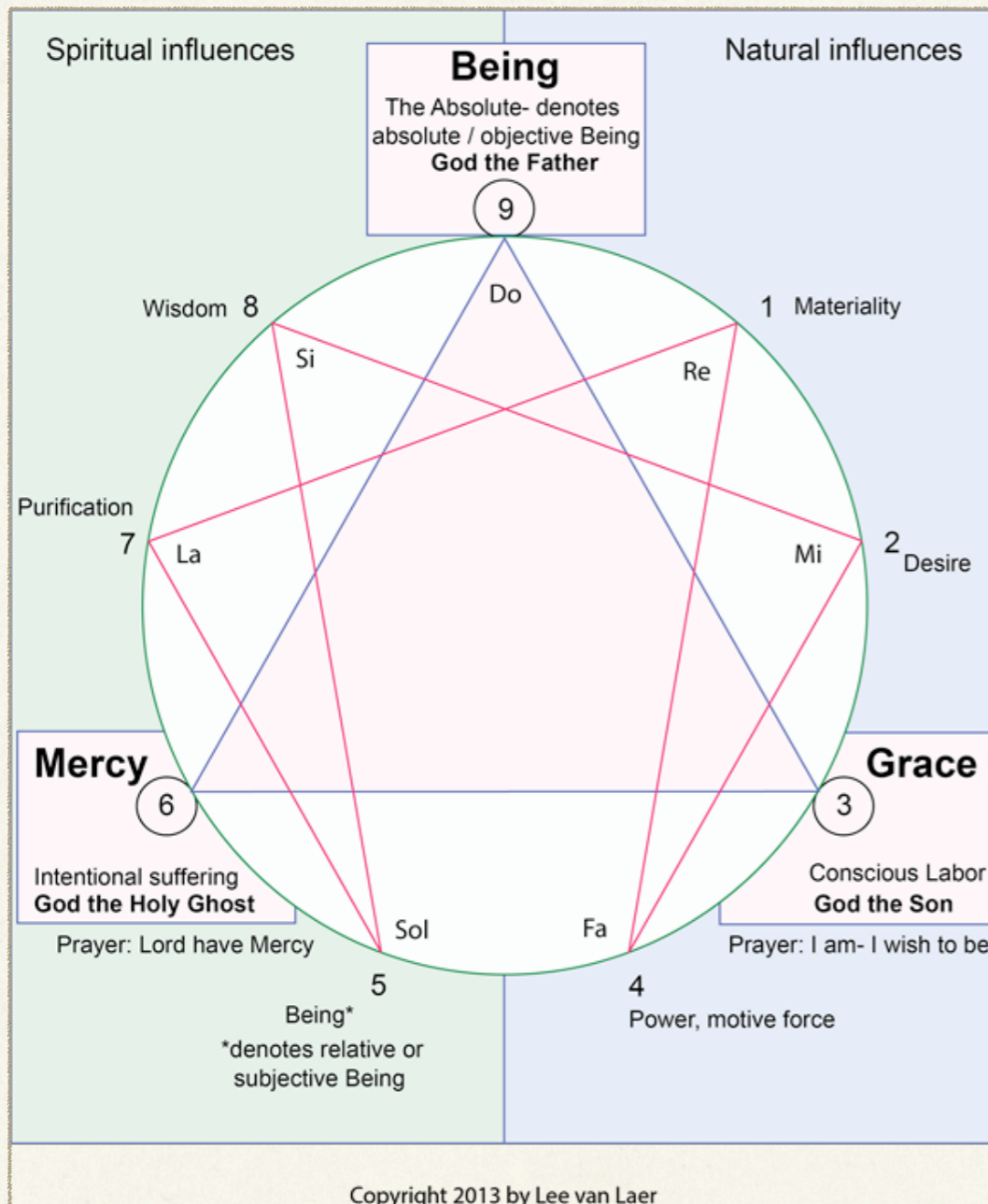
SECTION 4

Being

We say we search for Being; yet why do we search?

Being is comprehensive. This means that there is no non-Being, except in God, who perfectly encompasses and embodies all possible aspects of manifestation including, mysteriously, its absence. So Being is comprehensive; asleep or awake, aware or unaware, conscious or unconscious, there is no state in which Being is not already present and absolutely manifest. Being does not depend on our consciousness or Presence; it is already present with or without us.

The question is never whether a tree falls in the forest where there no one is there to hear it, but whether there are trees and forests; and there are always trees and always forests, regardless of the sounds they make, or the silence they emanate. Being is like this. The entire manifest universe is Being; its movement through Time is being; its infinite aspects are Being. This is what we mean when we say Being is comprehensive; it



comprehends, that is, it perceives, it grasps mentally; although this idea is far too limited to properly define it.

We might say it includes all; and this would be closer to the mark. It is the dharma, the eternal manifestation of Truth. Truth and Being are actually and functionally indistinguishable from one another, and one wonders now why this perfect congruence isn't spoken of more often.

We call the congruence between Truth and Being perfect because there can be no separation of the two; they are a mirror that reflects itself. The words that create distinction between them are actually a source of confusion; ultimately, there can't be any difference between the two.

So we understand completely that the manifestation of reality, as we call it, is perfect, which is why Ibn Arabi referred to God as The Reality, that is, the absolute condition of perfection. It must be understood without any doubt from an inner point of view that this condition of perfection is inviolable, eternal, and infinite, and that there is nothing that can corrupt it. While the mind is only capable of formulating this, the feeling and the body are capable of sensing it directly under the right conditions. This is what is called enlightenment, although there are many degrees of this, and each one of them is partial, because Reality as we experience it is irrevocably doomed to partiality of one kind or another.

In the largest sense of the cycle and of the Absolute, Being occupies the note do on the enneagram, and represents God the Father in the holy Trinity. It represents the Absolute manifestation of Being, which is distinct from the subjective or relative manifestation of Being which is always represented by the note sol.

The idea that Being is comprehensive is an essential one, because the word has a greater meaning than would be apparent on the surface. —com denotes synchrony, simultaneity, and togetherness, and —prehend is related to prehensile, that is, that which can grasp; so the word means to hold together, to grasp together, to bring together.

Being brings all aspects of Reality together: it is an expression of totality, which is why the word defies any easy descriptions.

Because Being is comprehensive, there is no need to search for Being. There is only the need to become manifest within it; it is already here, and issues an eternal invitation.

If there is a search taking place, we would have to say that Being searches for us.

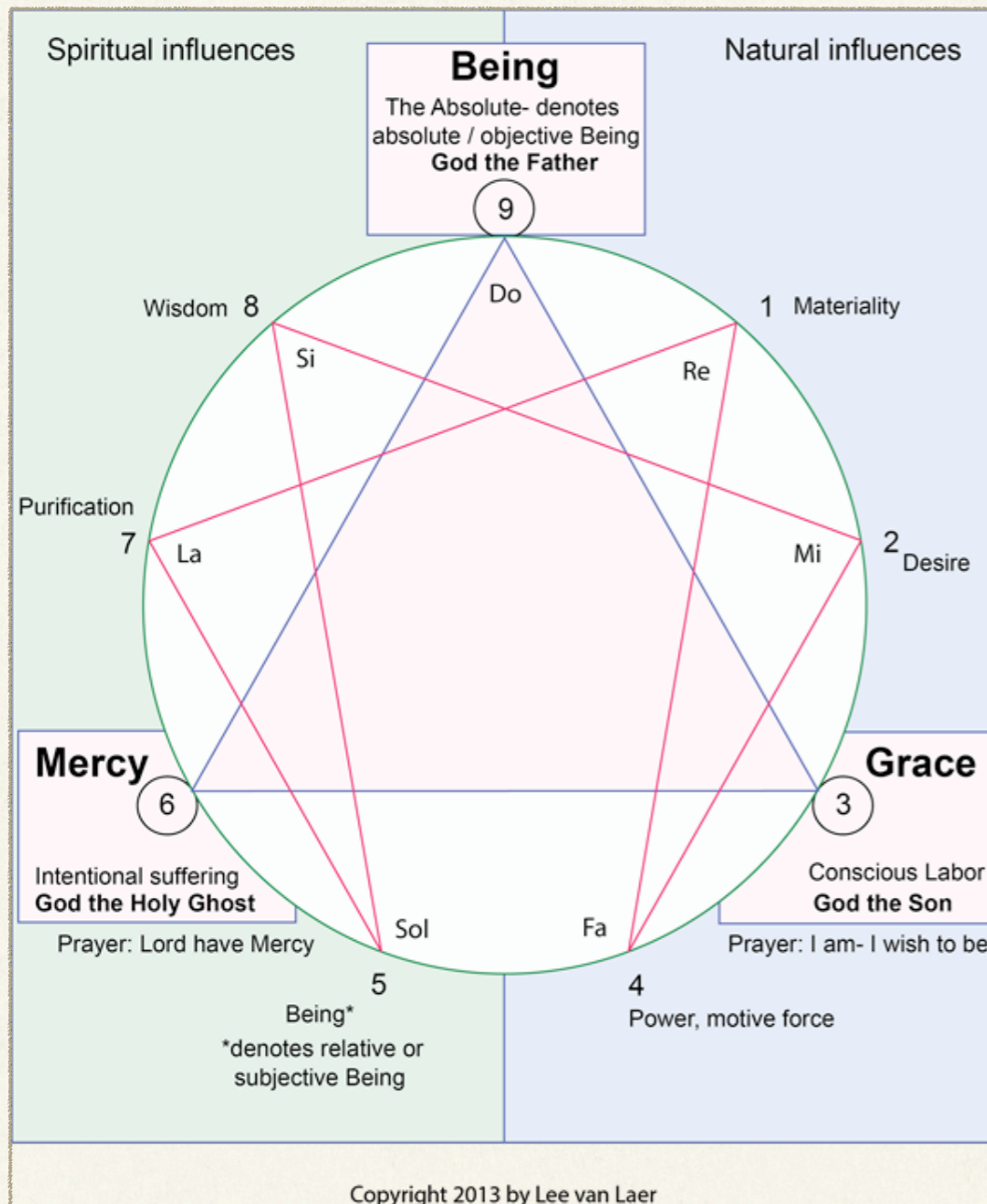
SECTION 5

Grace

Being, Grace and Mercy are the great forces of the Holy Trinity which drive the engine of the universe; and the second of these forces is Grace.

Grace is inherent; by this we mean that Grace is an inalienable property of all that is. All of creation is imbued by Grace; there is no object, event, circumstance, or condition that is without Grace, because Grace enters all of creation through the original Will of the Lord.

Grace is the force of Gurdjieff's conscious labor, because it represents and provides what he called the "first conscious shock." That is, Grace is the Will of God, which is always and forever consciously exercised—the consciousness of God, penetrating and giving rise to all things. Nothing arises except Grace creates it; and nothing exists except Grace sustains it. So Grace is both Creator and Sustainer; and it is ever-present.



If we somehow think that Grace only enters some situations at some times, and is not eternally present, we err; because Grace is ever-present and in all things, even things we think are the worst of things. Grace cannot be measured by the human instruments of good and bad, for within the Will of the Lord there is no good or bad. We say the Will of the Lord is unquestionable because it comes from a higher level and cannot in any way or measure be subject to human understanding. Grace, when it seems to appear to us, only does so because we are seeing what was always already there; and it is merely a function of our fallen nature and our ingratitude that we do not sense the Presence of Grace and its action in all things and at all times.

When we seek to place ourselves under the influence of Grace and its action, we pray, "I Am, I wish to Be" because to be is to be within Grace; for Being has no other place than within Grace, since that is its primary and functional condition. Grace can't be separated from Being because it emanates from the great and most holy, absolute do of Being; insofar as we -re-align with Grace, we enter Being.

This is the action of God's consciousness within the octave. It supports all of the further evolution that can take place after it; and nothing can take place else Grace is invoked.

Grace is not special, any more than God's consciousness is special; they are inevitable. Grace is, instead, fundamental; its action binds the three lower forces of body, intellect and feeling together, creating a whole that can cross into the manifestation of real Being at sol on the left side of the enneagram. This natural process ought to take place at all times and in all things.

So let's not speak of Grace as though it were distant or unattainable. Let us sense it together in the full and perfect knowledge that it is present now—and that we dwell within it in every moment.

If we're fortunate, once in a while, we may actually sense this with our higher parts.

Grace takes on an infinite number of aspects because of its inherent power to reconcile the right side of the octave, to reconcile the otherwise independently functioning forces of materiality, desire and power.

SECTION 6

Mercy

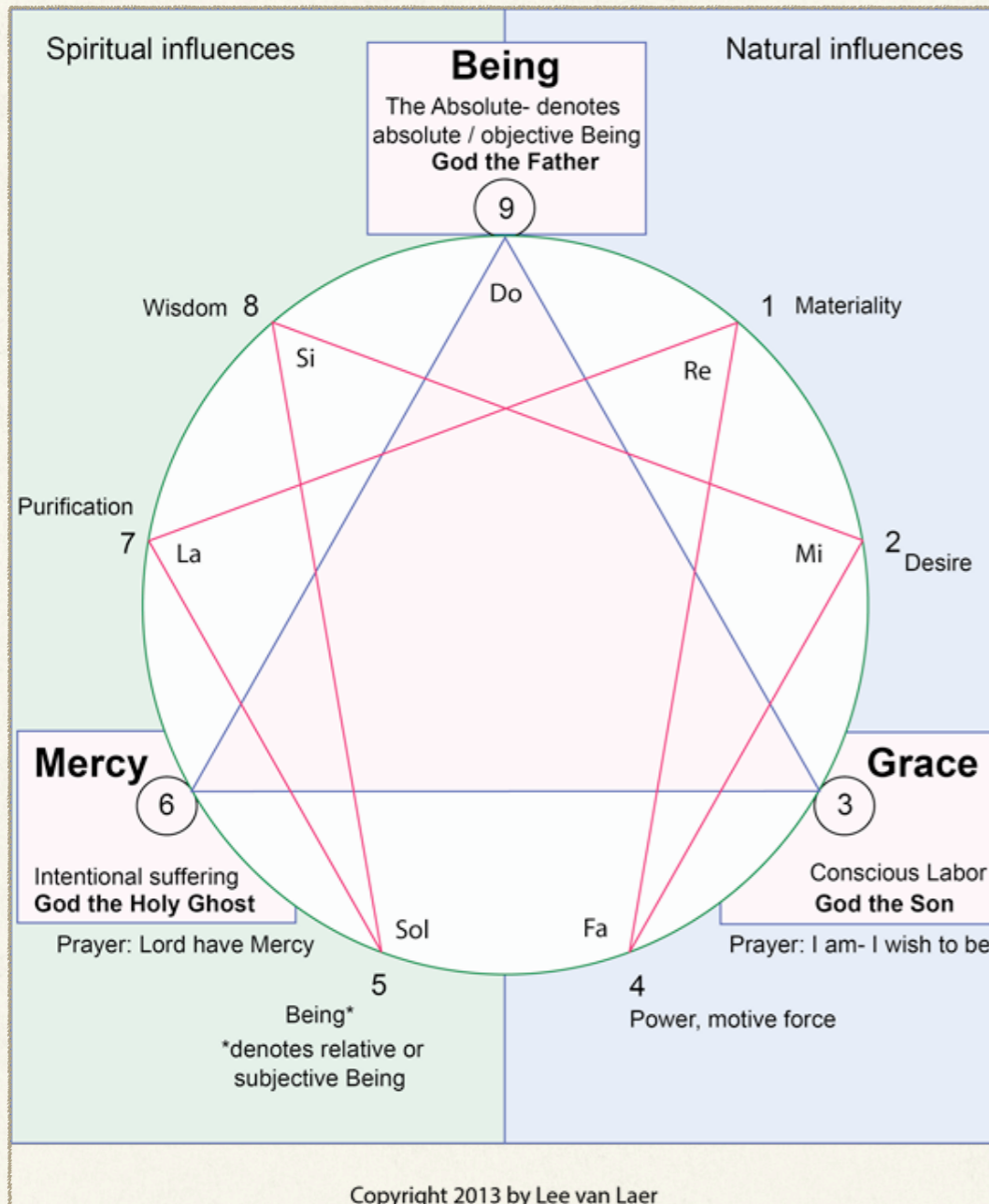
The Mercy of God flows in [all] created beings, and courses through the selves and essences.

—Ibn Arabi, *The Bezels of Wisdom*, chapter XXI

Mercy is the highest of God's qualities that becomes manifest in material reality; and Mercy is assured.

This is because Mercy cannot be withheld. If it were left to mankind, Mercy would be in scant supply; for we are fundamentally unforgiving creatures and don't understand what mercy is. Real Mercy flows downward in infinite abundance from the Lord, and is dispensed without regard to circumstances according to His infinite generosity.

God's Mercy exceeds his wrath (cf. Ibn Arabi) in all measures. Any perceived failings of the perpetual operation of Mercy are misunderstandings; because only man has the capacity to be un-



merciful. So Mercy, which Gurdjieff called the force of intentional suffering, is not only God's Love for His creation in perpetual action; it represents God's willingness to forever take on the burden of man's transgressions without judgment. Mercy is unconditional; it falls on the worthy and unworthy alike.

Because mankind does not understand either the burden or the obligation he is under, this was acted out both symbolically and literally for mankind by Jesus Christ in His crucifixion. The act was meant as a personal reassurance from God that no Being would be abandoned to judgment alone, but that Mercy would be shown to all. There is an irony, and a tragedy, in man's belief in a supremely or fundamentally angry or judging God, for such a thing is quite impossible. This is why Mercy is assured.

Buddhism understands this concept from the perspective that all sentient Beings will attain enlightenment; and Gurdjieff encoded the idea of the bodhisattva vow into his fifth obligollian striving.

Mercy, as the second conscious shock, occupies the last position between the notes si and do on the enneagram, and is the Divine force that makes the return to the heavenly realm possible. God, having originally emanated the entire universe and all that is from the depths of His Divine Being, swallows

it whole again; in this sense, God takes responsibility for all that he has created and everything that happens. To take responsibility is Merciful; and this gives us a number of clues as to the nature of the action that is necessary in order to return to God.

Everything is required to return; nothing can remain where it is. (see section 5 of the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy entry on Ibn Arabi for his cosmology of the Return, which is intimately related to the cycles of the enneagram.) There are two kinds of return: voluntary and involuntary. This particular question has a number of aspects too detailed to expound here, but suffice it to say that a deeper understanding of Mercy would engender trust in the Lord, which is actually a very high level of inner development rarely attained by human beings. Trust in the Lord—illustrated by Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son—knows no objective limits if it is fully developed, which was the original point of the story. Such trust relies on an infallible inner understanding of the absolute quality of Mercy; and we can perhaps agree that, categorically, we don't have it.

Yet Mercy is assured. And this takes place through a perhaps unexpected and definitely misunderstood vehicle, which will be discussed in the next essay.

Readers interested in examining more material on the subject of Mercy may turn to chapter XXI of *The Bezels of Wisdom* by Ibn Arabi, *The Wisdom of Dominion in the Word of Zakariah*—a piece which, despite its brevity, encapsulates an exactly correct understanding of the subject. You will find no better authority.

Death as a Grace



We live in a universe of contradictions. The Alpha and Omega of the contradiction are our separation from God and our wish to return.

This contradiction takes many forms; in its essence, every subsequent contradiction (and there are an infinite number) arises from this primary contradiction, which is inescapable. All desire, all longing, which arises instantly upon the manifestation of material existence, is a longing for the return to God.

There are two paths to return to God – the voluntary and involuntary path. Gurdjieff actually laid out the schematic for this in *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, in which he described a universe which originally allowed everything to automatically evolve back into God. It underwent a catastrophic change that ultimately frustrated this straight or involuntary path, requiring "shocks," or interventions, in order for things to move forward.

This allegory is an abstraction of the difference between a universe of involuntary, or automatic, return to God and one where choice becomes the fulcrum.

Sufi metaphysical arguments would pose that the idea of return to God is an illusion, simply because nothing can leave God in the first place — everything is contained within Him. The idea, well known in Zen Buddhism, that nothing can be separated from the Dharma is essentially the same idea; but in the broad sense of metaphysics as we examine them in the context of both of the Gurdjieff work and Christianity, as well as other cyclical cosmologies of the descent and ascent of energy, there is a separation and a return. The reason for the differences in concept arise in the tension between the transcendent and the immanent, which are essentially irreconcilable at this level – except by the mechanism of death.

I could write about this at much greater length, but instead I'm going to try to get at the heart of the emotive questions here.

We are separated from God; and we go through life unknowing, struggling, clearly incapacitated in our ability to understand that separation or its implications. There is a tremendous emotional vulnerability created, which generates all of the fear we feel about ourselves and about life. We have lost our trust.

Yet, God has sent us a guarantee of Mercy, epitomized by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ; and we are also guaranteed Mercy through death.

Death grants us an irrevocable return. This is actually a huge gift; yet, perversely, we have turned it into a terrifying experience that everyone fears. The reason that near-death experiences generally involve an ecstatic encounter is because the return to God is a return to Perfection; and every Being is not just offered this movement back into the Divine, we are required to participate in it. That's because death is not the arrival of something foreign, alien, or inimical to life; it is a return to our own nature. The nature of the soul and of Being is transcendent; it comes from a higher level, and its restriction to a body and a set of habits on this level is a limitation it suffers in order to broaden its experience of itself.

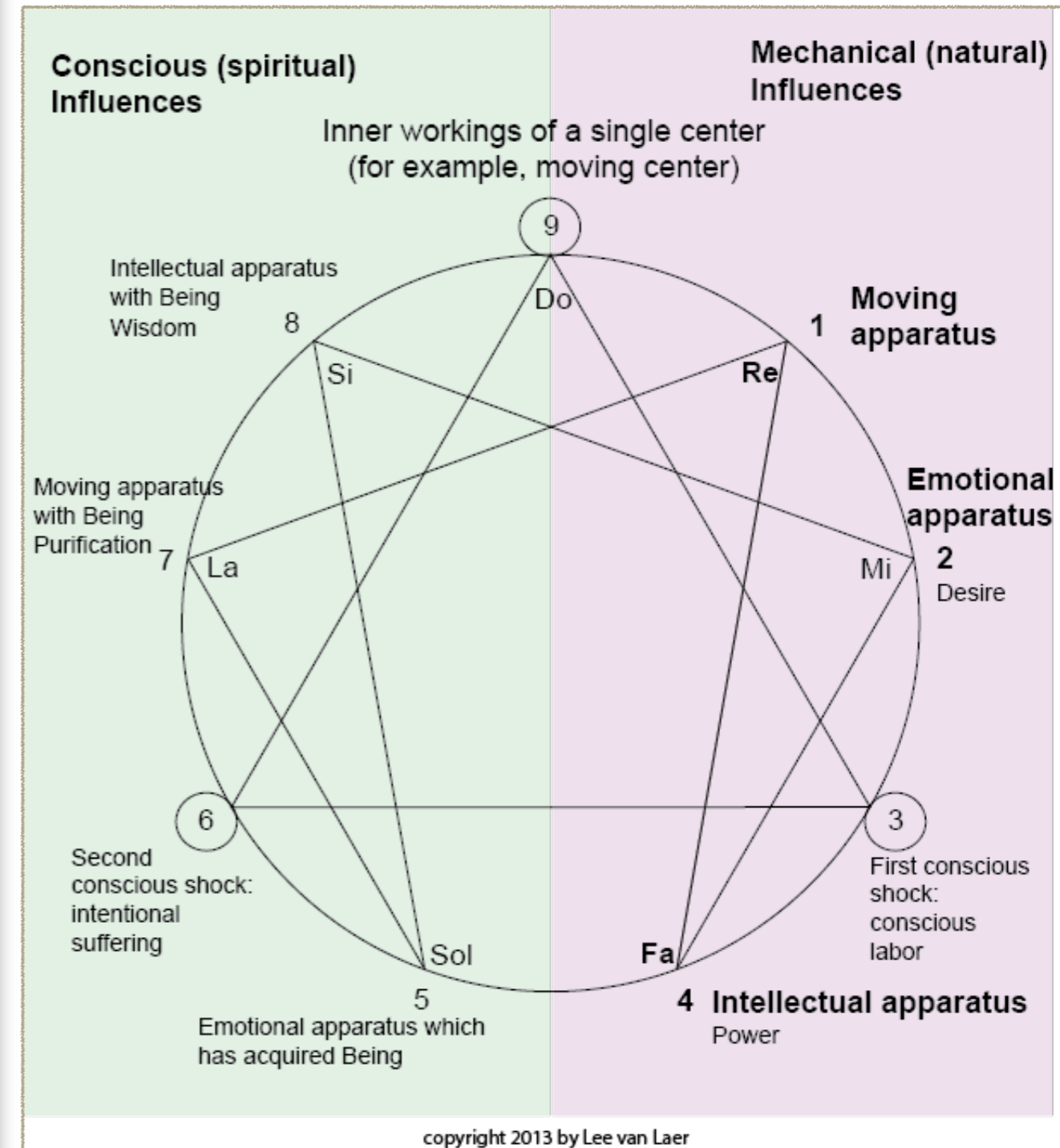
So Death is a Grace.

It is a conscious work undertaken to allow the surrender of consciousness back to its own source.

Chapter 11

THE ENNEAGRAM OF THE THREE CENTERS AND THEIR PARTS

On the voluntary participation of centers.



Repeatedly, in *The Reality of Being*, we encounter Jeanne de Salzmann making remarks about the idea that centers come to a moment where they participate voluntarily.

This language has a very specific meaning, and I'm not sure it's properly understood, so we're going to discuss it this morning. But in order to do so we must — alas! — get a bit technical once again.

Each of the three centers — the moving, emotional, and intellectual center — has, as we know, a moving, emotional, and intellectual part. These parts are connected quite lawfully in exactly the same manner that all of the other structures in the universe are; they are a triad representing the right side of an enneagram.

Several things are illustrated in this principle: first of all, the three parts of each center interact lawfully according to the development of an octave, requiring a conscious shock to bring them together; and secondly, perhaps more important, centers have a higher level of work in order to complete their own inner octave.

This means that after a center connects the inner moving, emotional, and intellectual apparatuses, it moves to a new level of work in which it has to complete the circulation around the octave. When it completes the first triad 142 and

has an inner connection, it becomes whole, that is, it moves to the note sol within its own octave and has acquired being.

Now, I've explained to readers many times that when a center is awake, one does not have to make any effort to get it to arrive in the moment and participate. It has now become a living thing, a consciousness in its own right which has acquired being; and it shows up on its own, that is, it shows up voluntarily — it volunteers. So, if the first triad of my sensation is complete, I don't need to try to sense myself, because the sensation arrives whole. It shows up in the middle of my being and supports my intellectual and emotional state because it is awake and has a wish of its own now.

The point that it has a wish of its own now is important, because the note sol represents the activation not of the physical or the intellectual higher part of the center, but the emotional higher part of the center — this is what provides the motive force, and (fortunately for us) development through the next two notes can proceed without an additional shock (even though an additional shock is always shown, in the wrong location on the diagram.)

So for an individual center to acquire Being is a major step in inner development.

All three of the centers need to develop Being in order to engage in voluntary participation. The inner sensation of this is a very specific thing that can't be described accurately in writing, but it's unmistakable, and those who encounter it are always astonished — which leads us to the comment in the Gospel of Thomas:

"Let him who seeks continue seeking until he finds. When he finds, he will become troubled. When he becomes troubled, he will be astonished, and he will rule over the All."

This particular comment, which may seem obscure, is actually a very precise and rather straightforward remark about the effort to see the centers clearly and discover how they work. We must engage in inner observation until we understand how our parts function according to the lawful development of the holy Trinity and the octave. We don't need to understand it technically in any absolute sense, but we must develop a very tactile sensation of our inner being and the way in which it functions. (This is a major point of de Salzmänn's teachings in *The Reality of Being*, by the way.) In doing this — we will become troubled. We create friction as the parts recognize one another and see how disconnected they are. Ultimately, this friction leads to the astonishment that results when a center wakes up and begins to participate voluntarily — and when it does, we "rule over the All" — which was never meant to represent some megalomaniac control of the universe, but rather, we become the masters of an inner Self

that has a new kind of unity to it. This, as well, is discussed over and over again in *The Reality of Being*.

Jeanne de Salzmänn repeatedly says that any kind of tension will block an effort at inner work. While this question can be understood through direct experience, it can also be examined from a technical point of view. This sheds some light on why tension is so much of an issue.

First of all, take note that tension arises in all three centers. Moving Center tension expresses itself as muscular tension; and most people think that this is the tension that needs to be dealt with, which is why yoga, massage therapy, and so on are so popular. But it only scratches the surface of the tension that we have.

Emotional tension expresses itself as reaction. Intellectual tension expresses itself as argument.

The reason for this is that tension always arises first and foremost in the moving part of the center. It is a physical issue, a physical blockage. It prevents the energy from moving through the center properly because it arises at the beginning of the process, at the note re. While it can be well understood through immediate experience that moving center attention is muscular, the tensions of the other two centers are almost

invariably ignored, because the manifestations are not understood as tension.

The tensions arise and prevent the higher energy necessary for inwardly forming — informing — the center through the progression of its parts. That is to say, the tension blocks the shock that ought to take place to unify the moving and intellectual part of the center with the emotional part. That shock is provided, as has been explained in other essays, through the action of Grace, which penetrates everything.

The diagram at this link will give some indications of how both Grace and Mercy affect the progression of energy in the octave. Grace is given; Mercy is earned. Grace is given because, as soon as the divine exits the transcendent Reality as an emanation that forms the material world (the note re) God immediately recognizes the separation and the objectively difficult circumstances that His creation has been thrust into, and immediately, because of His infinitely Merciful nature, sends help — that is, Grace, or, the conscious force that helps with work — on the very heels of the manifestation itself. That is to say, Grace has the opportunity to enter naturally from the beginning and support the development of the octave. But it is physically blocked at the note re by this resistance of tension.

This tension is caused, among other things, because of the loss of identity with the Godhead. In the instant of manifestation and material existence, all of creation has already forgotten where it originated, and has to begin a search for it; Grace is actually resisted, even though it is offered so freely. It's perceived as other; and in the initial establishment of identity, other is always to be rejected. It is overcoming this rejection that the passage around the diagram is all about. The rejection of the other in favor of one's own unique identity, even when that other is God, is where ego begins and ends.

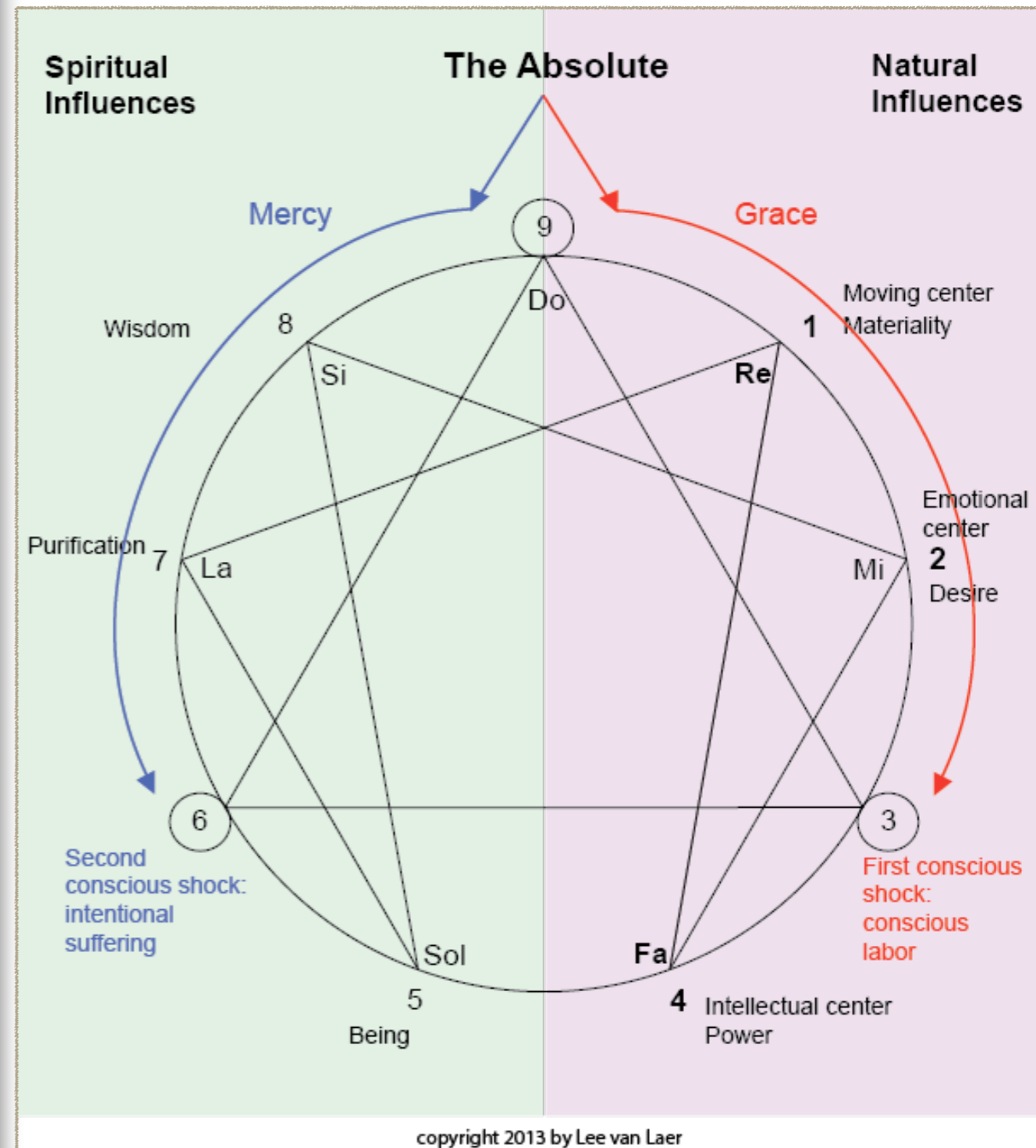
The important point to understand here is that every center blocks the entry of Grace, of conscious motive force, that could assist in its internal completion as a three centered enterprise. The centers block the entry of Grace through their tension, which is why Mme. stressed this so much.

I've heard others assert that some tension is necessary; but those who speak in this way don't understand what kind of tension and what kind of relaxation we are seeking here. For Grace to penetrate the action of a particular center, a very deep relaxation, one that isn't ordinarily available in any way, must arrive. And one of the deep mysteries is that Grace itself can provide this help, if we let it.

Chapter 12

ENNEAGRAM OF THE THREE CENTERS, GRACE, AND MERCY

Involuntary and evolutionary forces, and their relationship to Grace and Mercy



Grace is given, and Mercy is earned. This is because on the downward path along the right side of the enneagram, much help is sent. God, after all, understands that he has separated his own Being from himself and sent it on a very difficult journey which should benefit all of Being and even Reality itself if it is successfully completed. He consequently gives an enormous amount of help, very freely, because of His Merciful nature.

Once the energy is accepted, however, and the progression around of the diagram turns to the point where the individual has acquired responsibility — the note sol — a different kind of effort is necessary. Now, instead of accepting the conditions one is in and the influence one finds oneself under, which is in the realm and place of natural influences, one enters territory where one must strive to become more like God, since one has acquired the ability to purge oneself of the ego and move closer to God. So energy, in a certain sense, "flows backwards" on this side of the diagram. We discover Being; we seek Mercy.

This may sound like a complicated idea, but the terms are specific and exact. We don't need to seek Being because we already have it; we just don't recognize it. Mme. did not talk about the search for Being; she talked about the Reality of Being. To awaken is to awaken to one's pre-existing state of Being. There is no need to seek this; it merely needs to be uncovered.

Mercy, on the other hand, must be sought, because it is a divine quality that does not belong to man. It is one of the highest principles in the universe, and because it is actually very distant from Being upon its inception (Being is already directly inherent or incarnated (though not fully expressed yet) at re, whereas Mercy occupies the place between si and do, the correct location of the second conscious shock) one must strive to reach it. The fact that it is ever-present and assured does not mean it is attained without effort. My apologies: this understanding is quite complex and exceeds by its very nature the scope of the present essay.

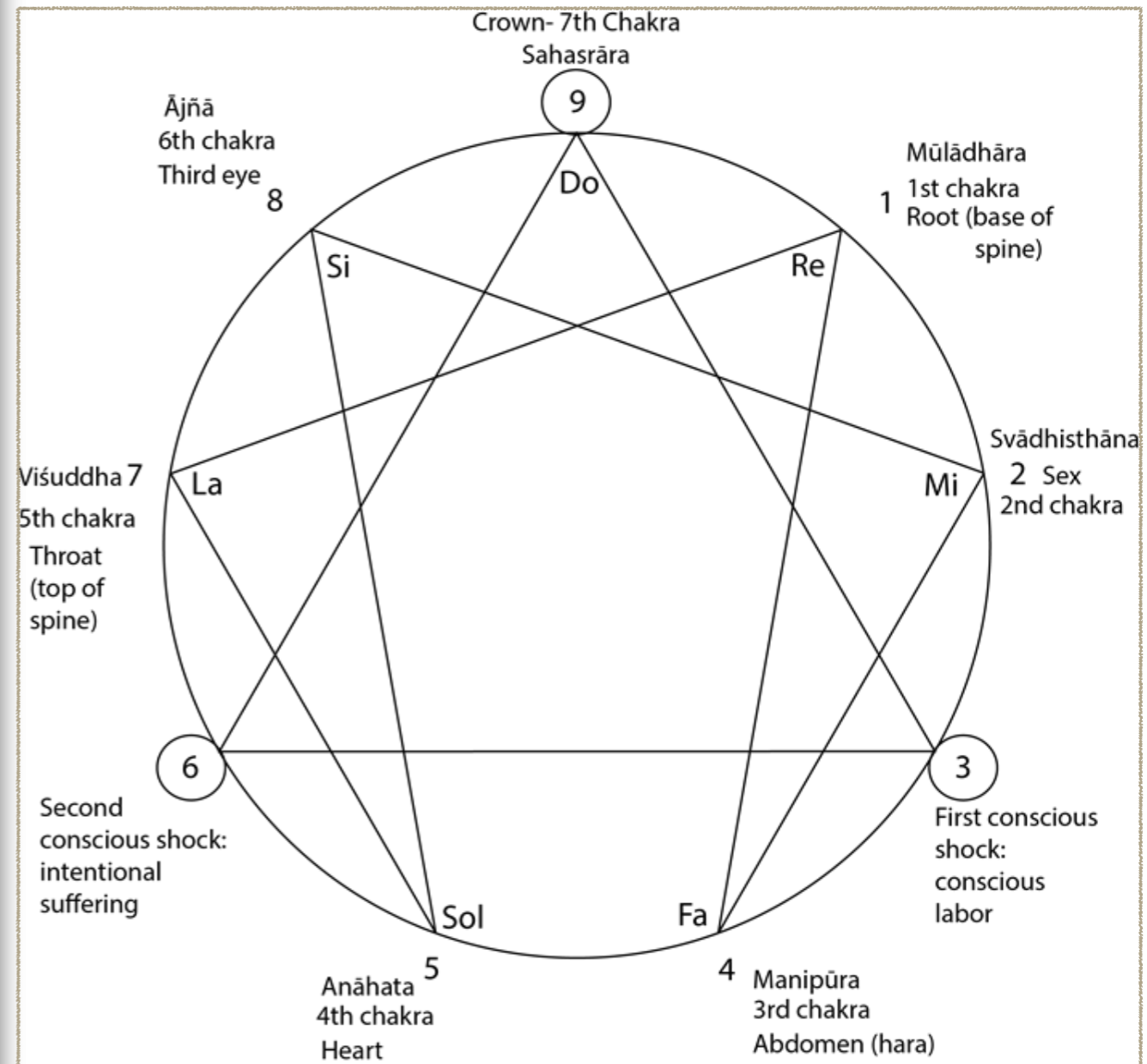
So, coming back to the question of the two prayers in the work, I am – I wish to be is the prayer of Grace given, and Lord have Mercy is the prayer of Mercy sought. The first acknowledges our condition; the second embodies our search. We inhabit the natural; we search for the spiritual.

The practice of conscious labor is the inhabitation of the natural with the support of grace. The practice of intentional suffering is the search to emulate the Mercy of the Lord; and one must go a long way towards Divinity before any help meets one from the other side under these conditions.

Chapter 13

ENNEAGRAM WITH TRADITIONAL CHAKRAS

The connection between traditional yogic chakras and the enneagram



The next five chapters deal with the relationships between the enneagram and Yogic schools of thought. While the connections are deep, the connections with Sufi schools are equally compelling and cannot be ignored. They underscore the interesting and deep-rooted connections between Islam and yoga, connections that many conservative modern Islamists might prefer not to discuss.

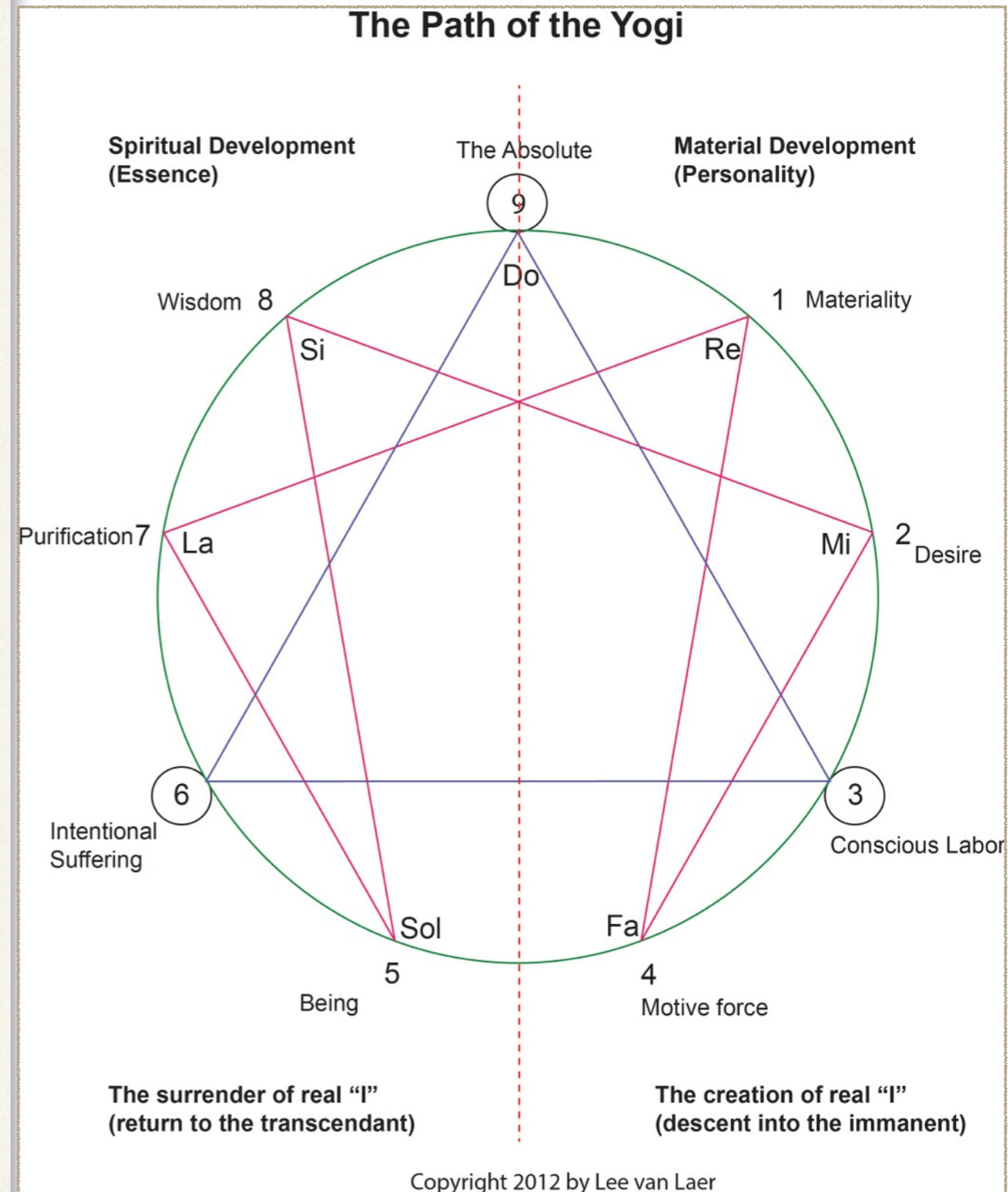
This diagram lays out the relationship between traditional Yogic chakras and the enneagram, as recounted in my book *Chakras and the enneagram*.

Those interested in studying this particular question further may want to get a copy of the book.

Chapter 14

THE PATH OF THE YOGI

The traditional chakras, when laid out on the enneagram, describe the path of the yogi.



On Gurdjieff and Yoga

Along with the diagram correlating the chakras, this diagram represents a seminal graphic for theoretical understanding of the enneagram based on the ancient yoga schools.

There can be little doubt that major portions of Gurdjieff's teaching are derived directly from yoga sources. He changed the language, but the understandings are fundamentally identical.

I thought it might be worthwhile to review some of the specific instances underscoring this fact.

Let's begin with the classic yoga Sutra from the Upanishads recounting the tale of the horse, carriage, and driver. (Click the link to read it in its original.) This story is repeated no less than nine times in various places in the three most well-known sources: *In Search of the Miraculous*, *Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson*, and *Views From the Real World*. (Once again, click the link to review the passages.)

In *Beelzebub*, Gurdjieff furthermore saw fit to expand on the analogy until it filled a colorful nine pages; and that, at the very end of the book, where he felt it necessary to append an editorial with a number of very specific references, including

one which is obviously about the six lower chakras, which he called "receivers of vibrations of different qualities."

His extensive chapter on the chemical factory includes obvious and unambiguous references to Prana, which is concentrated through breathing in the practice of Pranayama. And the rest of the book this particular reference comes from is rife with yoga concepts, including the idea of the centers, which has just about everything to do with yoga's idea of chakras. The correlations between the yogic system and Gurdjieff's own are extensive.

There can be no doubt that Gurdjieff considerably expanded on the ideas in yoga, especially with his introduction of the ancient symbol that used to connect all of the ideas in the yoga schools, the enneagram. The importance of this diagram can't be understated, since study in depth will reveal that the diagram is everything he said it was. Nonetheless, the ideas presented by his system and this diagram are complex, and an entry-level understanding of the basic concepts surrounding the diagram, the rate of creation, the 27 types, and so on represents only a scratch on the surface. Remember, ancient schools (one of Gurdjieff's numerous examples is the "Adherents of Legominism" in ancient Babylon) studied these ideas for thousands of years.

My own impression, shared by some scholars, is that almost all "modern" religions — and by modern, I mean any contemporary religions which have left discernible traces in the art and writings of ancient societies — are descended from a prototypical, Ur- religion, a root form of yoga, which was practiced somewhere between 5,000 and 8,000 years ago or more in the civilizations of Turkey and countries lying to the east, most probably in the very ancient Indus River Valley civilizations, of which relatively little is known.

By the time we encounter the first very large examples of organized religion in major civilizations such as Babylon and Egypt, it had begun to separate from its original traditions and, as both Gurdjieff and Ouspensky maintained, degenerate. That is to say, its ideas had become fragmented and were no longer intact. Certainly, this is the context that Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson presents religion in; and it need hardly be important, whether or not a civilization called Atlantis actually existed or was submerged under the ocean. We can fairly say that the story of Atlantis ably serves, in Beelzebub, as an allegorical vehicle on several different levels; one might fairly say that today, the myth serves a far greater purpose than any reality could.

In any event the point is that what we know of history emerged from well-developed and sophisticated civilizations with intricate philosophies and detailed understandings of both the natural world and man's nature.

To believe that these understandings only emerged recently — by recently I mean within the last 3,000 to 4,000 years— starting with Egyptian and Babylonian civilization is to vastly underestimate the ability of earlier cultures to think, and to question their existence. One of the conceits of modern civilization is to imagine ourselves as intellectually superior to earlier cultures; whereas the exact opposite may well be true.

So yoga, as a practice, probably underlies the origin of Egyptian religion, Judaism, Christianity, Sufism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, all of which emerge on the scene much later than the original civilizations in which yoga practices are clearly recorded in art. As such, it does represent what one might call the "esoteric core" of all religions, which — not coincidentally — is what Gurdjieff said his teaching was.

As if all of that weren't enough, we are left with the following quote from the man himself:

"The fourth way is the way of "Haida-yoga."

Commentary on the Diagram

The second of the three essential Truths.

There is no I, there is only Truth. The way to the Truth is through the heart.

This truth describes the Path of the Yogi.

The word "Yogi" indicates any spiritual seeker, not one on a specific path. Despite all the platitudes to the contrary, there is actually only one path, as described by the enneagram. Each path is inevitably no more than a variation of this progression, because nothing can deviate from a requirement to proceed according to the law of octaves.

As al Arabi puts it,

"If things are as we have decided, know that you are an imagination, as is all that you regard as other than yourself an imagination. All [relative] existence is an imagination within an imagination, the only Reality being God, as Self and the Essence, not in respect of His Names."

(From The Wisdom of Light in the Word of Joseph, The Bezels of Wisdom, Ibn' Al Arabi, translation by R.W.J Austin, 1980, Paulist Press)

Readers will undoubtedly note the striking similarities between this passage, Meister Eckhart, and various Buddhist and Yogic doctrines. Al Arabi reached this conclusion through an enlightenment experience, not because of other cultural or philosophical influences.

The second Truth may appear to be about the heart, but it's actually about the mind, which must be correctly prepared in order to approach the work of the heart.

The second essential truth embodies a contradiction which is a direct reflection of the contradiction between transcendence and immanence as described by Ibn al Arabi in The Bezels of Wisdom. The transcendent and the immanent are both part of the Reality; yet they are apparently contradictory. On the right side of the path of the Yogi, the side of incarnation and material development, the transcendent surrenders itself in order to create the immanent. God, in other words, becomes man, but only in the coarsest sense of material man (Gurdjieff's "man," in quotation marks.) This is the side of personality, and represents the descent of God into what we might call Hell, that is, the material world. One

might represent it as such because it is a descending action into the material, a separation of God from God.

So in creating the universe, God actually separates Himself from Himself. This creates the illusion of "I," as iterated in the infinite names of God, and directly manifest in the comprehensive arisings of the material world. (Objects, events, circumstances and conditions.)

The consequences of manifestation in the material create an inexorable set of events.

Desire (Jeanne de Salzmann's nostalgia for Being) arises. From the beginning, it understands that it is separated from the Father. It must engage in conscious labor to acquire the power for Being, that is, what Gurdjieff would have called conscious direction. Without this conscious direction, all of the immense energies unleashed by creation are trapped in a self-reflexive and essentially egoistic universe. Only real Being (Real I, as Gurdjieff referred to it) can provide the direction back towards the Father, the creative principle. And this can only be achieved through purification, wisdom, and, ultimately, intentional suffering, in which what we believe is "I" must be surrendered back to its source.

Adepts who have had a taste of what this is like will know that it is death. But this is not death the way I fear it; it's a quite different kind of thing.

So. There is only Truth. This is what Al Arabi calls the Reality, and I think he does an admirable job of expounding the aspects and virtues of this fact in exhaustive detail.

But why is the way to the Truth "through the heart?"

The note Sol on the enneagram represents both the sun and the heart chakra. In Gurdjieff's system, it constitutes the entry of real (feeling) emotion into the inner work of a man, and it also represents the beginning of an awareness of Christ—that is, help from above—which is sent, paradoxically, not in the form of the hero (who also occupies this particular note) but in the form of suffering. This note is the passageway—the entry—into what we might call the conscious side of the enneagram, the ascending or evolutionary (spiritual) action, as opposed to the descending (carnal) action.

Gurdjieff made it quite clear to Ouspensky and his other pupils that nothing real in terms of work and a man could begin before real emotion entered. If the heart does not open—the ultimate aim of Christian Hesychasm, compassionate Buddhism, Sufic Islam, and Bhakti Yoga—no further progress can be achieved. Once the heart is open—once it can

accept its condition, which is the Christian equivalent of the confession of sin—purification can be undertaken. (The Buddhist emphasis on compassion equally reflects this understanding.)

But a heart that isn't open can't be purified.

The left side of the diagram on the path of the Yogi is the path of the essence. Gurdjieff indicated that personality needed to be strong and healthy in order to feed essence; and indeed, we see this progression in the transition between the two sides of the diagram. His system was a reflection of esoteric understandings shared by Islam, Judaeo-Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

As he advised his students, in the end, there is truly only one Way, and there can be no disagreement on it from a certain level.

So the second essential truth is not just a complicated structural meditation on the nature of the universe and the path of the Yogi; it's a mystery that has to be experienced through the intentional creation, and then the intentional surrender, of the "I." An adept has to undergo a recapitulation of the process of universal creation: they must create a real "I" in themselves, and then, in the face of this action—which al-

ready requires a supreme effort, for which they are poorly equipped—see and agree with their own nothingness.

One must climb the mountain in order to see that there is no mountain.

All of this is, to be sure, rather technical in nature, and probably not of much direct practical value in a personal search to open the heart.

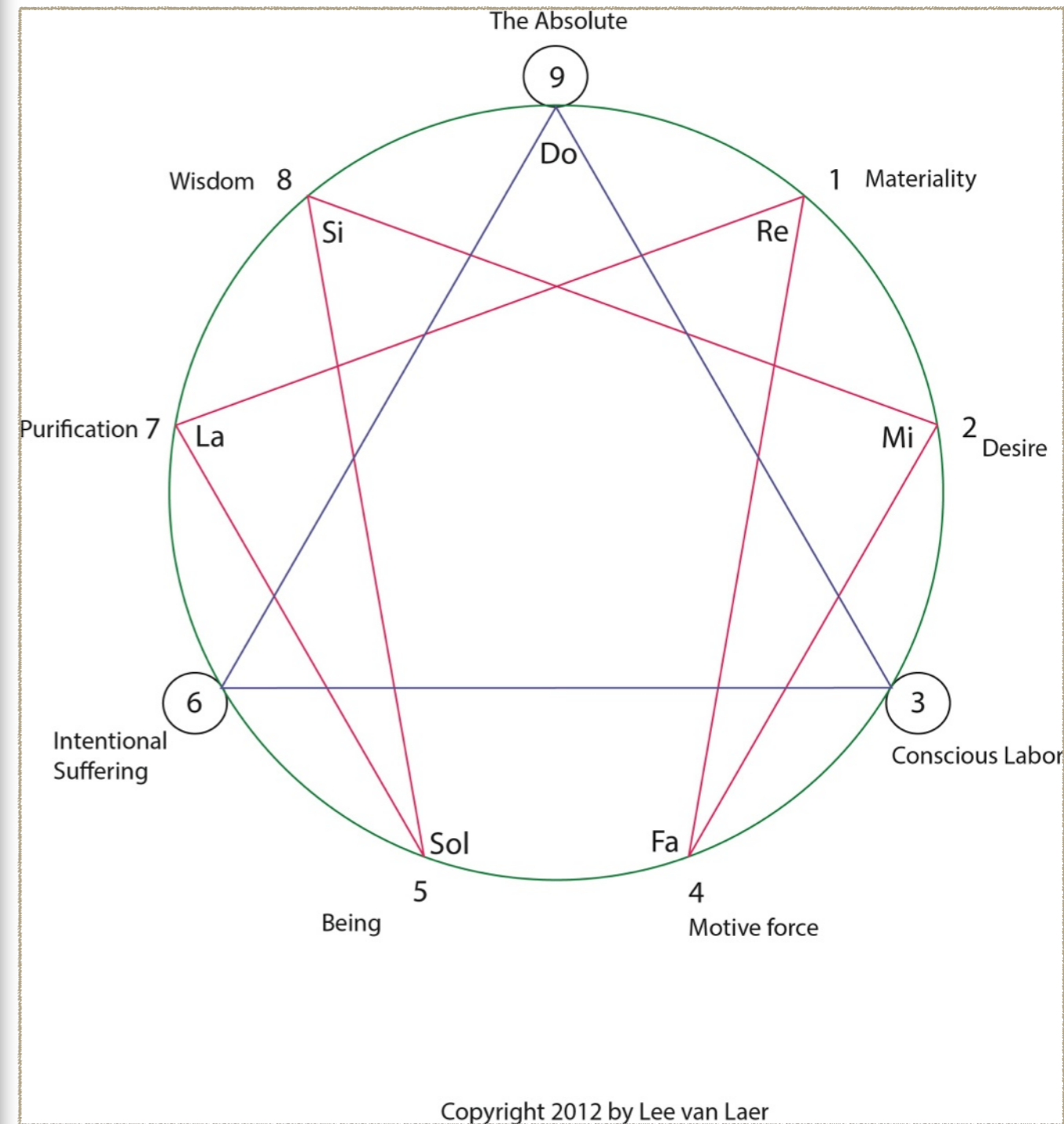
But before one enters a search for wordless contemplation and nameless places within, perhaps it helps a bit to know what one is attempting.

The enneagram is the map of "pre-sand Egypt." One can stumble around without a map if one wants to, but there is an alternative.

Chapter 15

THE OCTAVE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

A sufi diagram, more or less



This particular interpretation of the enneagram applies the basic characteristics, or "meanings" of the yogic chakras, or centers of vibration, to the enneagram. In hierarchical cosmologies, characteristics arise and then develop in an order. This particular version of the enneagram mirrors the development of material reality and the consequent iterations and manifestations in a form that is remarkably consonant with understandings from the Sufi tradition as expounded by Ibn al Arabi. In any event, the logic behind the progression around the circle is inexorable even to the casual viewer. A causal series of events is triggered by the manifestation of the absolute (al Arabi calls it "the Reality," which assigns it a status consonant with the Buddhist's Dharma) that results in a developing series of vibrations, each one at a higher level than the one before it.

Movement through the diagram is not mechanical; it can only take place through motivation and intention. This is because some of the consequences of the manifestation of the absolute in its transition into material reality (the note "re") are antithetical to the absolute itself; that is, the immanent contradicts the transcendent, a subject that al Arabi treats at considerable length throughout his many discourses. The same dilemma is present in most Buddhist philosophy, and covered extensively in the dialectic presented in Zen.

All material, having become manifest, instantly develops what Jeanne de Salzmann referred to as "a nostalgia for be-

ing" — that is, an overwhelming desire to return to its source. This instinctive longing is sabotaged by the allure of material existence, creating a series of obstacles that have to be overcome by a determination (Gurdjieff's and the yogi's "will") characterized above all by the willingness to work (conscious labor) and to suffer in order to purify oneself of the consequences of material existence (intentional suffering.) The fallen state, or state of sin, hypothesized in the yogic concept of karma and the Abrahamic idea of sin, is material reality itself. In a certain sense, by dint of material existence, sin is instantly manifest.

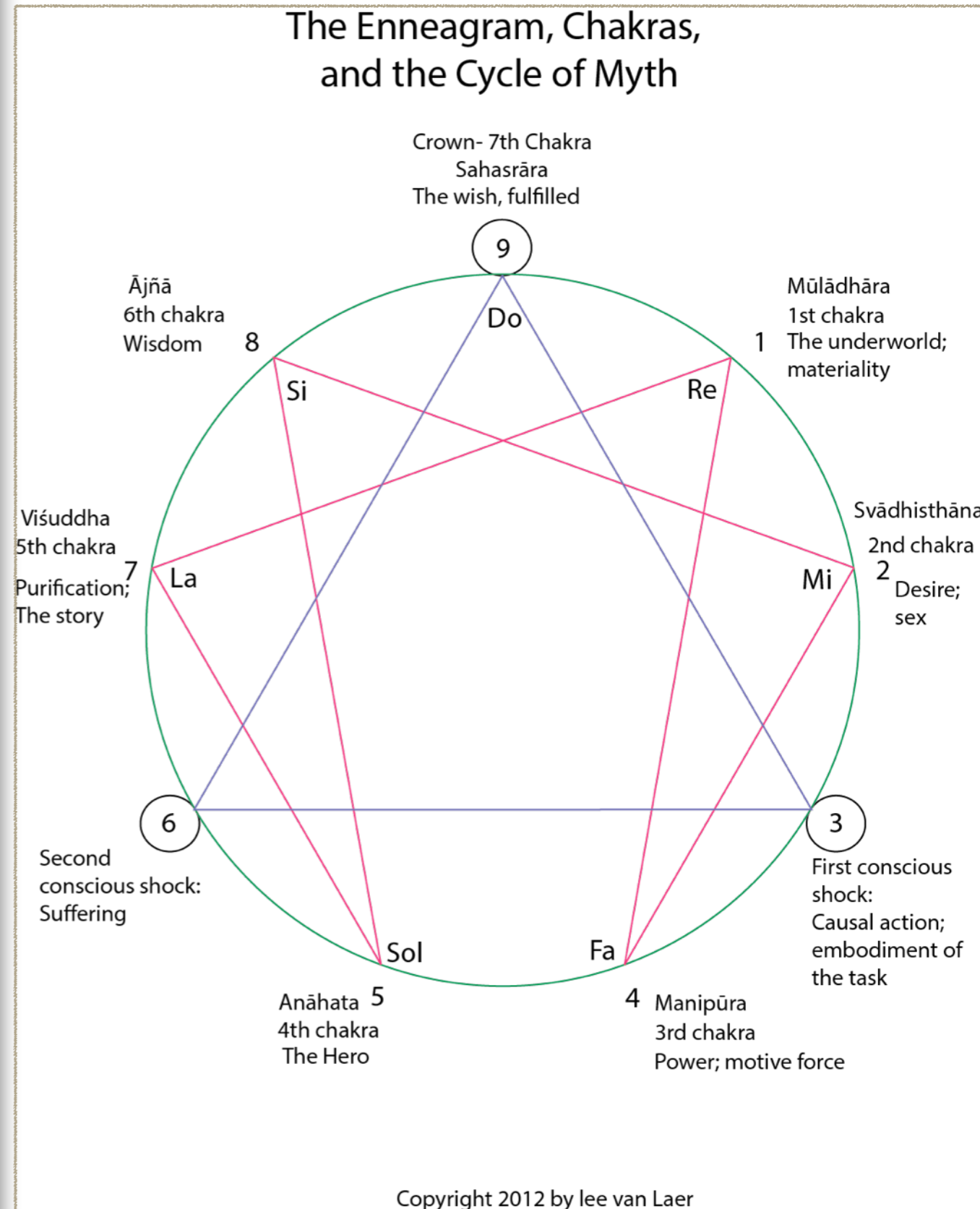
Astute readers will probably sense a connection here between Gurdjieff's choot-bog-litanical period, after which higher being bodies lost the possibility of blending directly with the Most Holy Sun Absolute.

The detailed function of the diagram needs to be compared to Gurdjieff's explanation in the chapter the holy planet Purgatory, in particular, pages 689 — 691. He referred to the action of the first shock, or stopinder, as the "mechano-coinciding mdnelin." A quick visual reference to Ouspensky's enneagram will reveal that the first shock takes place on what is called the mechanical side of the diagram, where mechanical and material forces predominate. Under these conditions, freedom from mechanical conditions must be sought in order to move to the second side of the diagram — and this, indeed, is exactly what Gurdjieff taught his pupils.

Chapter 16

THE ENNEAGRAM AND THE CYCLE OF MYTH

This is pretty cool. Really.



It occurred to me this morning that the enneagram beautifully embodies the progress of every Hero Myth, if we examine the relationship between the chakras and the diagram.

The first subordinate note in the diagram (first as opposed to the supreme note Do) Re, represents the underworld, earth, or materiality. This embodies the significance of the root chakra. It represents the world of manifested reality, what Ibn al Arabi called the immanent—as opposed to the transcendent, Do, which is the origin of all material reality.

There is actually a close relationship between the transcendent and the imminent at this point, which is why the God Brahma, God the Father, is associated with this chakra. (see "Kundalini," Ajit Mookerjee, P. 39.)

The second note Mi represents desire. It is, appropriately, the sex chakra. The encounter of material reality with itself gives rise to desire, represented in the Hindu tradition by Vishnu, the all pervading essence of all beings. In a certain sense, it indicates that the manifestation of material reality inevitably gives birth to desire. The ultimate root of the desire, which springs from the existence of awareness itself, is to return to its source, but entrapped within material reality, there appears to be no way to do that. Desire alone certainly can't do anything. It must raise itself to a higher level, one with force, in order to accomplish its aim. If it fails to do that, it is trapped in an internal and destructive cycle of materiality

and sex, or, at best, materiality, sex, and force. This triad is represented by the right side of the diagram.

The third note, Fa, represents the solar plexus chakra, source of fire, force, or power. (The Chinese call this region the Dantian—energy field.) Material reality, having given birth to desire, engenders the forces necessary for action. The shock between the two notes represents an obstacle that must be overcome, a task that requires conscious labor. In myth, to succeed, every Hero must fully engage in the two tasks Gurdjieff proposes: conscious labor and intentional suffering.

The fourth note, Sol, embraces the heart chakra, and manifests the hero. Material reality (represented by the right side of the diagram) embodies the conditions that produced the hero, whose action alone can move the story forward to produce a resolution. The God associated with this chakra is Vayu, representing breath, or life force. Only the hero can breathe life into this situation. He represents an emotional quality, the action of emotion itself.

The fifth note, La, represents the evolution of the story, the myth itself, which can take place as the circulation engenders a steadily expanding field of action for the myth. The Hero's progress (the story) serves as a rite of purification, exactly as the Vishuddha (throat) chakra is said to represent. Intrigu-

ingly, it also represents the spoken word, an essential part of every hero myth.

The 6th note, Si, represents the third eye, Ajna, or spiritual wisdom. The story—the progression around the cycle—must lead the hero to wisdom, spiritual attainment, and order to accomplish the task, overcome the first obstacle (shock) through his labors, and eventually meet the second obstacle—the final step between him and the return to the absolute (the “happy ending) through intentional suffering.

The progression around the enneagram in and of itself is straightforward. But it's the relationships within the law of seven (the six notes delineated by the red lines in the above diagram) that are interesting to me today.

In the initial state, material reality (1) interacts with force (4) which creates desire (2). Desire (2) needs insight, or wisdom, in order to avoid becoming destructive, and it thus connects with wisdom (8), a much higher level of vibration, seeking help. Compare this to the Sufi interpretation of the same subject in Ibn' al Arabi's work, as recounted by William Chittick in *The Sufi Path to Knowledge*:

"It is clear that a certain hierarchy exists among the names. For example, God does not do something (power) without wanting to (desire). He cannot desire to do something with-

out discerning its situation (knowledge). And he cannot have knowledge without existing in the first place (life). (*The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, State University of New York press, 1989, p. 23)

Because wisdom is so much higher in the order of vibration than desire, it can only send help in the form of a hero (5) to move the process forward from the initial triad (1, 4, 2, or, material reality, force, and desire.) The hero represents the heart. And the heart must be purified (passing through 7) in order to attain wisdom.

The Hero has to engage in action (7) which affects material reality (1) in order to move the process forward.

The left side of the diagram represents heart, purity, and wisdom—the three qualities which are needed in order to elevate the progression back to its original source.

In other words, the numerical progression 142857 recapitulates the myth of the hero; and the enneagram powerfully reconfigures it, reflecting universal cosmological actions that take place in the Law of Octaves. Gurdjieff referred it to as the Law of Octaves because every octave is a refractory entity under these same "alchemical" principles, and follows the same general line of development.

The five variant iterations found in Gurdjieff's multiplications convey additional, evolving information about relationships as they develop on the path. So the multiplications are not just a numerical series, they are a metamorphic language, a form that embodies an ancient form of storytelling.

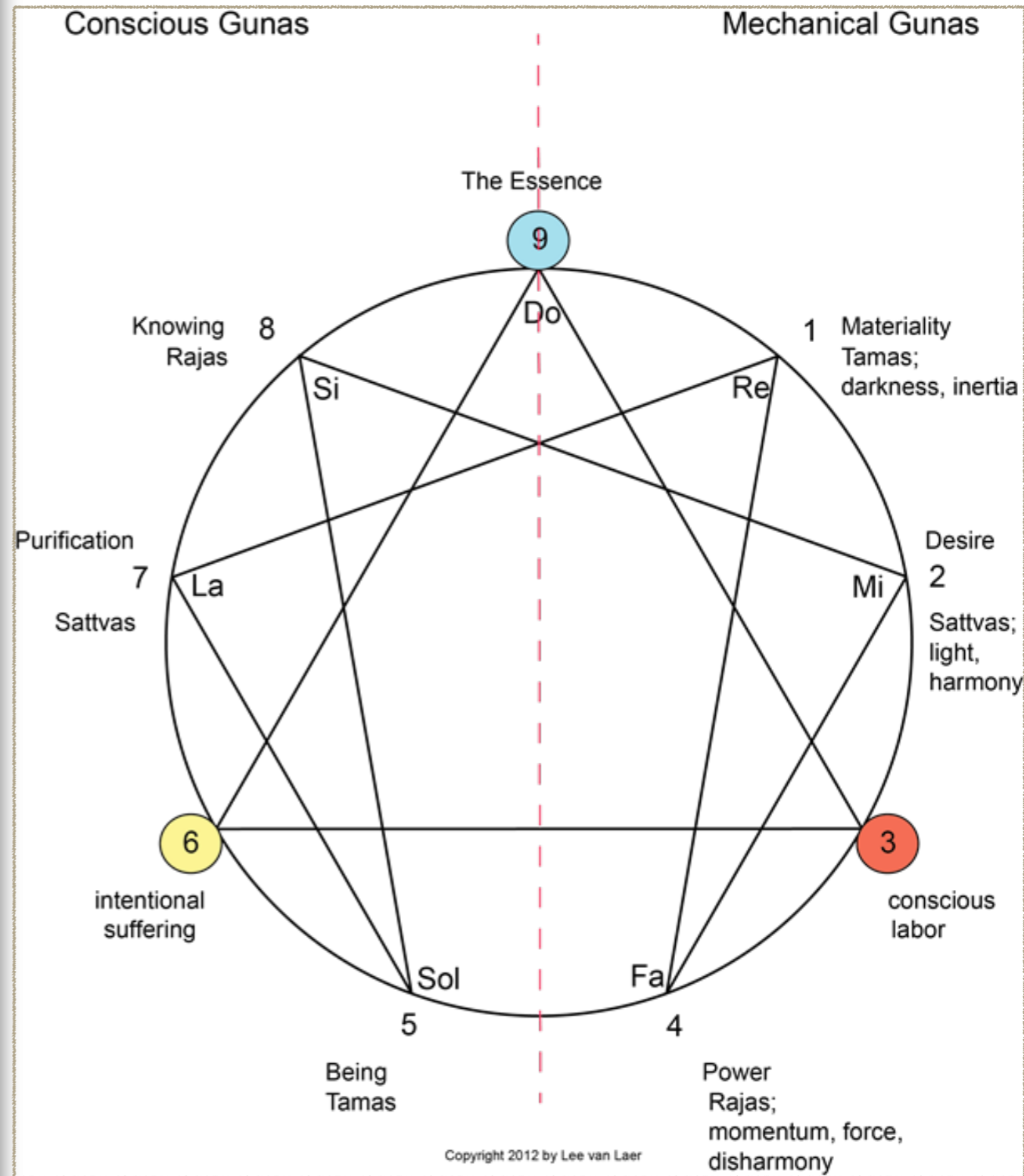
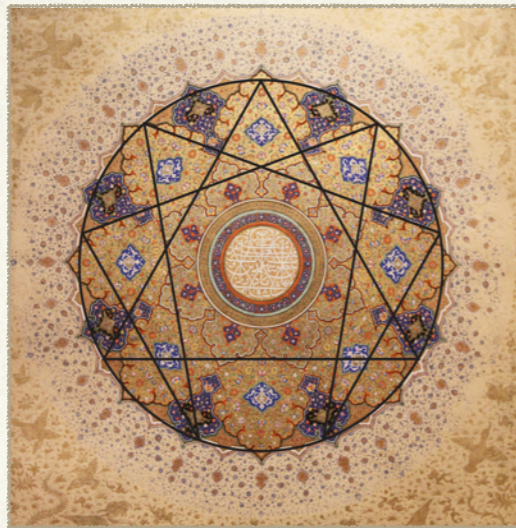
The heroic myth follows the progressive development of the chakras; the stories are orderly because they reflect the law of octaves, the process that informs the cosmos. In this version, the hero myth is not a tale with a beginning, a middle, and an end; it's a tapestry that reciprocally informs and reinforces itself.

This heroic path is in its essence identical to the Path of the Yogi... and, indeed, [Paramhansa Yogananda](#) advised us all to become the heroes of our own personal path.

Chapter 17

THE VEDIC GUNAS AND THE ENNEAGRAM

More connections between Indian concepts and the enneagram.



The Vedic Gunas, the Universal Principles, and the Enneagram

A close reading of the enneagram in conjunction with an understanding of the universal principles and the Vedic concepts of the Gunas reveals close connections between the three, and illustrates some important facts about the development of force in the cosmos.

Note that the word Guna means piece of thread. These threads, or forces, are what create the fabric of reality on the loom of Tantra. Taken together, these forces form what one might call a miniature "law of three," or triad, of interacting principles. Placed in their appropriate locations on the enneagram, they illustrate a mirrored system of mechanical and conscious forces, each one of which represents what one might call a two-dimensional piece of fabric — that is, a flat world related to its self horizontally, but in a certain sense unaware — and unable to be aware — of a three-dimensional world. The Gunas, in other words, represent a kind of trap; without an outside (higher) force to render dimension for them, they become an exitless circle.

Gunas represent the three primary constituents of what the Vedic schools call prakriti, or nature — in essence, manifested material reality. These stand in contrast to the principle of Being, or Self, which is referred to as Purusha. The en-

neagram represents, in abstract form, the journey of Self through the material realm— around the circumference of the diagram—in an effort to complete Being. Only by help from the Essence of the Self (emanating from God Himself) which is represented by the triangle can this journey be completed.

The first Guna, *tamas*, represents darkness, or the principle of inertia and delusion. It represents the note *re* on the enneagram, the first consequent incarnation of God as material. Materiality is composed of light; all material existence is energy folded inward upon itself in an enormous containment of force. This containment of light energy (which can be released in nuclear fission, or compressed in nuclear fusion) results in a material reality that reflects and rejects much of the light that it encounters. In an allegorical sense, material reality exists in darkness and inertia. In and of itself, it has no motive force: no impulse, and no momentum.

The second Guna corresponds to *Sattvas*, the psychic entity forming the core of personality, light, and harmony. This is represented by the note *mi* on the diagram, corresponding to desire in the yogic system of universal principles. The darkness of materiality is opposed by the light of desire, whose essential and instinctive wish is to return to its source.

The third Guna corresponds to Rajas, the principle of movement, activity, and disharmony. This is represented by power, the note fa, on the enneagram.

On the enneagram, arranging the three forces in this position exactly reflects the vortex in which the Self, or Being, becomes enmeshed, trapped and unable to move onwards from a world where the material manifestation of ego predominates, into a realm where the spiritual manifestation of ego is born and can begin to realize its possibilities. Sri Anirvan (see below) details this process in an exceptional manner on pages 106-109 of Inner Yoga; the passage should be taken as a whole, and is far too long to reproduce here without violating the applicable copyrights. Readers are urged to read the book and refer to it.

Ultimately, the interaction of the three Gunas on this level presents a "magic circle" which cannot be escaped from without the intervention of an outside (conscious) higher agency. The intervention, in this case, comes from what Gurdjieff called conscious labor — a property which, appropriately enough, has a physical attribute (as opposed to intellectual or emotional) indicating its connection to the very material actions of this level. Material forces, in other words, require material remedies.

What is of interest here is to see that the Gunas do not just drop away as the aspirant's Self (Purusha) acquires Being at the note sol, beginning its "ascending" progression from the bottom of the diagram upwards and to the left, back towards the absolute. The Gunas have an action in the spiritual realm as well as the material realm, and directly correspond as laid out on the diagram above:

Tamas correspond, in this case, to Being. Even Gurdjieff's conscious egoism, once manifested, is still a form of egoism, and separated from God, thus, still a material (not transcendent) entity which is not returned to its source and remains fundamentally separated. This is still darkness, albeit a new and higher form of darkness. We might call it conscious darkness; it is a darkness which has become self aware of its own lack, a property that is not extant on the right side of the diagram. Being imbued with conscious awareness of one's lack does not by default mean one has the remedy for it. The invocation of higher, that is, truly conscious, forces emanating from the essence are still necessary in order to complete the action in this new triad.

Sattvas correspond to the note la, representing purification. Purification indicates a higher level of desire; specifically, a willingness to sacrifice. Purification represents a path to harmony.

Rajas on this side correspond to the note si, in this case, knowledge or wisdom. It may seem odd to have this highest principle associated with dissonance, but it is so because all of the knowledge and wisdom a human being acquires will forever stand in opposition to the transcendent knowledge of God. The esoteric meaning of this is that even if a man develops to the highest level, everything he has acquired falls short of what is actually necessary. Gurdjieff indicated this issue in the chapter the holy planet Purgatory in his magnum opus, *Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson*; and the abandonment of the intellect has had its worldwide esoteric advocates from Meister Eckhart through Ibn 'Arabi and Dogen, simply because there is no way, in the end, for intellect to master God.

Even a conscious being, in other words, is subject to a new set of the same actions of the Gunas which ensnare those operating on the mechanical or material level of life. The spiritual path, in other words, carries the same set of obstacles and pitfalls that the material life does, just written in larger letters, on a new billboard. Aspirants and adapts alike continually mistake the beginning of the spiritual path for a license to be free of such influences, when in fact they are ubiquitous.

In the end, only death — whether spiritual or physical — can truly free us from the action of the Gunas.

note to the reader:

Significant credit should be given to [Sri Anirvan](#), Inner Yoga, available from Morning Light Press, for his lucid and viable explanation of these subjects in his essay *Buddhi and Buddhiyoga*.

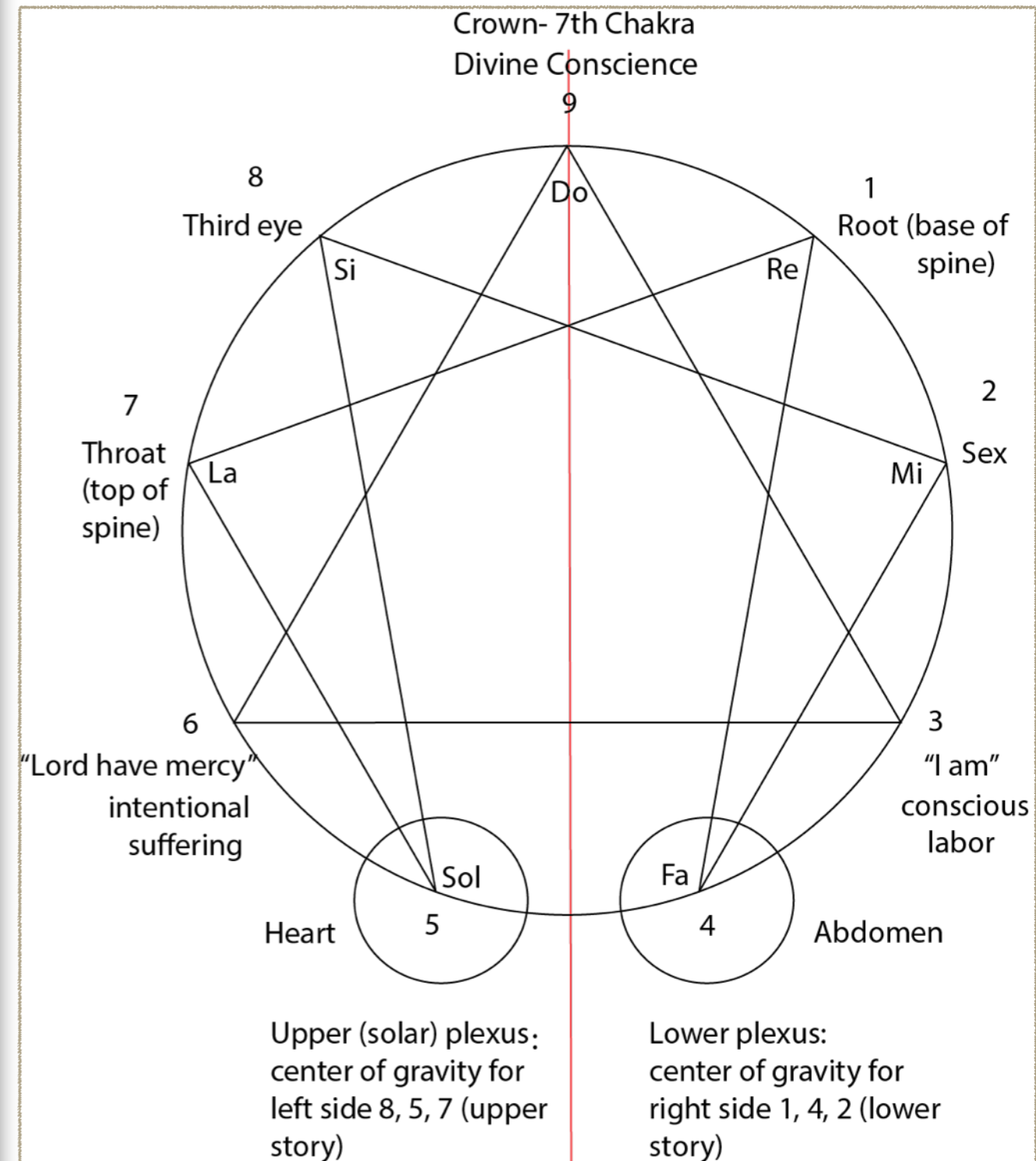
morning light press

Readers interested in a detailed treatment of these questions should refer to pages 99 through 112 (and onwards) if they wish to acquire a deeper understanding of the principles expounded in the enneagram. Although the essay is not about the diagram per se, all of the essential features of the information and coded in it and its message are discussed at considerable length in his treatise.

Chapter 18

CENTERS OF GRAVITY AND PRAYER

Investigating the connections between prayers and the enneagram proves to be a fascinating exercise.



One of the unanswered questions about the Enneagram diagram which Gurdjieff brought to the West in the early 20th century was the reason the second conscious shock, which ought to be located between 8 and 9, or “si” and “do,” is instead found between 5 and 7.

At the time he introduced the diagram and discussed the shocks, Gurdjieff explained that the incorrect location was an indicator of the type of work that was needed to provide the shock.

In order to explain this in more detail, we will need to take a look at the diagram in several new contexts.

When divided by a line down the middle, the two sides of the Enneagram symmetrically represent the upper and lower stories of man's chakras, or energy centers. (See diagram.) The right side of the diagram represents the lower story, and the left side of the diagram represents the upper story. They are two triads, or separate systems, joined together into one harmonious whole within the context of the entire diagram. There is a fundamental difference between the two, because the upper story represents a different level of working than the lower story. One could approximate a rather crude summary by saying that the right side relates to the corporeal centers, and the right to the astral centers.

It's worth noting that the Star of David, an incomplete version of the Enneagram, clearly conveys the existence of the triads, although in an almost uselessly simplified version. It does however preserve some of the understanding by inverting one of the two triangles, indicating its involutory nature (see below.)

In addition, the position of Christ on the right hand of God the Father assigns His Presence to the LEFT side of the Enneagram--if we understand the view to be from the perspective of the diagram itself, not our own-- for reasons which may eventually become clear.

Centers of Gravity

Jeanne De Salzman and others have often referred to the “center of gravity” in man as though there were only a single center of gravity. This isn't exactly the case, however.

The dominant center of gravity for the lower story is found in position 4, which represents the lower portion of the central nervous system plexus, located in the center of lower part of the torso. Physically speaking, this lower portion of the plexus is located in the abdomen, below the navel.

The center of gravity for the upper story is found in position 5, and is commonly referred to as the solar plexus. This location corresponds to the center of the spine, and occupies the heart position in the Chakra system.

Esoteric systems from the East including Zen, Tai Chi, Qigong, and some yoga practices all strongly emphasize the center of gravity for the body and all the other centers as the lower portion of the nervous system complexes, located in the abdomen.

What is not elaborated by these practices is that although this is a location that does confer great power if developed fully, it only represents half of the question. Because of its specific nature it's no surprise we see its long-time association with both martial arts and magical or healing powers, especially in Taosim, Tai Chi and Qigong. We might surmise that Dogen's outright contempt for such homegrown practices—many of which now appear to be slowly assimilating into mainstream Buddhism and other esoteric practices—stemmed solely from his superior understanding of their exact nature.

I'll probably upset the aficionados by saying this, but in reality, work to develop and contain the energy in the lower portion of the torso, that is, the abdomen, remains at best an incomplete understanding of the entire energy system.

The Enneagram specifically reveals this simply through its visual impression: we can easily see how both 4 (abdomen) and 5 (heart) anchor the triads 1, 4, 2 and 8, 5, 7 on either side of the diagram. As is always the case, the information implicit in the Enneagram is unmistakable, once one sees it.

Work on the lower story is accomplished through what Gurdjieff referred to as the first conscious shock. This shock, coming at position 3, is represented by what is called “conscious labor.” Because this is a physical work as much as anything, and because it involves the acquisition of power (which, readers will recall, Gurdjieff told Ouspensky was in fact the aim of the Fakir), it is a discipline that relates more or less directly to the practice of Hatha Yoga. Logically enough, this physical yoga—including its influence on both the triad it belongs to and the diagram in its entirety—is the first stage of work for man.

Work on the higher story—that is, the left side of the diagram—, as Gurdjieff taught it, is accomplished through the second conscious shock, associated with what he called intentional suffering.

Earlier work on this material has verified that the opening of the emotional center is ultimately essential to inner effort. The reason that the second conscious shock is placed next to the heart is specifically to indicate that what is necessary for the second stage of work is the opening of the heart.

Paradoxically, this must take place long before the energy that is required for the passage from 8 to 9, or “si” to “do,” arrives. The opening of the heart establishes the center of gravity for the work of intentional suffering and the completion of the left side of the diagram. We see here a visual illustration of the mysterious parable, “To he who has shall much be given,” embedded within the enneagram’s geometry itself.

Readers might find it interesting to ponder the essential nature of the first shock, which is egoistic and involutory, and the second, which is compassionate and evolutionary. These two characters neatly incorporate other understandings in the Gurdjieff system which are beyond the scope of this essay.

Djana and Bhakti Yoga

It is arguably self evident that Gurdjieff began his work with a strong intellectual influence: the influence of the Yogi, or, as it is generally known, Djana Yoga. He himself explained to his protégés that a man who completed this work would know what was necessary to complete the work of both Bhakti and Hatha Yoga, that is, the Way of the Monk and the Way of the Fakir. Esotericists can reasonably assume that by the time he encountered Ouspensky, Gurdjieff had already fully completed the Way of the Yogi. In addition to the formidable and even daunting potpourri of theoretical information he imparted, he certainly began teaching his students many Hatha Yoga techniques, although largely in secret.

Nonetheless, as his work progressed, it became increasingly compassionate and emotional, while aggressively de-emphasizing some of the other practical work (especially intellectual theory) and it is quite clear (to this author, at least) that he ultimately understood that, in the end, no matter how much intelligence you have, it is fundamentally impossible to complete the work depicted in the Enneagram without the full participation of the emotional center.

In other words, the final step on Gurdjieff's path was the path of Love.

We can thus say, with some degree of certainty, that the man did indeed embody a fully realized incarnation that blended all three paths, as he said was necessary. The culmination of his path was, however, firmly grounded in Love. Hence the unusually strong affinity between the Gurdjieff Work, Christianity, and Sufism.

Harmonious Development

The Enneagram does not represent a static system offering a linear progression of development up through a series of numbers from 1 to 9. In this system, all of the notes already exist: that is to say, as is physically true within man, all of the energy centers are already there, and in constant motion. What is left to man is to connect them, or form right relationships with them.

Thus, the idea that one should concentrate on any one part of the diagram at the exclusion of others is a mistaken one. This is where works such as Hatha Yoga, Zen, Qingong and Tai Chi, may stumble, if stumble they do, because they all

presume the concentration of power in the abdomen as the aim of work.

The Enneagram clearly shows why there is much more to the question of development. All the notes need to be worked on at once. This is a subtle practice that does not admit to aggressive manipulation or specific techniques that concentrate on one or another point. It is a gentle, long-term process. All of the other techniques can produce remarkable results, but all of them will inevitably tend to be lopsided.

Only Gurdjieff understood the inner energy system in enough detail to present a work that was fully balanced; only the Enneagram provides a simple tool for understanding the relationships properly.

The Two Prayers

There are only two principal prayers found in the Gurdjieff work. This may seem odd in what is so clearly a religious practice, despite any protestations to the contrary. We needn't feel this is so unusual, however; the early [Hesychasts](#) and the writers of the [Philokalia](#) managed to reduce their practice to a single prayer, the "Lord have Mercy" prayer alone, which was deemed fully sufficient to achieve salvation.

One could argue that point; however, what is certain is that Gurdjieff reduced the essential prayers in his system to the only two he considered as absolutely necessary, according to the science of the Enneagram.

This is because each prayer is specifically related to one side of the Enneagram.

I am—I wish to be

This prayer is the Abrahamic prayer, that is, the Old Testament prayer for being that founded the work leading to Christianity. It derives from the statement that the Lord made to Moses when he encountered the Lord in the form of a burning bush: “I am that I am.”

This prayer is specifically related to the first conscious shock, conscious labor, which is a work of essential affirmation and conscious labor. This particular work relates to the energy on the right side of the body (in yoga, the “right channel,” or “golden thread,” running down from the right temple through the bottom of the foot) —an energy which, esoterically speaking, is directly related to the work of the individual and their own personal effort. This work might be contextualized as an effort to show oneself as worthy through preparation, although there are many other dimensions to it.

Lord have Mercy

This prayer is the Christian prayer, i.e., the New Testament prayer that represents the “new covenant” of Love brought by Christ. It is furthermore—unmistakably—the Prayer of the Heart as practiced by the Early Church Fathers of the Philokalia. It belongs to the second conscious shock, and the left side of the Enneagram. This work relates to the energy on the left side (yoga: “left channel”) of the body, which is sent from above (the Right Hand of God the Father) as help. The prayer itself represents a call for help, and is in fact the core of the practice of both Christianity and Islam--that is, submission.

Both prayers are necessary in order to foster harmonious development, and stand in complete technical accord with the principles expounded in the science of octaves.

Because each one is specifically associated with a conscious shock, we see that worship, in both the old and New Testament form, is actually an essential--perhaps the most essential-- component of the Gurdjieff system. It is just worship in what one might call an unfamiliar context.

This makes perfect sense, because if we wish to discover a truly effective worship, certainly, it won't be one we're familiar with.

More on the Prayers

Each of the 2 conscious shocks—in the form of prayer—takes on a dual role of both holy affirming and holy denying. This relationship is complex, but important to try and understand.

I am- I wish to be

The first shock, conscious labor, is accompanied by a prayer of affirmation of the self.

This is entirely appropriate, because it takes place on the right side of the enneagram, which is the corporeal, or incarnated, side of the diagram. It corresponds exactly to Gurdjieff's comment that a man must become a conscious egoist in order to work. Embodied in this flesh, a human being's first task is to affirm themselves consciously. This means to take responsibility for one's Being.

This is actually a holy denying action, since one must paradoxically deny the Lord in order to affirm oneself. It's notable

that Gurdjieff's mythological protagonist Beelzebub fell from grace in heaven specifically because he affirmed himself and his own ideas, instead of His Endlessness. We see a direct connection here between Beelzebub's actions and the first conscious shock, as well as an explanation of why he is banished—that is, incarnated—in the solar system.

There is, in other words, a little Beelzebub in all of us.

The energy of the first conscious shock is involutory (See Beelzebub's Tales To His Grandson," pg. 1040-1046) It is a folding inward of the higher towards the self, a gathering of energies. This shock is affirming from the perspective of the self, but denying from the perspective of the Lord. Nonetheless, it is absolutely necessary as part of the process. One might say that one has to leave the Lord in order to come back. The parable of the prodigal son comes to mind.

The understanding also casts a light on the ideas of original sin in Christianity; man begins from a point where holy denying (affirmation of the self, which may be perceived as sinful) is a requirement for his existence and development, not an option. This is consistent with some of Meister Eckhart's views on the nature of sin, as well as brother Lawrence's observation that he put his sins between himself and God, to advise God that he was not worthy, and that God studiously ignored him, and continued to send blessings anyway.

The path is fraught with danger because the path must be fraught with danger. (Job 5:7: Yet man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward.) No one is exempt from negotiating this territory. The difference between the conscious egoist and the unconscious egoist is that the conscious egoist is aware of the danger; the unconscious egoist blithely ignores it.

One important esoteric meaning of the first prayer is to overcome the fear of the self. This particular point of work is extensive, personal, and beyond the scope of this essay. It's worth pointing out, however, that Jeanne De Salzmann often commented that we wish not to be—that we turn away from what we are. This turning away stems from a root fear which must ultimately be confronted in order for what Gurdjieff called “Real I” to appear.

Lord have mercy.

The second conscious shock, intentional suffering, requires a movement into the emotional and spiritual side of the enneagram.

The shock that is required here is the exact opposite of the first shock—this is a holy affirming action—that is, it is a surrender to His Endlessness. In other words, it is the surrender of the ego which was painstakingly and actively affirmed in the

first stage of work, and an affirmation of the Lord. The shock is, of course, a holy denying action in relation to the ego. And this shock consists, above all, of opening the heart—an esoteric process known since time immemorial, and completely embodied in the Eastern orthodox Prayer of the Heart, or the Jesus prayer. (The maze at Chartres physically represents the path to the heart. Its center is located at the exact same distance horizontally from the church door as is the image of Jesus at the center of the West Rose Window, on the facade.)

Ultimately, we are required to surrender everything we have gained in order to complete the process. The evolutionary process of the second shock is a returning outward of everything that was folded inward in the first stage. And, in the same way that organic molecules must without fail be correctly folded in order to do their jobs, what was folded inward in the first stage must be rightly folded, lest what is emitted in the second stage during the unfolding be corrupted.

Why does it work this way? Well, Gurdjieff gave us an oblique answer to that in his conversations with Ouspensky. He pointed out that men already think that they have will, and so make no effort to acquire it.

In the same spirit, it is impossible to surrender your ego to God if you don't have one.

As Gurdjieff explained it, what we think is ego, or "I," is actually just false personality—a construction of the intellectual mind. (See G.I. Gurdjieff's *Views From The Real World*, "Essence and Personality," P. 143; also, P.D. Ouspensky's *In Search Of The Miraculous*, Pgs. 226-227) Hence the work to acquire a real ego, in order to have something to give up or offer, makes perfect sense.

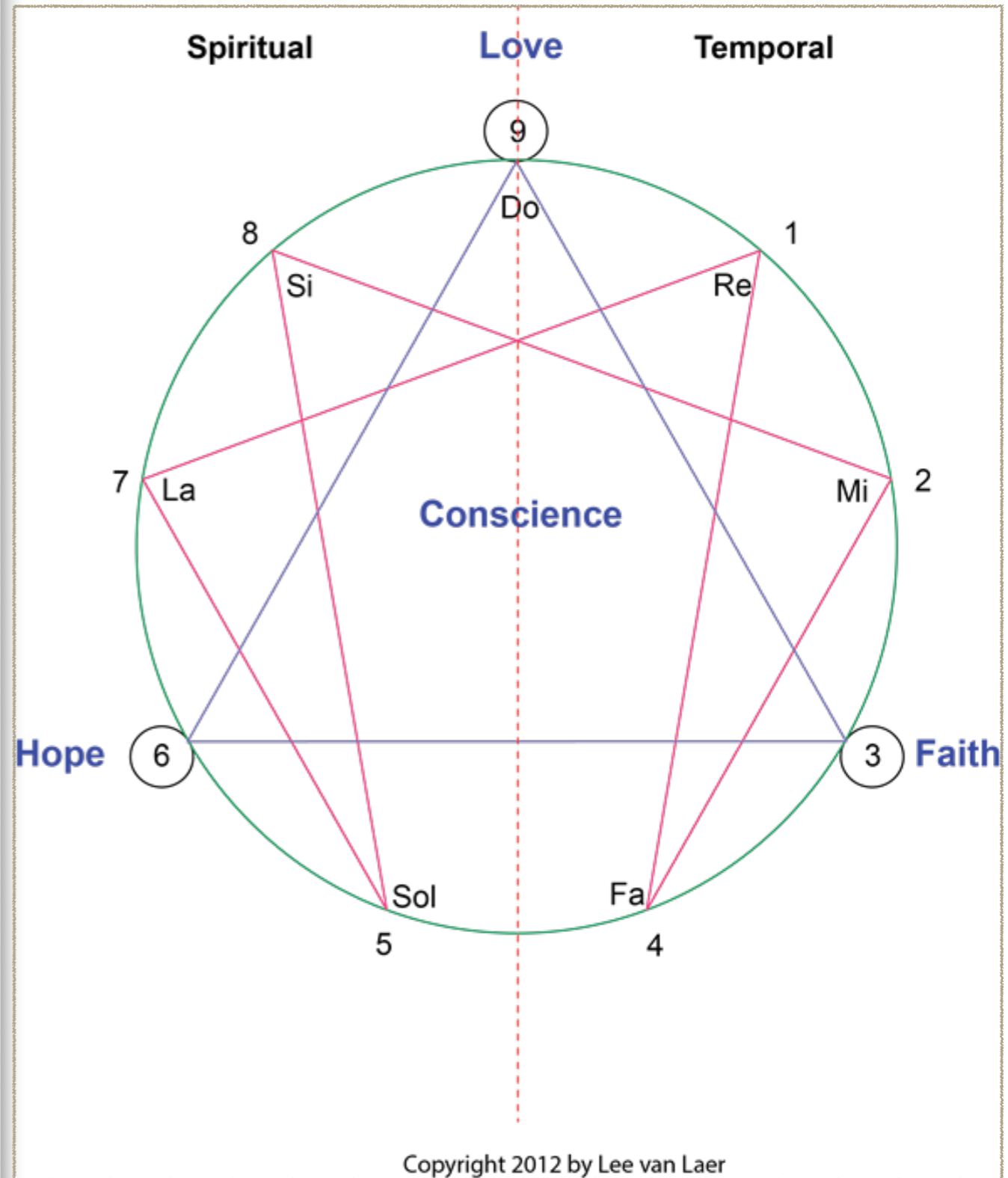
The shocks are not one-dimensional. Each shock actually embodies both a yes and a no- the two shocks manifest an internal friction that maintains a dynamic action. The beauty of understanding the system from this perspective is that the reconciling factor always remains "do," regardless of which role the shocks play, and which perspective they are viewed from.

The action of the Lord is always necessary in order to reconcile our contradictions.

Chapter 19

FAITH, HOPE, LOVE, AND CONSCIENCE

Examining the place of conscience in Gurdjieff's work



Why is conscience, in Gurdjieff's system, such an important property?

In order to understand this question, we have to go back to his magnum opus, *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, and review what was said by the very saintly Ashiata Shiemash in the chapter "The Terror of the Situation."

Take clear note of the fact that the being-functions Faith, Hope, and Love, are all sacred being impulses, that is, these impulses or properties do not belong to the routine rotation of the law of seven in the enneagram, i.e., the ordinary quality of life. The only place that we can locate these three properties in the diagram is within the law of three: and indeed, they belong there.

These three sacred ways had always been used by previous Sacred Individuals as a means for correcting the deficiencies in man's consciousness, because each one of them provides a shock within the circumstances of life. Logically enough, Love is the greatest of these paths, as Paul pointed out in [1 Corinthians 13](#), and hence we find it located at the apex of the triangle representing the law of three, as it should be.

Nonetheless, it was the inescapable conclusion of Ashiata Shiemash that each of these sacred properties had deteriorated so much in man that none of them were any longer

able to act in a sacred manner. In essence, the connection to them in man had been broken — their rate of vibration no longer provided a shock. They had descended, as the chapter so eloquently explains, to the coarse level of ordinary being, which enthusiastically apes their action, but can never correctly express it.

The three of them together, however, form a whole—as is inevitable, according to the laws of emergence and the law of three itself.

And that whole is Conscience.

Deeply linked to essence, this particular property is the emergent property of the interaction of Faith, Hope, and Love which produces a fourth, whole, new entity. [See the chapter "From the Author," pages 1089 — 1091](#) for Gurdjieff's discourse on the lawful interaction of three such properties in man to produce a fourth.

We know we are very close to the bone here, because Ashiata Shiemash himself referred to it as "that being impulse on which, in general, the whole psyche of beings of a three brain system is based." It is, in other words, closely related, or coincident, to essence—which, as previous essays have demonstrated, is much closer to vibrations from higher levels than personality, and whose properties belong to the law of three,

rather than the law of seven. The relationship between essence and conscience cannot be understated, as understanding Gurdjieff's premises about the repair of man's psyche greatly depends on it.

Conscience represents a unifying factor in man's psyche; its essential nature as the product of the three higher sacred impulses of Faith, Love, and Hope, actually gives it a primacy of place over them, because it represents a superior opportunity to any one of them, taken alone. As such — we might say, as luck would have it — this is the one part of man's psyche that was not permanently damaged. It is buried in our subconscious Being; located, in other words, in the same place as our essence, which is also buried. Both of these entities bear a strong allegorical relationship to Gurdjieff's numerous comments about a "map of pre-sand Egypt" and the sinking of the continent of Atlantis. The idea of ancient philosophical schools (and Christianity) that man has an "essential good" buried in him stems from a longstanding and probably even lawful intuition of this relationship.

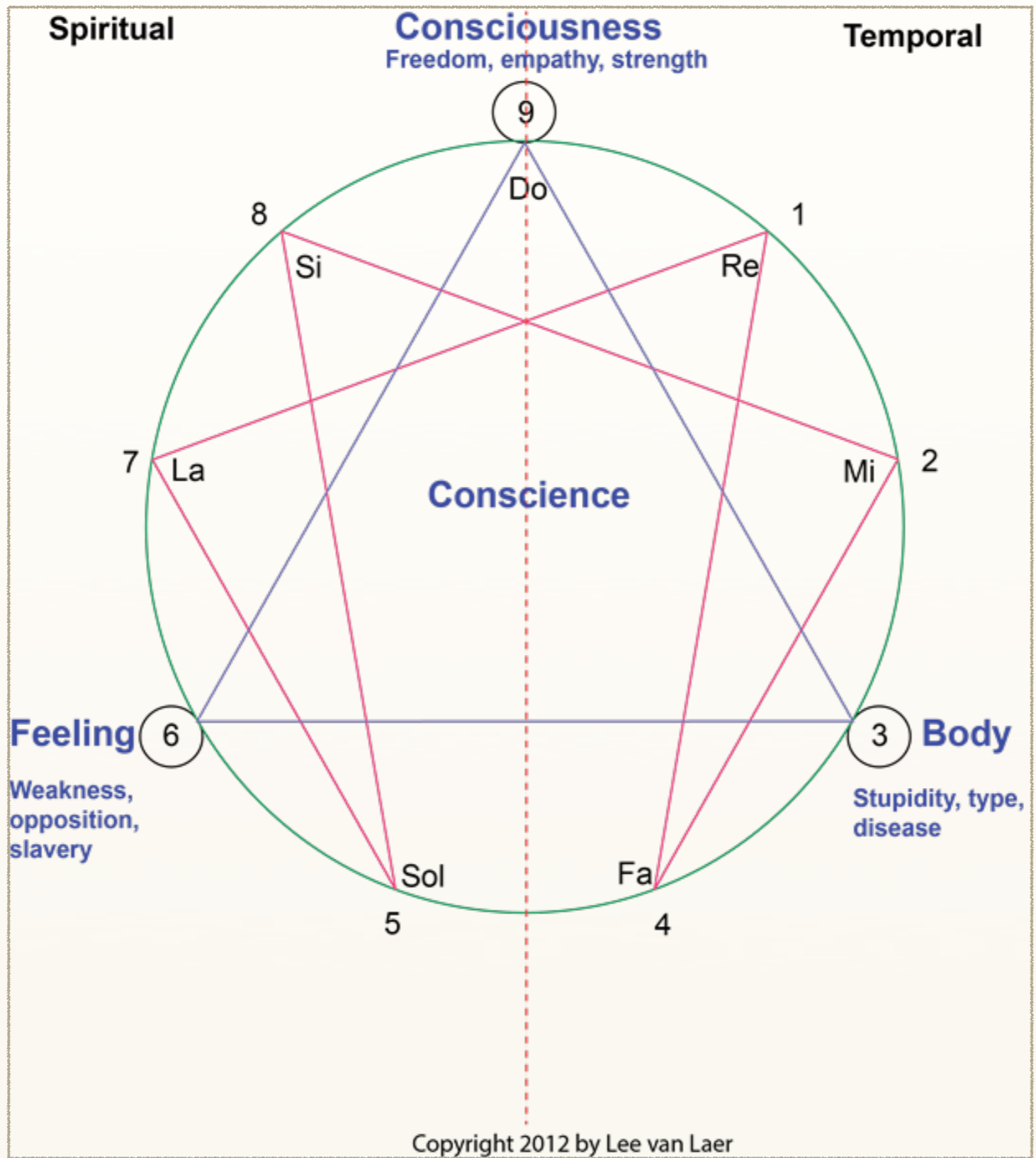
The point is that there is something ancient and valuable buried within our Being. The representation in the diagram at the above link visually locates conscience as a concealed entity in the center of the triangle created by the law of three; thus, an esoteric part of our Being. It is intact, or untouched, by outer life; and because it begins and ends that way, being a product of the three sacred impulses (which unfortunately do

have to touch outer life) it escaped the degradation they were ultimately exposed to. It is to man's good fortune that Conscience was doubly insulated: both a higher property, and one not in direct contact with ordinary life.

Ashiata Shiemash maintained that the function of sacred Conscience had the possibility of passing into the functioning of man's ordinary consciousness. This is a very high work; Conscience can provide the unifying factor which is parenthetically indicated in the passage on [Faith, Hope, and Love](#).

This particular passage indicates the action of the law of three, in which consciousness occupies "do," or the apex of the triangle, in each case. In other words, Faith, Love, and Hope cannot act sufficiently in man if they are attached to his outer circumstances, and both feeling and the body operate within the context of outer circumstances. Only in their highest expression can they help us.

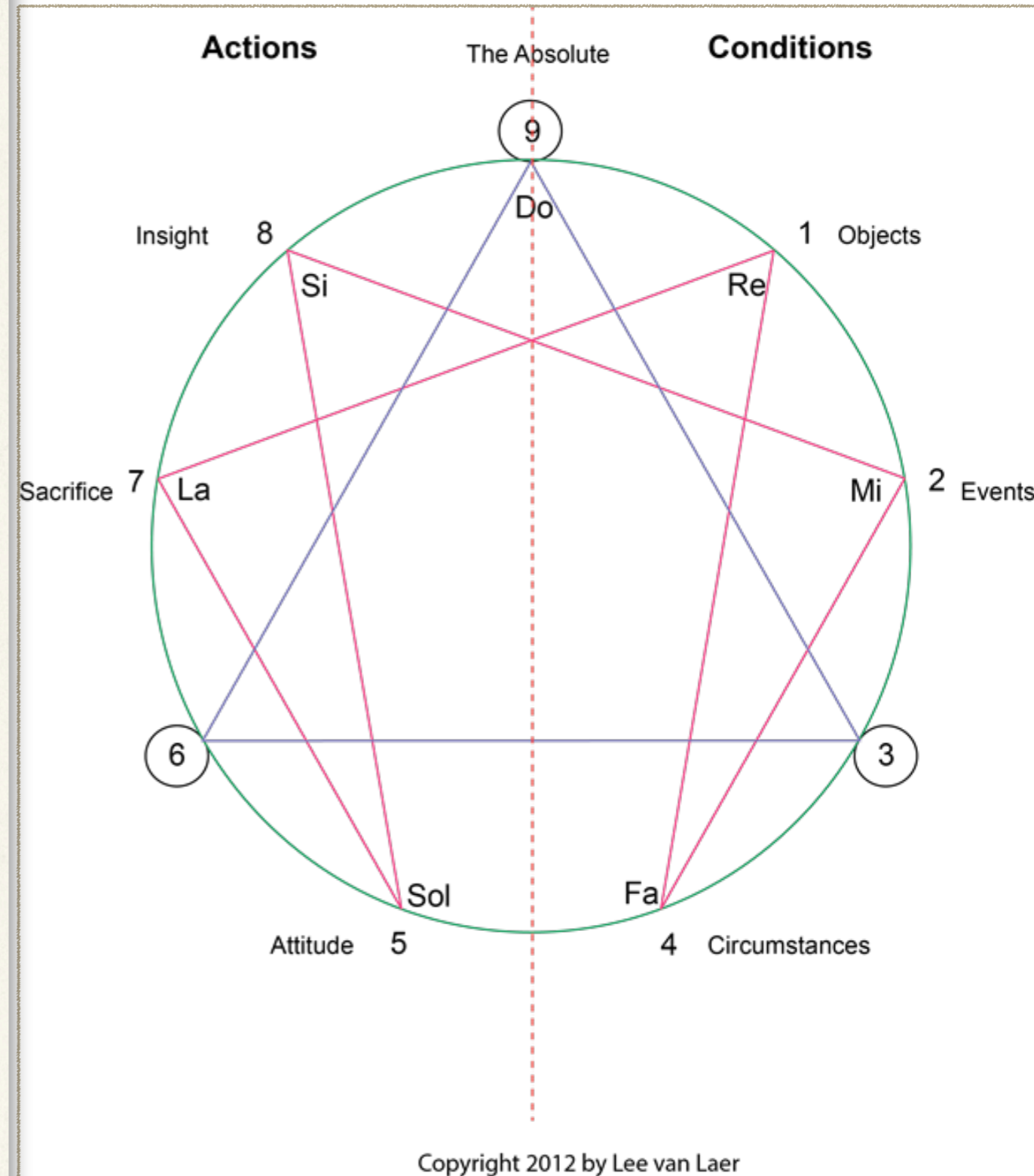
Of course, this theoretical discussion of the nature and action of conscience hardly begins to touch on exactly what conscience is or does. It's the action of conscience in a man that matters; and this is a higher principle which it does one little or no good to read about.



Chapter 20

OBJECTS, EVENTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

What happens



I use the phrase objects, events, circumstances, and conditions so frequently that I thought a little explanation might be in order.

I'm going to use the enneagram to examine this question. Click on the link for the related diagram.

First of all, I should make it clear that the enneagram describes a lawful set of conditions that always applies in one way or another to every situation. The nature of the development of the law of octaves, and the individual notes, doesn't change. These are the Conditions (capital "C"): there is a progression in increase of the rate of vibration, and it moves through a distinctive hierarchy of principles, which have been described in numerous earlier essays. The principles are embedded in mythology, found in the yogic chakras, and recounted in Islamic theories of the development of the material world. The commonality between the systems arises from the fact that the enneagram is the underlying structure for all of them. Because it's an objective science, the principles described in the diagram can be applied to almost any situation in order to understand it. And indeed, Gurdjieff made this clear to Ouspensky.

An inadequate understanding of the diagram has rendered contemporary explanations of Gurdjieff's comments obscure; but it need not be this way. There is no doubt that it's possible to understand almost anything if the diagram's basic principles are clear.

The diagram is always divided into two sections, representing two triads: one on the right, one on the left. The right triad (represented by the numbers 142) represents, paradoxically, a descent— even though what is taking place is actually an increase in the rate of vibration, or an evolution of energy. It is a descent only in the sense that it initially moves away from the absolute, its point of origin.

The left side, represented by 857, represents a triad of ascent in the sense that it marks a return towards the origin of the energy within the octave. Roughly speaking, we can say that the right side of the diagram always represents an “earthly” or material quality, and the left side a “heavenly” or spiritual one, although these definitions do undergo intelligible permutations depending on the exact situation.

(I ought to mention here that Gurdjieff's multiplications are all paired triads, each delineating a specific set of relationships. Each set of two triads has its own implications and the two sets taken together require a third factor to reconcile them.)

Understanding objects, events, and circumstances, we see that they take the place of material, desire, and power on the material side. Logically enough, objects interacting with circumstances create events, mirroring the interaction between materiality, power, and desire as seen in the Path of the Yogi.

So taken together, we have objects, events, circumstances, and conditions. (I use the term conditions in two ways in this essay; one, to describe the overall lawful Conditions [upper case] of the law of octaves, and in the second case, conditionally, to describe only the right side of the octave and the material nature of its conditions [lower case]. I know it's a little confusing... sorry.)

The right side of the diagram, its interactions and constraints, basically define everything we can know of ordinary life. One conscious shock applies here; it requires conscious effort. Interestingly enough, we see that the shock plays its role a bit differently than what one might have expected: objects and circumstances cannot be linked to events without the conscious shock; without the shock, there is no path created to insight, or wisdom (8), which might advance things. In a certain sense, the energy “travels backwards” here, the shock creating the conditions that make the passage from 4 to 2 possible. And indeed, that understanding applies over and over again in every version of this diagram, although it is

rarely mentioned. (It has been by some few, including, as I somewhat dimly recall (it was a long time ago) by Nicoll.) There are a number of things indicated by this apparently strange property of "energy reversal," but I don't have time to go over them in this essay.

Men are generally locked into a trap between objects and circumstances, because of the inability to apply the shock in this place. So people get "stuck" in material reality: Objects, events, and circumstances keep interacting over and over again, and little or no insight is gained. It's like a pinball stuck between three bumpers of extremely low point yields.

If insight is gained, however, attitude can be enlisted to help engage change, and for that, sacrifice is necessary. One of the reasons that Jeanne de Salzmann said that the only thing we could change was our attitude is because it is the single element in this particular evolution of energy which we are actually able to influence. Insight comes from a higher level; objects, events, and circumstances are a given; and sacrifice is a requirement.

Attitude furthermore occupies the critical point of the heart chakra: Sol, the note of the sun. It's the place of the hero; and it embodies the essential Buddhist principle of right attitude.

The left side of the diagram recapitulates, in its essence, actions—that is to say, there is an involuntary and static character to the right side of the diagram, and a voluntary and dynamic character to the left side. These are of course gross generalizations, because there is certainly a dynamism to the right side, the only problem being that it is a self-reflexive and unyielding dynamism that produces a form of masturbation in the material world. That is to say, it accurately describes our society and our behavior for the most part.

All of the conditions on the right side of the diagram must ultimately be transcended by invoking the actions on the left side; but transcendence here is a form of incorporation, not dismissal.

The role of the conscious shocks is the same in this version of the diagram as it is in every other version: the first shock, conscious labor, involves the formation of the equivalent of a real “I;” in this case, responsibility. The second shock involves, as always, surrender, that is to say, a sacrifice above all of one's attitudes.

No one wants to sacrifice their attitudes. This is the essential problem in a nutshell. Even if a man or woman being completes the first side of this octave, the resistance to the second side is enormous. This is, in the larger sense, what Gurdjieff meant when he said,

“But in order to be able to attain this or at least begin to attain it, a man must die, that is, he must free himself from a thousand petty attachments and identifications which hold him in the position in which he is. He is attached to everything in his life, attached to his imagination, attached to his stupidity, attached even to his sufferings, possibly to his sufferings more than to anything else. He must free himself from this attachment.”

—In *Search Of the Miraculous*, p. 218.

This chapter also contains the Sufi tale illustrated in my drawing of the magician's sheep.



"The
Sheep,"
cil, 30" x

Magician's
colored pen-
40", copy-

right 1993 by Lee van Laer

“There is an Eastern tale which speaks about a very rich magician who had a great many sheep. But at the same time this magician was very mean. He did not want to hire shepherds, nor did he want to erect a fence about the pasture where his sheep were grazing. The sheep consequently often wandered into the forest, fell into ravines, and so on, and above all they ran away, for they knew that the magician wanted their flesh and skins and this they did not like.

“At last the magician found a remedy. He hypnotized his sheep and suggested to them first of all that they were immortal and that no harm was being done to them when they were skinned, that, on the contrary, it would be very good for them and even pleasant; secondly he suggested that the magician was a good master who loved his flock so much that he was ready to do anything in the world for them; and in the third place he suggested to them that if anything at all were going to happen to them it was not going to happen just then, at any rate not that day, and therefore they had no need to think about it. Further the magician suggested to his sheep that they were not sheep at all; to some of them he suggested that they were lions, to others that they were eagles, to others that they were men, and to others that they were magicians.

“And after all this his cares and worries about the sheep came to an end. They never ran away again but quietly awaited the time when the magician would require their flesh and skins.

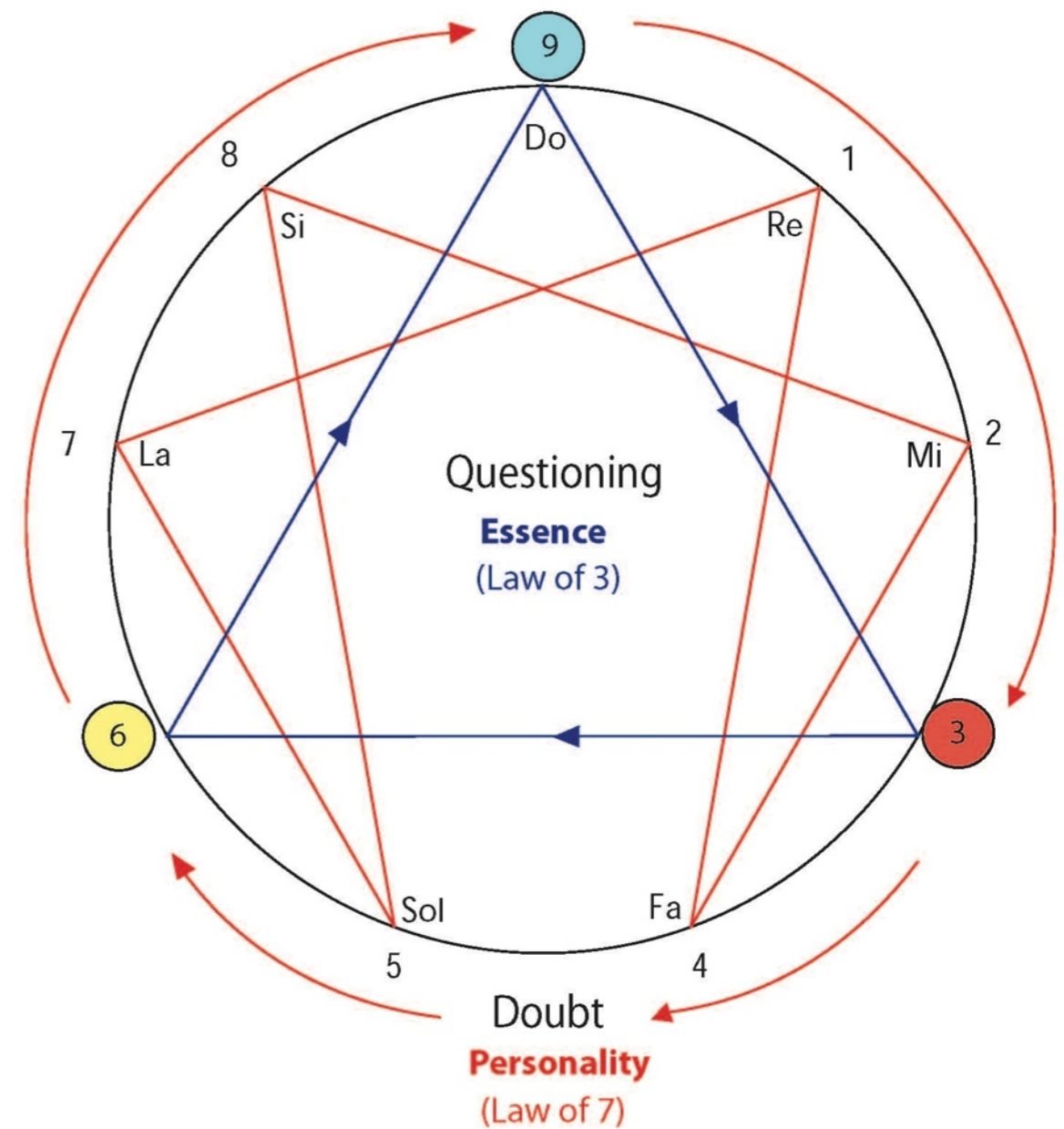
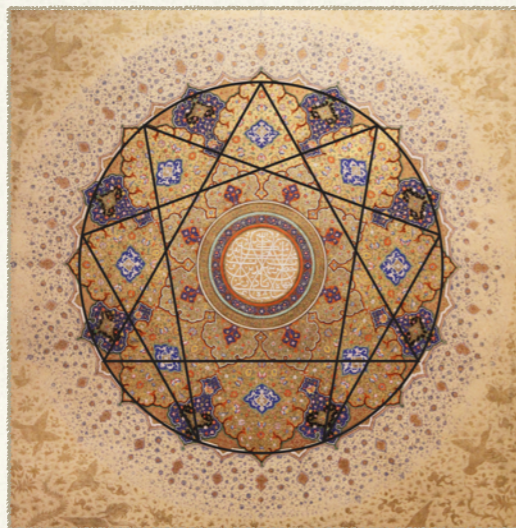
“This tale is a very good illustration of man’s position.”

—Excerpt taken from *In Search of the Miraculous*, P.D. Ouspensky, pub. Paul H Compton Limited, 2004, Page 219.

Chapter 21

QUESTIONING AND DOUBT

The place of two great inner polarities on the enneagram



There's a significant difference between having a question and doubting.

Doubt belongs to the outer circle of our being—in other words, to the realm of personality. It's a powerful force, one driven by engines beyond our control. Mankind's preoccupation with theories, philosophy, and matters of the intellect are a doubt creation machine; it leads to endless battles both within individuals, and between cultures.

Our own doubt belongs to our own level, subject to the law of 7, and it circulates around the perimeter of the enneagram—that is, it perambulates through the octave. It can't go any further than "mi" without a shock. Generally speaking, when considered in relationship to inner work, it's consequently aimless and destructive.

Questioning, on the other hand, belongs to our inner self. In its purest form, it emanates from essence, and thus comes under the law of three. Those who have studied this subject through essays on this site over the course of the past four months should understand why this is a completely different action: a stabilizing one. Looking at the diagram, and assigning it its proper place, one can see that questioning arises from a position of balance, in which three forces interact equally. Question isn't partial; it involves the whole presence.

We may see doubt and questioning getting confused with one another in ourselves. The reactive engine in us (us, in other words) is rooted not in questioning, but in doubt. To complicate matters, doubt and fear are inextricably linked; together, they're capable of inflating one another in a negative reciprocal relationship (if you think the law of reciprocal feeding doesn't also apply to our negativity, think again.) If you want to seek the roots of war, look here.

In particular, doubt in relationship to the higher—and to one's own work—is a destructive force, yet we all have it in us. It's good to have questions regarding faith and regarding higher influences, but to have doubt about them won't serve.

Yet it's there, isn't it?

When Ouspensky first encountered Gurdjieff, as he recounts in *In Search Of The Miraculous* ([chapter 1, p. 23](#)), he was searching for facts. He sought facts because facts dispel doubt; they're incontrovertible. Gurdjieff promised him that there would be facts; and there are facts, but until one encounters them in a concrete and essential way, they aren't facts.

I might, for example, assure each and every reader that the existence of God is an absolute fact... Let's suggest I then claimed I know this because of a personal experience which

permanently erased all doubt from me, and that I furthermore announce I'm not capable of doubt anymore. People ask me if I believe in God, and I say no, because belief does not rely on facts—it's merely a supposition or conviction. I know absolutely and for certain that God is real, so I have no need to believe.

But that does not do others much good.

Take a look—presented with this hypothesis, you are already suspicious... already doubting. Perhaps rightly so; you don't want to play the fool, now do you? How could anyone truly know such a thing for certain?... Ridiculous. If I came up to you on the street (or in my blog) and said such a thing, you would have the same reaction I would—you would turn away from this lunatic—undoubtedly some dubious fundamentalist—who was accosting you.

Now you see what I mean. Even if a man knows the truth, truth is not transmissible. I can't give you a pill that will fix what is wrong with you and your doubt. You have to make your own pill, and swallow it yourself—or, at the very least, find a better doctor than me.

It's absolutely necessary to learn to distinguish between question and doubt. It's absolutely necessary to go against doubt, because doubt comes from a part of us that wants to destroy

our work. All of those demons that tempted St. Antony? They were doubts. The force of personality often dedicates itself to the rape of essence. That can, in some cases, lead to insanity.

The parable about Jesus healing the Gerasene Demoniac ([Mark 5:1-13](#)) may help illuminate this a bit. The man is among the tombs—a sacred inner place where the soul enters its final communion with God. He is terrorizing the passersby, breaking his shackles, howling and bruising himself with stones, disrupting the sacred silence of this place. None is able to restrain him. When Jesus asks him his name, he says he is legion—that is, he is the many "I's" of personality. And Christ casts them out, assigning them to the place where the "I's" properly belong, the outer realm of personality—the place of swine. (readers will recall from an earlier post the suggestion that the swine we must not cast our pearls in front of are within ourselves.) The swine, furthermore, promptly run to the lake and drown themselves, symbolically (and voluntarily) undergoing a ritual purification of baptism and cleansing by water. In this way, the doubt that was trying to destroy the sanctity of an inner communion with the Lord is purified.

One of the reasons we cultivate a contact with the higher is that only the purifying force of a higher influence can, in the end, truly dispel our doubt. This erasure of doubt doesn't lie

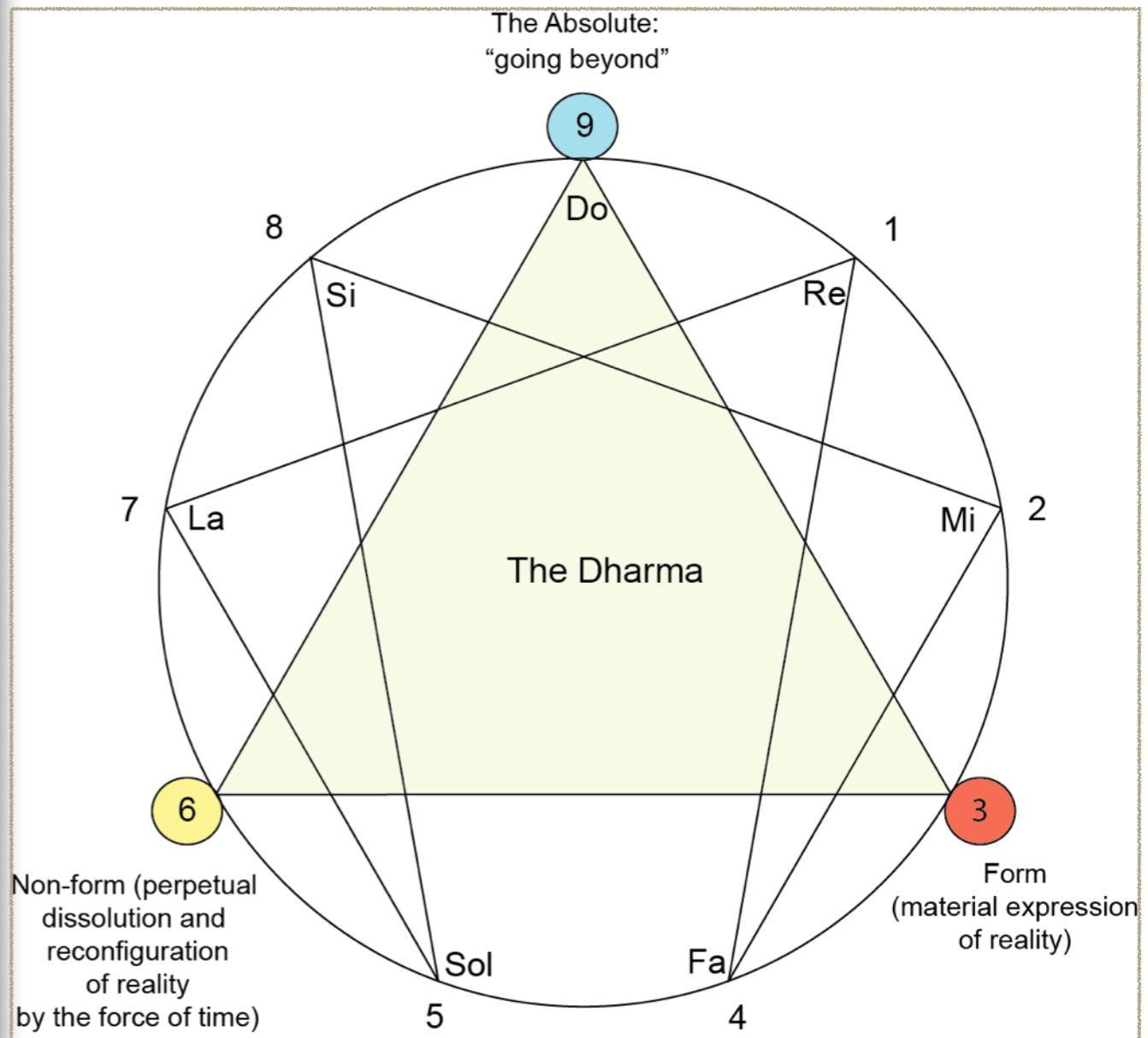
within the sphere of our own abilities; in the end, it only arrives through divine Grace.

Work efforts, conforming to obedience and under law, can earn that—that is itself a law.

Chapter 22

FORM AND NON-FORM

A buddhist inquiry



Parabola recently published a link to [Bob Thurman and the Dalai Lama's discourse on the Kalachakra](#) on the Parabola Facebook page.

A few of the comments in it are worth examining relative to my recent essays on the law of three and the nature of time.

Thurman remarks (see 2:40 onwards) that time is, in the [Kalachakra](#), viewed as infinitely compassionate. Gurdjieff, on the other hand, characterizes time as the “Merciless Hero-pass”—not a compassionate force at all, but, instead, an objective one.

The difference is interesting, given that some of Gurdjieff's cosmology appears to be derived from Tibetan sources. For example, one distinct connection between the Kalachakra and the Gurdjieff work is that, in the tradition, the Kalachakra originated as a work in life (see the “history and origin” section in this Wikipedia link.) The Kalachakra tantra, furthermore, emphasizes the similarities and correspondence between human beings and the cosmos—yet another striking point of similarity to Gurdjieff's cosmology as he expounded it to Ouspensky in *In Search Of The Miraculous*. Finally, we might consider Thurman's remarks about time as a machine (3:50) whose ultimate action is to liberate Beings from suffering. If we are going to characterize the universe and the flow of time as a machine, I believe we can agree this at least pre-

sents a more optimistic point of view than Ouspensky did in his treatment of the same subject.

How could these exalted sources possibly get it wrong- or, to put it more bluntly, how dare a slug like me exercise so much chutzpah as to suggest the Dalai Lama and Thurman are mistaken?

Well then, dear readers. Put your incredulity aside for just a moment and allow me to try and explain. While most of what they say about compassionate practice and a positive view of time is quite wonderful, understanding this question without understanding it from the point of view of the law of three and the universal octave may cause us to fall into the briar patch.

The Dalai Lama is entirely correct in referring to a universal force of compassion; nonetheless, Thurman ascribes this force to the action of time, instead of understanding the action of time as the formation of intelligence, which informs, but does not create, compassion. Compassion belongs to Love, which stands at the apex of the triangle in the law of three and is the reconciling force between matter and time.

Time is indeed a devourer, but this is not a negative characteristic, as suggested in the video. Nor is it a characteristic that needs to be "overcome." It is merely an existing charac-

teristic, assuming- like Love and Matter- positive, negative, and reconciling roles by turn, in relationship to conditions. (In the action of the law of three, these three characteristics are not fixed, but fluid. Love, Time, and Matter each represent what Gurdjieff would have called "completed triads," that is, each one by itself is a harmonious blend of positive, negative, and reconciling elements. Each one has the capacity to express one of those three qualities in active manifestation, as necessary and appropriate in relationship to the actively expressed character of its partner elements in the triad.)

Manifestation and dissolution (form and non-form) are both real, and inescapable, as expounded in Dogen's Great Practice, found in the [Shobogenzo](#). The action of going beyond— an essential Buddhist understanding— is where the question of compassion enters, as it balances the universal forces of creation and destruction.

What can we learn from this?

The law of three never excludes. It always integrates. Hence, every force is folded in to an action in relationship. There is no need to understand time as positive or negative; it is included in the whole of the force needed to turn the wheel of Dharma. It cannot act, however, without relationship to both matter (material reality) and compassion, or love.

Understanding time as a being food of the universe, in the Gurdjieffian tradition, helps us to understand that awareness outside of time is not intelligent. Information—that which is inwardly formed—cannot act or produce a result in relationship without time. One might say, in some senses, that the wisdom, or intelligence, needed to inform compassion is discovered and developed within the properties of time. It's equally true that the power of expression is embodied in material reality. In other words, the shocks in the universal octave describe and embody the three main paths Gurdjieff laid out as the foundations of yoga— the Way of the Fakir, the Way of the Monk, and the Way of the Yogi.

Combining all three Ways into a “Fourth Way” gives us the path of the whole dharma— and Gurdjieff's law of three is the engine that turns the wheel of dharma.

While I liked the video and its overwhelmingly positive message (it's a little difficult to take a position against world peace, try though we may) its overwhelming emphasis on the "total positivity of time" raises some questions for me. To indicate that the ultimate action of time is to liberate beings into their "highest bliss" or their own “deepest reality” may be true- readers must decide for themselves- yet we might consider resisting the temptation to label this as “positive,” since it implies a polarity, an inherent duality, rather than an

absolute objectivity, which— like the Dharma— encompasses everything, all Truth.

Here, I think, the message departs from both the deepest and most esoteric Buddhist doctrine, as well as Gurdjieff's vision of the universe. To say that everything is working towards a final “positive” outcome, rather than an outcome which is simply whole, appears to be a message designed more for its populist appeal than an objective vision of transcendence. Transcendence, after all, goes beyond positives and negatives—one of the main points of Zen Buddhist discourse, as expounded by Dogen and one, I believe, that even Tibetan Buddhists may agree on.

And we cannot come to grips with Gurdjieff's ideas about the Sorrow of His Endlessness if everything is ultimately going to turn out, as he would say, “roses, just roses.”

Don't get me wrong. I am all for a universe of loving compassion, and positive outcomes. These constructs are, however, inventions of the conceptual mind. In the end, what we seek is a mystery, and that mystery transcends the limitations of our ordinary understanding.

My overall concern here is that presenting Buddhist practice, one of the most deeply esoteric and richest traditions in the world, as some kind of fairytale where “everything comes out

all right in the end” may play well to audiences, but has the unfortunate potential to sell both the practice, and its meaning, short.

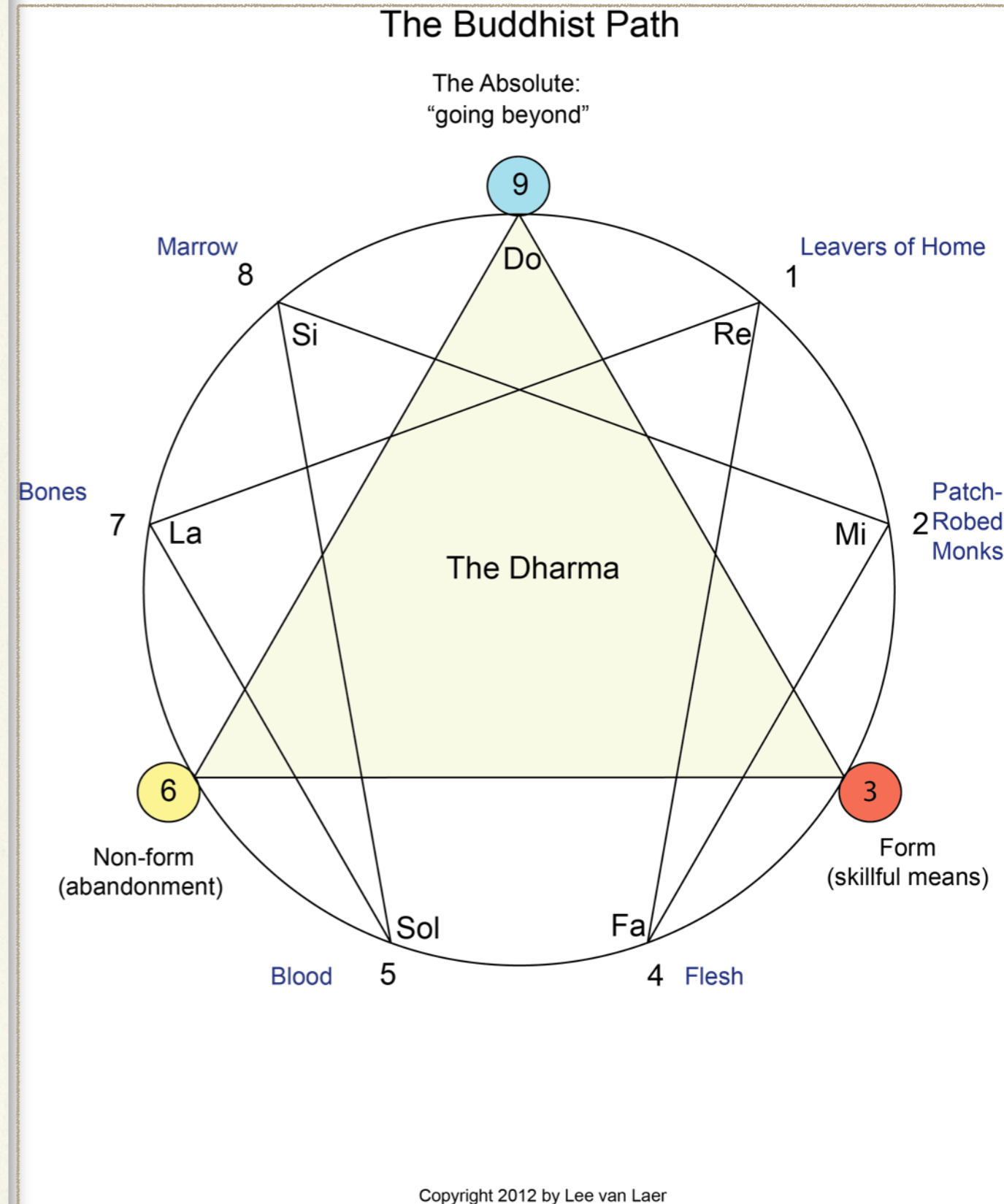
Buddhist philosophy and practice— like the Gurdjieff work— is not merely a facile means of ensuring a final positive result.

Its aim is to help us see Truth.

Chapter 23

THE BUDDHIST PATH

This, too, neatly described by the enneagram



Zen master Dogen's expressions regarding how advanced his students were on the path included expressions such as "Leavers of Home," "Patch Robed Monks," and so on. It's not always obvious that these particular expressions aren't random, but they denote a specific hierarchy which can be directly related to the path of the Yogi.

Readers should relate this to the enneagram of form and non-form to understand some of the other Buddhist concepts that dovetail into this.

Leavers of Home aptly denotes the initial separation of the material from its origins in the absolute. On the level of the Buddhist path, it represents the aspirant who has separated himself from everything he knows in order to pursue his spiritual destiny. This aspirant has achieved a material manifestation of the initial wish to return to enlightenment.

Leavers of home are, furthermore outside. Although they have developed an aspiration, their work is essentially an external work

Patch Robed Monks are aspirants who have developed a wish— that is, desire— symbolized by the fact that they are now no longer just Leavers of Home, but monks. The external work has begun to clothe itself in an inner work, symboli-

zed by the robe, but the work is still essentially external, visible, and is furthermore not well organized — it's in patches, bits and pieces, instead of made of a whole cloth.

The four levels that Zen monks most frequently speak of in terms of serious accomplishment are attaining the **Flesh**, **Blood**, **Bones**, and **Marrow**.

Flesh represents power, that is, the material ability to express the teaching. This requires what Gurdjieff called conscious labor to attain, which, in Zen, is composed of what is called "skillful means." The reason that skillful means are not considered to be sufficient is because they only represent the force necessary to complete the material side of the path.

This stage is the culmination of the external work, in which it becomes solid and real, and can potentially transition to a true inner work. It marks the final step on the path before the transition to an esoteric understanding.

Blood represents life force, which is the equivalent of Being or Agency. It marks the birth of a true inner work, on the level of the sun, the note sol. In Zen, the attainment of this level marks the ability of the aspirant to begin the real work of abandonment, or, an approach towards going beyond.

Abandonment, or the leaving behind of all things, is, in Buddhism, the shock represented by the force of what Gurdjieff called intentional suffering. There are specific esoteric reasons for understanding that these two actions are actually the same thing.

Bones represents purification. Once the aspirant has attained the Flesh and Blood, he must surrender them, stripping himself down to the pure white of the bones.

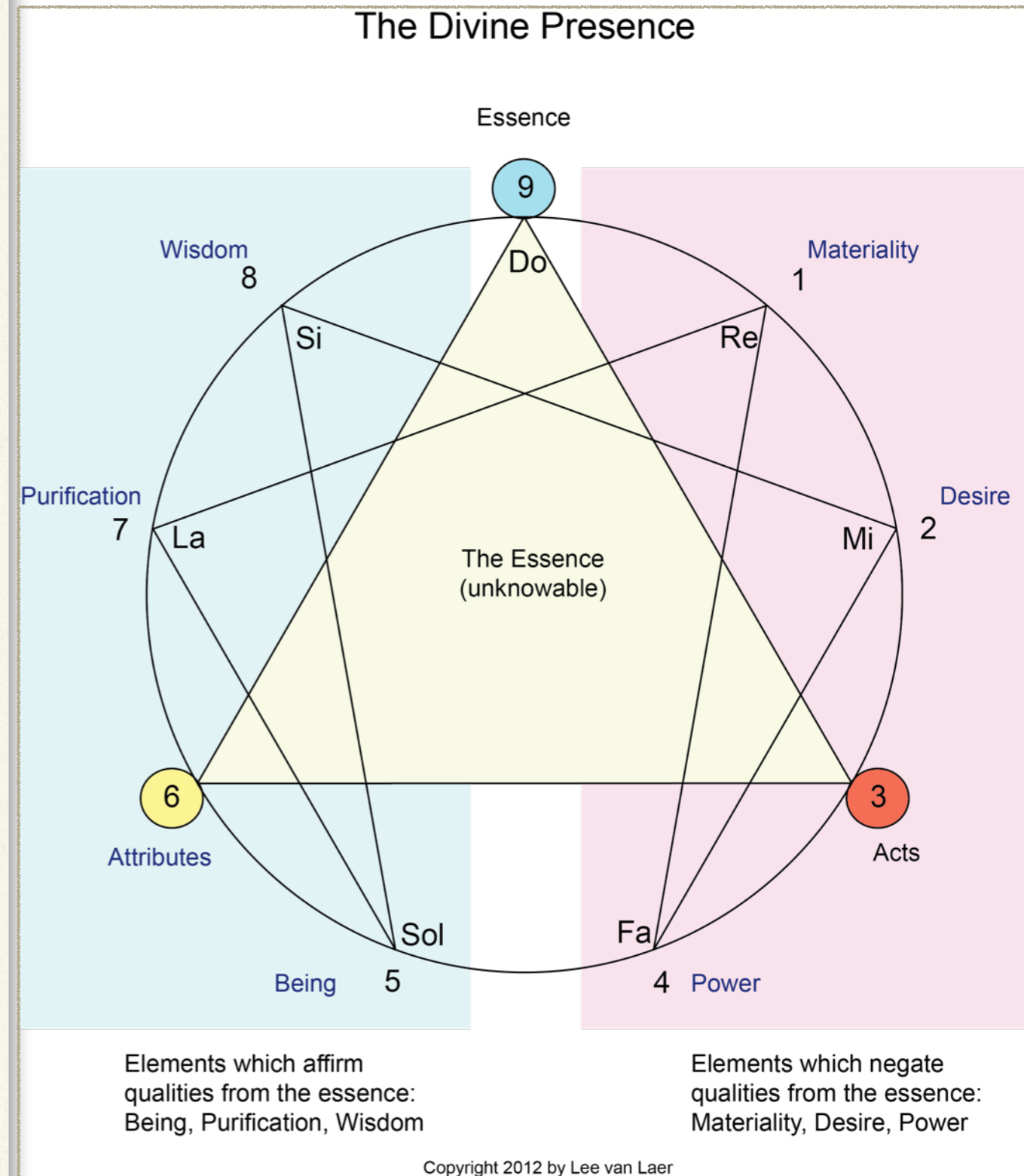
Marrow, the most essential stage on the path of Zen, represents the sweetness, the incomparable nutrition, that arrives with true wisdom.

As in the Sufi cosmology of Ibn al 'Arabi and the hierarchic path of the Yogi, Zen follows the same inexorable requirements for inner development, using what initially appears to be obscure allegorical language. The language, however, clearly indicates the same hierarchy we see in the other systems, with the same inner obstacles and challenges that need to be assimilated and overcome.

Chapter 24

THE DIVINE PRESENCE

The Divine Presence as defined by the enneagram



Understanding the enneagram in the context of Ibn al 'Arabi's teachings involves mastering a fairly complex set of hierarchical concepts, but I will try to simplify it as much as possible.

Al 'Arabi proposes two congruent entities that constitute what we would call "God." One of them, the Essence, is unknowable and will always remain so; one could definitely draw some parallels between this entity and Gurdjieff's discussions on essence (notably found in his book *Views From The Real World*) simply because essence, in man, performs a similar role, which would be beyond the scope of this essay to explain. In this case, however, what we see is an unknowable, Essence, and then what al 'Arabi refers to as Divinity, that is, God within the context of material manifestation.

Essence is absolutely unknowable. In the [Futuhât al-makkiyya](#), al 'Arabi states:

"... The Essence of the Real is outside this judgment, for it is witnessed before it is known. Or, rather, it is witnessed, but not known, just as the Divinity is known, but not witnessed." He also says, " we have no knowledge of God except through attributes of incomparability or attributes of acts. He who supposes that he has knowledge of positive attributes of the Self has supposed wrongly. For such an attribute would define Him, but His Essence has no definition. This is a door

locked to engendered existence, a door that cannot be opened."

(The Sufi path of knowledge, Wliiam Chittick, State University of New York press, 1989, pgs. 58 & 60.)

God can, however, be "known" through his names in this context, although each one is a mere shadow of the unknowable Essence. Because a man will never be able to know God in his Essence (as explained in al 'Arabi's *Futuhât al-makkiyya*), the best he can do is make an effort to know God through Divinity, via the names, and, indeed, the hierarchy of names and a man's understanding of them determine his place.

Divinity refers to level, whereas Essence refers to entity. Divinity presumes relationship to creatures, whereas Essence exists as a reality itself, without any relationships (ibid, p. 59.)

The names represent characteristics of God, which convey essential relationships. As Chittick explains,

"The Divine presence includes the Essence, the Attributes, and the Acts. The Attributes are names are the barzakh (isthmus) between the Essence and the Acts. But these names can be divided into two categories, depending on the type of relationship which they designate between the Essence in the cos-

mos. In the first case, they negate various qualities from the Essence. In the second, they affirm that the Essence in as much as it is a God, and possesses various qualities."

(ibid, p. 58.)

This may be confusing to the general reader, so allow me to explain that in this case the word "Attributes," or names, does not represent things, but rather, qualities that God has, (also, forces) and the word "Acts" represents all of the material creations that God has made manifest.

Acts, in other words, represent things; and names represent actions on those things. Rendered crudely, "Essence, Acts, and Attributes" can be interpreted as "God, things, and stuff that exerts forces on things." An oversimplification, to be sure, but you get the general idea.

In the diagram, the Names or Attributes of the Essence are represented by the notes, each one of which represents a particular quality of God that can be manifest through a material act (thing). We can understand the hierarchy, or elevation (evolution) of energy as departing from God (right side of the diagram, in which the initial manifestation of material reality creates a division between God and his creation) and returning to God (left side of the diagram, the evolution of energy back towards the essence.) Lest readers doubt that the names

have a specific ranking, this excerpt from the Futuhât al-makkiyya will set the record straight.

The attributes which negate qualities from the Essence are all related to qualities of God that contact the material world and its consequences, representing, in the general sense, a lower level of intelligence both of origin and self. Conscious labor is needed to reconcile these forces before any return to the absolute can be attempted.

Inevitably, once we reached the attributes that affirm qualities from the Essence, the work must involve surrendering, or suffering, since everything "acquired" during the active process of negation must be given up. This work is clearly progressive; and it ultimately affirms the incomparability of God, that is, the Essence, because the process which has consisted of one comparison after another in its evolution from the material, up through desire, power, being, purification, and wisdom — ultimately has to surrender this action to return to its source.

Ah, you may well say, if you have followed me so far. You've explained the attributes and how they are notes; but where are the acts? And this is a bit of a trick question, because they are here; hidden in plain sight.

Any single octave as a whole represents an Act. In what may seem paradoxical, but is in fact quite logical, every "thing" or Act represents a whole octave in and of itself, dependent on octaves above and below it, of course, as is necessary in the hierarchy. Yet each octave contains all of the names of God, or attributes, in it, in one form or another, and all the principal Attributes (forces) contribute to the action of the Attributes upon the Act, or thing. This means that all things contain, in a microcosmic sense, a complete expression of God with all of the Attributes, or names, extant in potential. Everything, in other words, contains all forces. It is the degree to which each of those forces express themselves, and the harmonious relationship of the expression of forces between one another, that determines the completion of the octave and the level on which it vibrates.

Although a man, in other words, has all the names of God in him, some forces always can and will predominate over others.

Al 'Arabi presents a brilliant summary of the potential contradictions we encounter in trying to understand why some of the names of God appear to produce horrific results in the real world; the subject is far too detailed to treat here, but a good recap of it can be found in pages 47 through 58 of

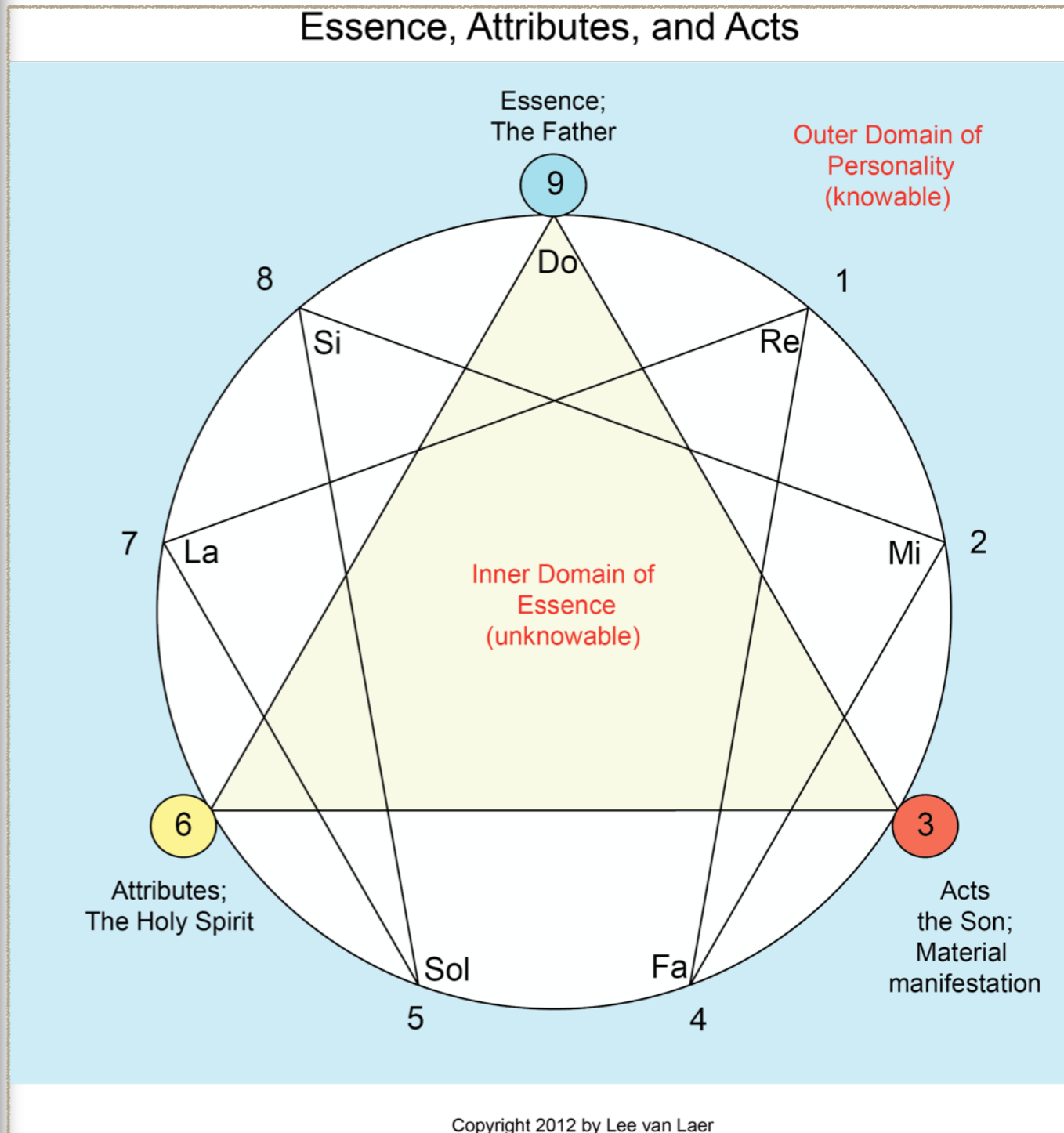
"The Sufi Path of Knowledge," in the chapter entitled "The Divine Roots of Hierarchy and Conflict."

In regard to the question of incomparability of Essence, it's notable that Gurdjieff's seemingly peculiar chosen names for God and his place of residence (Uni-Being endlessness, Most Holy Sun Absolute, etc.) adopt the traditional language used in Sufi expressions of incomparability, indicating a plausible source for his understanding of how such things were to be expressed.

Chapter 25

ESSENCE, ATTRIBUTES, AND ACTS

Some Sufic concepts, in relation to the enneagram



There is a discernable relationship between al Arabi's concepts of Essence, Attributes, and Acts, and Gurdjieff's use of the terms essence and personality to describe man's state. The distinction appears to be primarily one of levels, and leads to some interesting questions about the exact nature of inner work.

Al 'Arabi explains God as being composed of two different qualities: the Essence, which is forever incomparable and unknowable; and the Divinity, God in "His" or "Her" knowable form, in contact with material reality.

Although the Essence is irrevocably unknowable, the moment It emanates from Itself and creates material reality, It has altered its state (we might say, "lowered Its rate of vibration," although this, like any other tangible description, would not be quite correct) to create a knowable universe. In doing so, two parts of Itself interact intelligibly with the created universe.

The first of these parts is Acts, that is, things which have been created. The second part is Attributes, that is, aspects (al 'Arabi calls them the names of God) which exert influences on the Acts. On the enneagram, these influences are represented by the notes in the octave. The influences represent qualities which belong to God, and which have distinc-

tive effects on materiality. The names represent qualities such as desire, power, and knowledge.

Essence, Attributes and Acts together constitute a holy Trinity directly analogous to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, or, in Gurdjieff's system, Holy Affirming, Holy Denying, and Holy Reconciling.

Although the dynamic nature of the teaching allows different elements to assume the same role, in the strictest sense, the right side of the enneagram always represents Holy Denying, the left Holy Affirming, and the transcendent note "do," from which all force within a given octave becomes manifest, Holy Reconciling.

All of what Gurdjieff referred to as personality occupies the outer portion of the diagram, that is to say, circulation around the perimeter, passage through the notes. Even though the notes actively exchange energy in an inner action, their visible manifestation always takes place in the realm of personality, that is, externally.

Two domains are created: one which can be known, that is, is redactable and subject to understanding through thought, whether or not said thought is classified as rational. (In this case, we include any form of sensory experience, including

sensation and feeling, as thought.) This domain is the outer portion shaded in blue on the diagram.

The second domain, the light green shaded triangle, can never be known, although its influences are both vital and necessary. It is the domain of the Essence, the unknowable, and it occupies the inner triad which forms the support for the entire enneagram. The contact of the Essence with the knowable takes place in the locations Gurdjieff would have called conscious shocks, which, logically enough, represent Christ and the Holy Spirit in Christianity. We can deduce from this that this particular model encompasses Islamic, Christian, and Gurdjieffian understandings within a single diagram — in other words, the enneagram is able to perform its expected function of unifying apparently distinct bodies of knowledge under a single intelligible principle.

Gurdjieff frequently referred to essence and personality in his teachings. Because man, in his system, is a microcosmos who exactly reflects the metaphysical structure of the meta-cosmos, we should expect that his concepts of essence and personality translate to the meta-cosmic scale, and, in fact, they do. The understandings are similar enough that we can hypothesize Gurdjieff drew this portion of his teaching from Sufi understandings, and it is certainly plausible, furthermore, that he drew them from al 'Arabi himself, since it seems impossible he could have had the extensive contact with dervishes he indubitably had and not have encountered

al 'Arabi's teachings on many occasions. Although al 'Arabi's name is obscure to most Western minds, it is anything but in Sufic Islam.

The question brings us to an interesting piece of territory, because the very distinct nature of inner and outer work are rendered evident in the diagram, and the nature of essence at its highest level raises some significant questions.

Inner work — the type of work which Gurdjieff (like Meister Eckhart) insisted was the only type of work that could affect a man's being — is understood, in the context of this diagram and al 'Arabi's concepts of Essence and Divinity, as being a secret or Gnostic work. Al 'Arabi says, "There is a whole treasure of secrets in the pure center of the human being." ([Divine Governance of the Human Kingdom](#), p. 7, trans. Tosun Bayrak al-Jerrahi al-Halverti, Fons Vitae 1997).

This work is secret in the sense that the work remains a work hidden even from the man himself, as he conducts it, because the work, in its absolute essence, is unknowable; it emanates from a domain that cannot be contacted by the known or the rational.

We certainly have enough allusions to this circumstance in Christ's teachings, which dovetail quite neatly into this picture. Esotericism, in other words, is not a secret work in

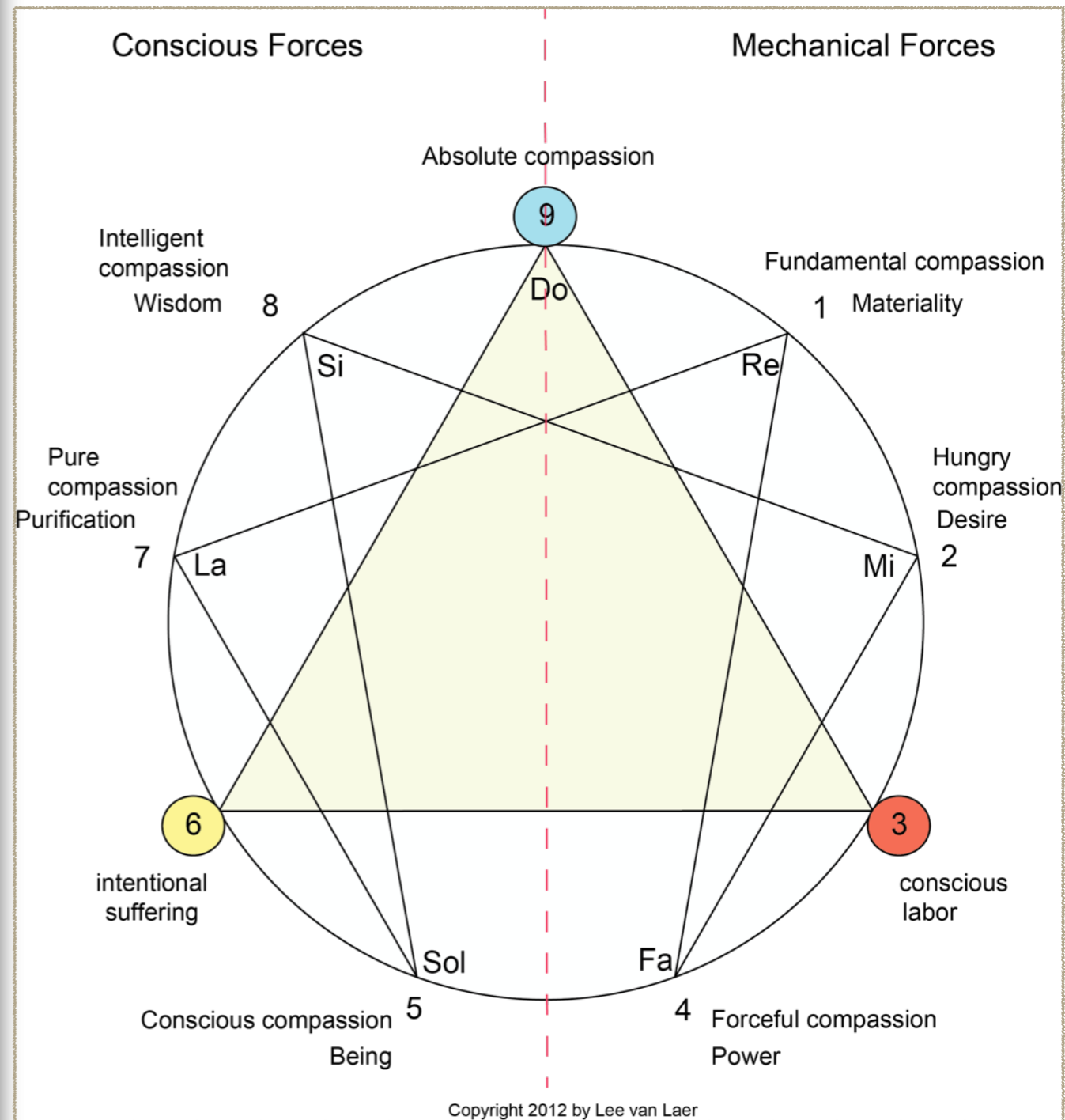
which one person knows the secrets, and another person does not; it's a secret work in which the secrets cannot be known.

Only their effects can be known: and they emanate from a mystery that can never be penetrated by Being, even though Being owes its existence to them.

Chapter 26

THE ENNEAGRAM OF COMPASSION

Compassion as a progression and interaction of forces;
the relationship between various forms of compassionate
expression



Every attribute, or name, of God is a force with its own octave of development. Characteristic attributes we are familiar to ascribing to both man and God, for example, mercy or compassion, develop according to level as they encounter the material world and become subject to the law of octaves. This takes place because the forces are material, and all material forces are subject to the law of octaves.

This explains why any man may be more or less compassionate; and why the way in which compassion is expressed changes within a human being, both over the course of a lifetime, and in the course of the development of an inner life.

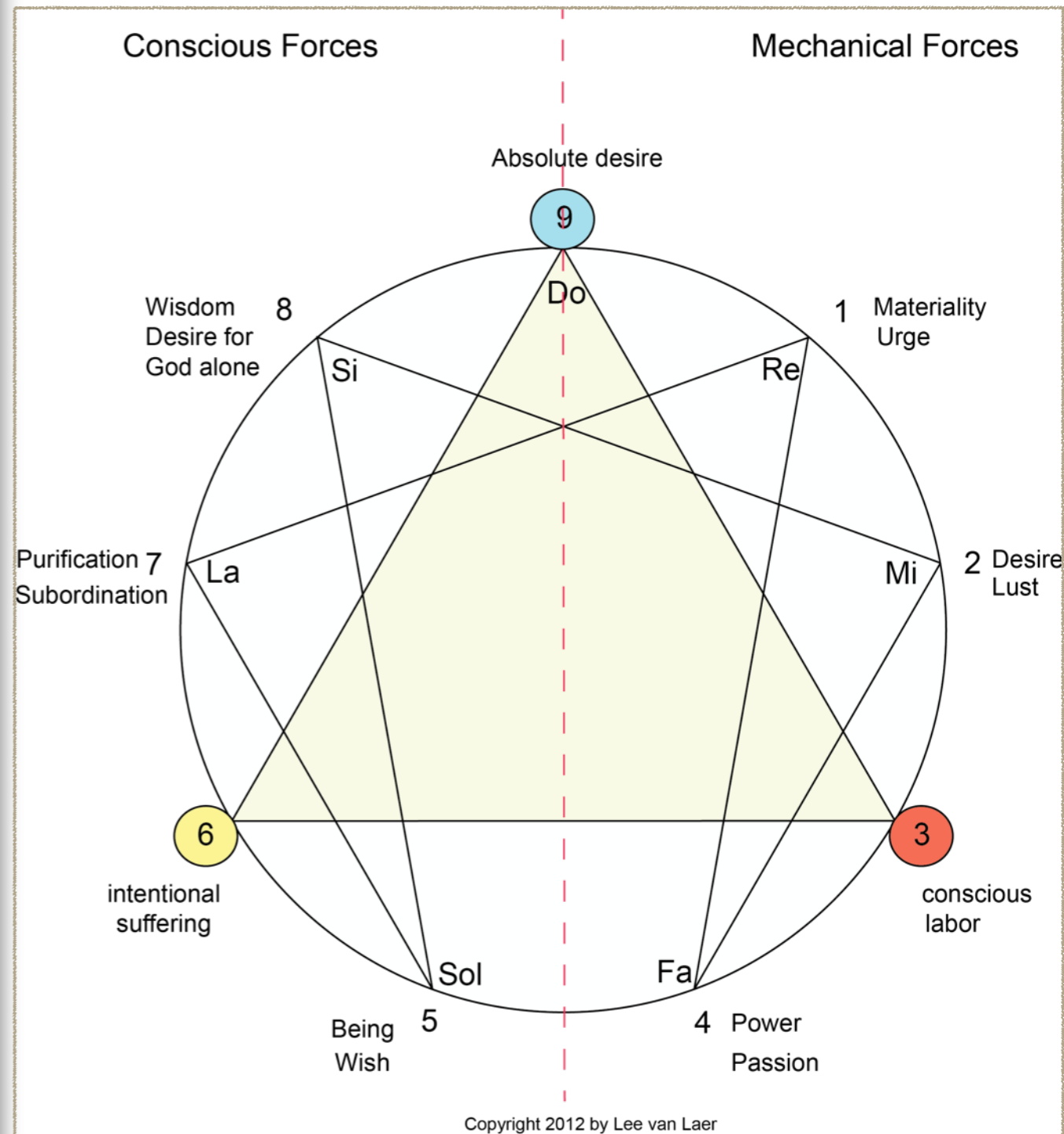
The majority of compassionate expression in the world takes place on the mechanical side of the diagram; it is automatic, and not informed by conscious action. It is thus more forcefully under the influence of, and subject to, the less intelligent (less conscious) forces expressed on the right side of the diagram. This means that although the compassion developed by those who desire compassion or have the power to exercise compassion may have a good deal of force, it does not have the intelligence it needs to have a meaningful action on materiality. As has been pointed out in the path of the Yogi, the energy has to complete its progression through the octave in order to have a meaningful, or permanent, effect on material reality.

Saints and other legitimate spiritual masters have invariably completed at least the right side of the diagram, causing their compassion to undergo an evolution which is visible to those who have not been able to complete this inner work. This is what sets them apart from ordinary men, although, even here, we see that there are definite levels, and, as the fractal universe shows us, gradations within those levels.

Chapter 27

THE ENNEAGRAM OF DESIRE

Desires in relationship to one another, as expressed in octaves.



The Octave of Desire

In examining the octave of desire, we can understand that there are levels of desire that arise according to the inherent nature of the notes in the enneagram. That is to say, there is not one kind of desire; desire has levels, like all other forces.

In the octave of desire, when desire materializes as a crystallization of the absolute, or name of God, it has dropped into the material world and is subject to its forces, like all other material manifestations. Separated from God, its instinctive nature is to return — as is lawful in all iterations of any octave.

Because of its distance from the divine, and its low rate of vibration in its material manifestation, this aspect of desire — let us call it the sacred aspect — is buried. Another way of viewing it is that because of its low rate of vibration, its intelligence is dispersed across such a wide range of objects, events, circumstances, and conditions that it cannot exercise any aim. Under these conditions, at the first note, Re, we can say that all it is able to exercise is what we call urge, which is desire in its animal form.

Moving to the note Mi, desire has doubled its rate of vibration—it has become more concentrated, as Jeanne de Salz-

mann might say—and understands to a greater degree its need to return to the source. Because the return to the source of its arising is deeply linked to a procreative force, it gives rise to the sexual impulse, and, in mankind, is lust. This is a urge with a much greater degree of force. Nonetheless, it still hasn't acquired an intelligence helpful in directing it.

The third note in the octave of desire is Fa, representing power. In man, the word we use for this is avidity. It is a grasping quality that wants to acquire for itself. This form of desire is entirely lawful within the constraints of the right side of the diagram, where materiality and ego dominate. The word avidity was at first not used much in the Gurdjieff work, but it has enjoyed a minor renaissance since the translators of Jeanne de Salzmann's diaries used it in *The Reality of Being*.

And, really, it is the perfect word to describe where we are, where we find ourselves, on the octave of desire. This penetrating observation touches deeply on the Buddhist point of view of man's weaknesses, our grasping nature. But the diagram allows us to position it quite precisely in the development of an inner octave.

So the three stages of materiality in the octave of desire are urge, lust, and avidity. Only when materiality acquires a direction, and then an intelligence, through the shock of conscious

labor (always, let us remember, imparted by assistance from a higher energy) can it evolve to the level of Sol, the sun, in which it acquires Being. This is the point in the octave of desire it which wish can become known, because it is the moment where desire emerges from the inexorable mechanical forces of the natural world and enters Swedenborg's spiritual realm.

This level of desire, wish, creates an entirely new relationship in which intentional suffering can enter the action. The level is now under the influence of the sun. Gurdjieff referred to this moment in work as the action of a second order cosmic law under the name of the sacred 'Aieioiuoa.'

His comments, found on page 132 of *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, are as follows:

"This cosmic law may be expressed thus: everything arising, large or small, when in direct touch with the "emanations" of the Sun Absolute itself or of any other son, undergoes a process called "remorse," during which each of its parts, issuing from the results of one of the holy sources of the sacred Triamazikamno, "revolts" as it were, and "criticizes" the former unbecoming perceptions in the manifestations taking place at the moment in another part of its whole — apart issuing from the results of another holy source of the same fundamental sacred law of Triamazikamno."

This remorse is the action of purification of desire, which takes place at the note La. And it is only through this action that desire can acquire wisdom.

When we reach the higher levels of inner work, it's difficult to define the forces that the notes on the octave of desire represent. However, it seems quite likely that desire actually becomes a form of humility at this particular note. That is to say, it is a desire that moves away from the ego, rather than towards it. This makes some sense, because in traveling around the perimeter of the diagram, we see that the forces moving up the left side of the diagram trend, in a hierarchical scale, away from the manifestation of ego and towards the surrender of it.

I leave it to the reader to try to understand what the note Si, which would represent the wisdom of desire, may mean. But this should be the goal that a man seeks within himself; the wisdom of his force of desire.

Gurdjieff's statement about a man needing to have his non-desires prevail over his desires relates to this question. Perhaps the wisest of desires extinguish themselves voluntarily?

Worth pondering.

Suffering and Desire

Perhaps one of the most telling statements in Gurdjieff's *Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson* is the quote regarding desire and non-desire.

I say this in part because of the position that it takes on the question of suffering. What he says here is, in my experience, entirely true and completely accurate. This may seem like an extreme position to take; after all, when modern people speak of spiritual development, everyone seems to want to talk about joy, to experience joy, move into a realm of joyful action. This includes Gurdjieffians, who might occasionally seem to be otherwise pragmatic individuals.

It's not about joy. If you want to believe that, it's fine with me, but speaking from my own authority, this is not a right understanding of the nature of the universe, our condition, or where our responsibility lies; it's just a step on the path, and will serve as a powerful distraction unless one is wary. Everyone wants joy; but very few know what actual joy is. What people call joy is a temporary state of emotional infatuation, much like love.

These words are not meant to be harsh; nor are they meant to represent a dark and impossible cosmology, contradiction though that may seem. The resolution of this contradiction, such as it is a contradiction, and such as it resolves, is that men find what we call “joy”—real joy, that is, not the ersatz emotional state produced by our personality—only through fulfillment of their responsibilities to the Creator.

That is to say that suffering is our lot, our responsibility, and our due—and the essence-satisfaction that can be gained from true suffering, an actual participation in receiving the material forces of sorrow, is much greater than any ordinary emotional experience we may think can make us feel good, think positively, have a right attitude, and so on. The word “bliss,” which is commonly believed to describe an ecstatic state of a joyful nature, actually means to suffer in great anguish. Touched by this understanding, one will begin to fully appreciate the difference between the reality and the very nearly entirely theoretical premises that we use to describe such things in books and conversations.

As such, we discover that Gurdjieff's aim fundamentally differs from that of the Buddha in that he proposes we must invest in suffering, rather than become free of it. This despite the unambiguous relationship between many Buddhist ideas and Gurdjieff's principles. It poses questions well beyond the scope of this essay.

When we speak of non-desires, what do we mean? What is desire? How does it differ from what we wish? And how does allowing non-desire to prevail over desire figure into the picture?

One thing seems sure to me. Those of us who wish to “develop” spiritually desire an improvement. It's all very nice to speak about not working for results, but let's be honest with ourselves. We want something. We are not in this work—no one is in any spiritual work—for “nothing.” A desire for development motivates the effort. To be sure, there is also wish, but wish and desire are two different things. Our personality desires enlightenment—it wants to inspire it, “breathe it in,” get it, and have it for itself. This is where most of our work is centered.

Our wish, on the other hand, aspires. Aspiration can be characterized as the exhalation of what we are; it is a surrender, a giving up. So wish does not grasp, it surrenders; whereas desire wishes to have for itself. And if we want our non-desire to prevail over our desire, above all, perhaps, we must not want to work. We must not desire inner work; we must not be attached to inner work. Inner work must, in a certain sense, be done for no other reason than that we do it. Which, incidentally, may remind astute readers of Dogen's ideas.

This is a tricky thing, because it suggests that we have to work without expecting anything whatsoever. We have to throw out all of these ideas we have about development, man number 4, 5, 6, and so on. All of that nonsense. All of it completely irrelevant, in the end, to the fact that we must make an effort to be, which is quite different than desiring.

Wish consists of a longing, and a letting go of what we are. Desire wants to force open the flower bud, peel back the petals and make it bloom; wish understands that no flower can be forced. Wish is an observer with the patience to be still and watch a process unfold; desire is an actor who wants to make it happen. So the question of desires and non-desires doesn't just relate to the simplistic question of what the body wants and the need for discipline in this area; it goes well beyond that. It moves in to the territory between essence and personality, and how each one operates. One with wish, and the other with desire.

In a certain sense, in the same way that chief feature is everything a man is, desire is everything that we are. One might even reasonably argue that desire is the chief feature of chief feature.

Think of it this way. As we are, in this moment, we are composed of desire in exact proportion to how much of us expresses personality. If even one percent of essence enters into

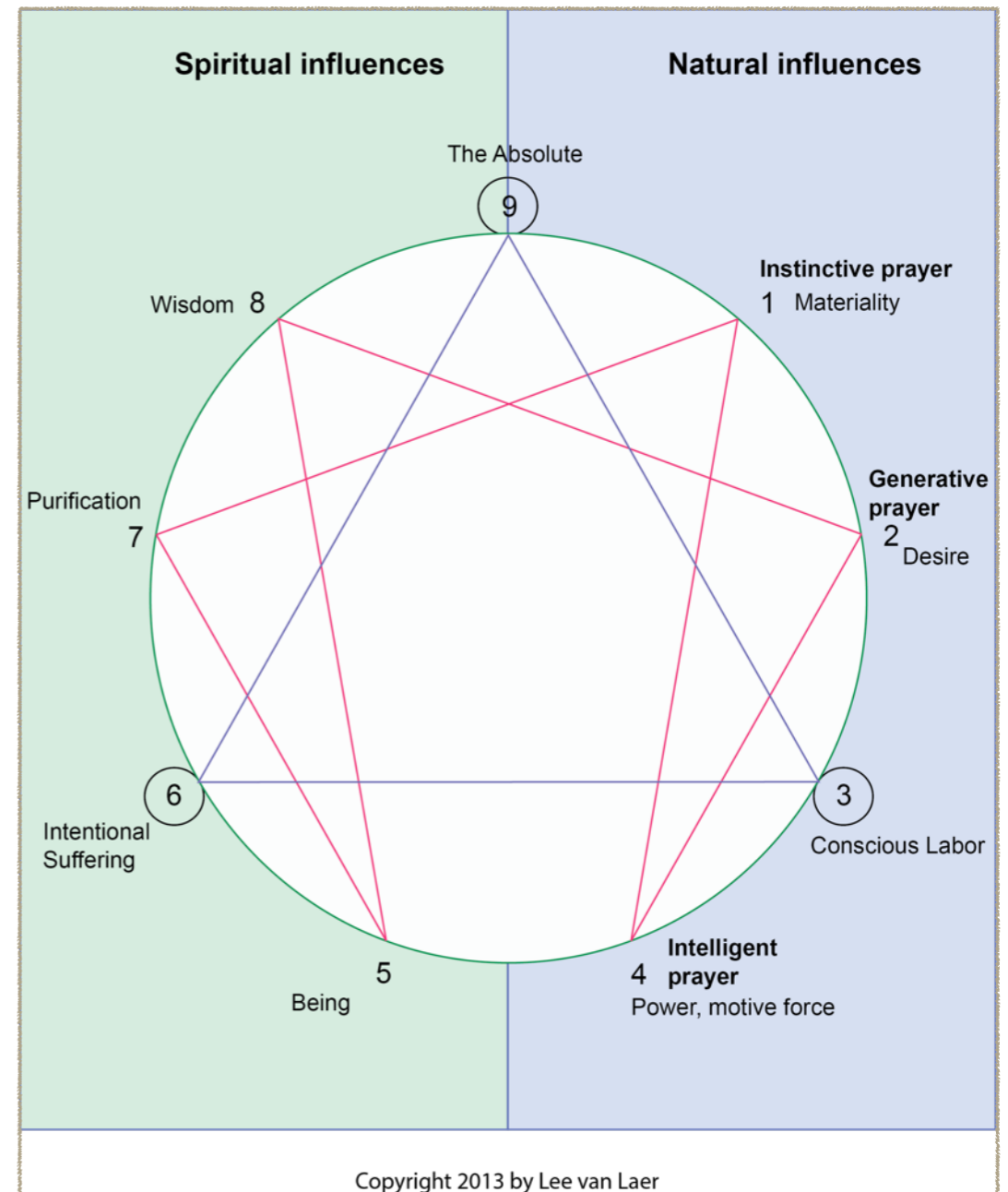
the expression of total being within a moment, then 1% of us becomes wish. This is an apt analogy, because when we work, we gradually become a blending of essence and personality—at least, that is, if any change takes place. At that point, we begin to draw active distinctions between essence and personality, and perhaps we know when we are invested in one or the other, and to what extent.

This is an important point of work for all of us. If we can't distinguish between a higher influence and our ordinary self, we know nothing, and very little is possible.

Chapter 28

THE HIERARCHY OF PRAYER

Prayer and the centers



The Structure of Prayer, Part 1

If we speak of three-centered prayer, it's inaccurate; because actually, all five of the lower centers engage in prayer. To be sure, the two higher centers also engage in prayer, but we need not concern ourselves with these at present, since their own version of prayer is not germane to our investigation from the point of view of this level.

The lower centers engage in prayer naturally, if they are allowed; and our ordinary, conventional understanding of prayer can interfere with this.

I could speak of the prayer of all five centers, but perhaps it's most useful to understand the prayer of the three principal centers we can have an effect on, that is, prayer of the mind, prayer of the body, and prayer of the feelings.

These prayers are arranged in a definite hierarchy, the lowest of which is prayer of the mind, and the highest of which is prayer

Conscious function

Feeling

Sensing

Thinking

Three-centered prayer

If three-centered, functions in conjunction with instinct and sexuality; represents power; note *fa* on the octave

Automatic function

Sexuality

Two-centered prayer

Functions automatically in conjunction with instinct; represents desire; note *mi* on the octave

Instinct

One-centered prayer

Functions without assistance; represents materiality; note *re* on the octave

of the feelings. Most of us are strictly familiar with prayer of the mind, because this kind of prayer, which stems from the intellect, is the most verbally accessible, and words are the language we most readily understand.

The languages of the body and the feelings are not properly understood as languages, even though they ought to be, so we don't correctly understand how to perceive them as prayer, even though they can organize themselves into prayer naturally if a right connection to higher energies is formed.

All yoga is actually a form of prayer; and the self-organization of the centers into prayer is what we might call intuitive yoga. Intuitive yoga is what yoga originated as; when yoga originally emerged as a practice, humanity was much closer to its spiritual roots, and most men and women had their inner eye opened quite naturally. As mankind's nature deteriorated, contact with the inner eye was lost; and yoga became an organized, as opposed to intuitive, practice. This does not mean that the intuitive, or natural, form of yoga was lost; the proclivity for this kind of yoga still resides innately with the unconscious (where Gurdjieff said man's undamaged conscience was located.) But this intuitive form of yoga, that is, prayer, is buried.

This intuitive kind of prayer is, ultimately, a study of attention; but intuitive yoga is allowing the attention to have an attention, not attempting to form an attention artificially. This particular point is persistently misunderstood by our ordinary

parts, who are functionally incapable of understanding things in any way other than "under their own control." Attention exists naturally and does not need forming; all that the initiate needs to do is become open to the force of attention, and it will appear without effort on the initiate's part. Admittedly, this takes a good deal of preparation; most often, decades of it. A good deal of the aim of Jeanne de Salzmann's work as expounded in *The Reality of Being* is the reorganization of yoga into its original and intuitive form; a work, by the way, which was one of the original aims of Gurdjieff's system, which, as I have noted before, is nothing more than yoga with all of the yoga jargon judiciously—and intentionally—excised from it.

At any event, let's get back to the subject of prayer.

Prayer must become active at all times. One simply cannot pray enough; another point which (despite [Conge's](#) concise observations on the matter) often seems to be lost on students of the Fourth Way, as well as everyone else—excepting perhaps the Muslims, who seem to have retained a soundly right valuation of this activity.

But one needs to understand prayer from the point of view of all three centers, and be actively engaged in within each one. It should be noted that intuitive yoga naturally produces this result if the development of the three centers is harmonious and balanced. It was one of the original aims of the

Gurdjieff work, in the form Gurdjieff encountered it (a very ancient form) before he adopted it to western ends and means.

The prayer of the mind is received through forms, and created on this level by the intellect and associations. It's helpful; it's necessary in order to conceptualize, which takes a more active form of thinking than just passive or rote interpretation. Gurdjieff described this kind of prayer when he was speaking to Ouspensky about prayer in *In Search of the Miraculous*. I say above, created on this level, but keep in mind that this kind of prayer has the potential to be informed by a much higher intelligence under the right conditions.

The second kind of prayer, prayer of the body, is received when the body develops an active attention of its own, and its own mind develops the capacity to work independently of the other two centers in a right way. (This "vivification of vibration" needs to take place before the body can work in active conjunction with the mind.) Without this correct relationship, prayer in the body cannot arise; but once it arises, it is forever present, as Brother Lawrence explained in his classic *The Practice of the Presence of God*.

The perpetual action of these two kinds of prayer will inevitably attract and engender the third form of intuitive prayer, prayer of the feelings. This is truly esoteric prayer which, although it can be described, is best left to the initiate to experience.

The Structure of Prayer, Part 2

The reason Buddhists invented prayer wheels was probably from an original understanding that all movement, all turning—in tantric practice, the whole universe and all the material in it is perpetually engaged in turning—is a sacred action, a form of prayer, in which all movement ultimately seeks a return to the transcendent source of arising. The centers in man are, like everything else in the universe, machines designed to form and recreate a relationship with the higher, in an ascending path towards the transcendent. This is what prayer, in its essence, is: the conscious effort to collect energy and return it to the source of its arising in God.

Man, because of his potential for consciousness, has a unique responsibility in this regard, but it can't be fulfilled without conscious participation in the form of prayer. Because man is iterated (created and expressed... or, so to speak, extruded) as a three-brained (and seven-centered) Being, he has not one but five total forms of physical prayer, or prayer-engines, active



within his lower Being-parts. (Hence the probable origin of the five-chakra systems of Tibetan Buddhist doctrines.)

They are nested within one another like Russian dolls; two of them (the foundational efforts at prayer) are automatic, and three of them require conscious participation.

If you refer to the first diagram of prayer, you'll see how prayer is structured and layered in man.

First of all, we have instinctive prayer, that is, automatic prayer regulated by the instinctive center. This kind of prayer, common to all one-centered beings, fulfills all the automatic being-functions necessary for the existence of life. It corresponds to materiality on the basic enneagram of prayer, that is, to the note re in the octave. This type of prayer needs no assistance from the conscious mind in order to function. I have personally verified that it is possible, under certain circumstances, for a yogi or yogin to develop a specific connection to this level of prayer, at which point one will understand automatically functioning sacred actions as exclusive entities, that is, without the interference of the ordinary mind or, indeed, any of the other functions.

Under these conditions one becomes the prayer or sacred action, so, if the example we take is breathing, one becomes the breathing, and there is no other existence, reality, or entity

other than the breathing. At this fundamental level of Reality one sees the "subjectively-absolute" nature of each level of action when taken unto itself, so that levels of prayer, while functioning parts of a fractal whole, can also be seen to exist as whole entities within themselves; hence the perfection of existence is completely contained and entirely reflected within each apparently disparate element.

This is, admittedly, an exotic experience, revealing the underpinnings of functions that we pay very little attention to and have almost no understanding of. (For example, with all the emphasis on attention to breathing in this, that or the other manner one encounters in pranayama, how many understand that the critical element in all of this is not howmuch one breathes, but how little one actually needs to breathe?) The bliss that Gurdjieff claims every three-brained Being ought to experience when taking in the second Being-food of air is related to the sacred action of prayer at the instinctive level. The satisfaction we feel when we eat is also related to this function; it easily becomes a vice.

An element that almost everyone is familiar with, however, is two-centered prayer, conducted by the conjunction of instinctive and sex center. The ultimate result of this much higher and more powerful level of prayer is orgasm. Gurdjieff called it "palpitating Self-oblivion;" and indeed, the action of orgasm produces a unique ecstasy which is entirely comparable to the "perfect oneness of being" I describe above as conse-

quent to a whole experience of instinctive prayer. Two-centered prayer is a function of materiality plus desire, represented by the notemi on the octave. Sex itself represents the culmination of automatic prayer, which is why very nearly the entire animal kingdom engages in sexual congress of one kind or another. Although, as biologists have puzzled over for over a century, sexual reproduction isn't necessary, (leaving the strictly evolutionary explanations for it somewhat wanting) it is most desirable from a sacred point of view; and the universe naturally produces what is most desirable to God.

Man has these one-centered and two-centered functions combined in him because they are foundational; one cannot construct a three-brained or three-centered being without the underpinnings of the one-and-two centered actions of prayer. Some of the "secret" reasons the yogic chakras exist and relate to one another in the first place are subtly related to this question, which has universal implications, but that is another issue which can't possibly be covered in this series.

The Structure of Prayer, Part 3

Every action aimed at inhabiting the attention is an action aimed at awakening prayer.

One could say that the whole aim of inner work is to awaken prayer within every moment. The three centers we are privileged to enjoy, the sensory apparatus we take impressions in through, are designed for prayer. And it's only in the conjunction of the three, as prayer gently and gradually awakens within the mind, the body, and then within the feelings, all in relationship with one another, that we discover a new and perpetually renewed meaning in life.

The essential meaning of life is in prayer; prayer is no dry, repetitive engagement with words, but a living and tactile encounter with the world around us.

The prayer of the mind, using words, perpetually turns us back towards an understanding that God exists and is with us at all times.

The prayer of the body, consistently receiving the grace and the blessing of God through every sensory impression that it takes in, speaks to us in a language that deepens our relationship to the world and to life.

The prayer of the feelings enhances our understanding that the experiences we have are sacred and consist of blessing after blessing.

I was speaking to a friend in the work over a month ago when she pointed out that every day brings blessings of this kind. This is what becomes possible when the centers work together. And this is just the beginning, as a study of it in the context of the enneagram reveals.

Three-centered prayer occupies the note fa on the enneagram, the position of power. It is the third iteration of prayer in the inner evolution of man, and confers — if it arises — the necessary force which must work in conjunction with Being to produce a higher level of prayer and understanding. But all three of the kinds of prayers are needed: the foundational and gravitational one-centered prayer of instinctive materiality, the generative two-centered prayer of emotion and

desire, and the intelligible three-centered prayer of power informed by consciousness.

All three of these kinds of prayer together form a re-mi-fa triad that serves as the precursor for a passage into the realm of Being. This work, characterized by the shock of conscious labor, serves as a preparation for passage from the natural, or ordinary material realm of prayer, into the spiritual, or divinely informed, realm of prayer. These two domains are vastly different. One is under largely mechanical influences; the other, Heavenly ones. I have deliberately chosen to describe the diagram in Swedenborgian terms, since his conceptualization of the two sides of the diagram suits the situation best.

One of the interesting things about three-centered prayer is that it represents the triad that provides the conscious shocks at the note fa. that is to say, the prayer of the mind, the body, and the feelings form the holy affirming, holy denying, and holy reconciling forces in the single note fa. There are relationships like this within every note on the enneagram, which one could spend a good deal of time contemplating. The point is, overall, that forces massed one within the other in an intricate blend of interactions that reminds us of neurological and cellular structures — which is exactly what they are. Swedenborg understood this quite fully, and blended his accomplished understanding of neurology as a mirror of

heaven intimately with his understanding of Divine love and Wisdom, Grace, and Prayer.

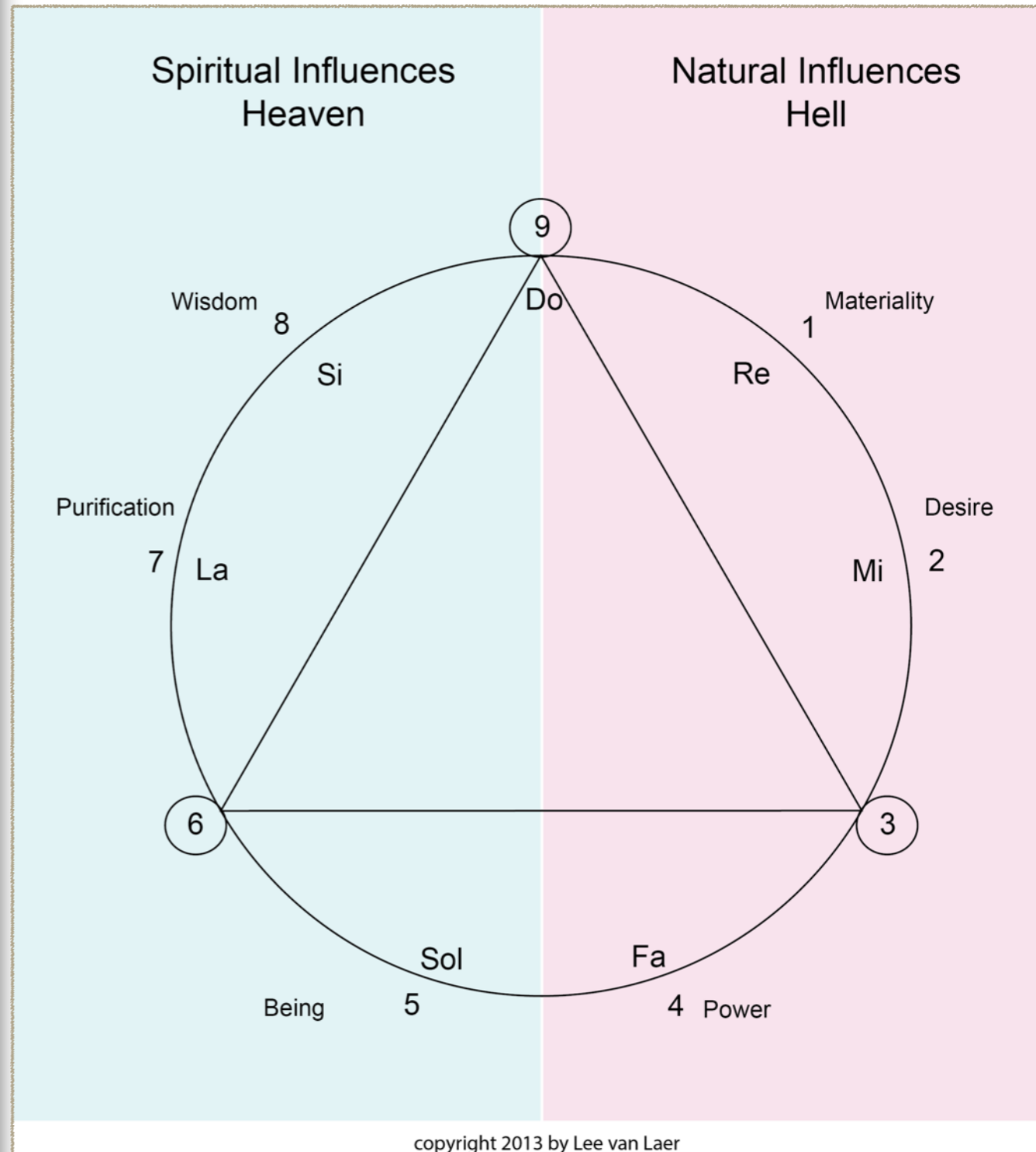
The action of prayer is the supremely transformational action. This is a central esoteric understanding in the Gurdjieff work, and, indeed, in every other legitimate spiritual practice. The understanding can't possibly be approached through any of the humanities or the ordinary sciences, and none of the results obtained by it have anything to do with the reductionist analysis of the world or the material interests of human beings. This is not a work for people interested in, as Ibn Arabi would call it, "worldly rubble." It benefits the soul alone.

It's important to keep this understanding in mind when working. Inner work cannot develop without right action of prayer.

Chapter 29

THE ENNEAGRAM AND DEATH; HEAVEN AND HELL

Dante, Swedenborg, and the enneagram



The Enneagram and Death



In this chapter, we're going to take up a subject that will explain some features of Dante's inferno and Swedenborg's Heaven and Hell which seem contradictory unless one understands both the enneagram and the nature of death itself.

The enneagram is divided into two realms, the spiritual and the natural. Transition from the right side of the diagram — the natural — into the left side, which is the spiritual, represents the transition from ego, or personality, into Being, or essence. A human being is meant to accomplish this transition during their lifetime.

At the moment of actual, physical death, the progress around the perimeter of the diagram ends. All of the actions that were possible on this level, whereby energies are exchanged according to the principles of the law of three and the law of seven, cease. At this point is obtained what one might call a lawful result. In any event, whatever has taken place within the evolution of this

octave, it is now a fixed entity. So what you are when you die cannot be changed.

In this way, individuals who are still trapped within the vicious circle of the natural side of the diagram, that is, materiality, desire, and power, are in hell. Because there are three aspects of hell: Materiality, Desire and Power, each one of which is made up of a subordinate octave of the same three qualities, hell has nine levels. Each level expresses a particular quality of understanding, all of which fall short of real Being.

In the same way, Heaven has nine levels composed of three "major" levels, Being, Purification, and Wisdom, each one of which contains three reconciled qualities within it. This is how we arrive at the structure of Dante's heaven and hell, which were legitimate divine revelations on concise particulars.

Swedenborg's heaven and hell are composed of three levels each, because Swedenborg was reporting from a more generalized level of detail regarding the actual structure of heaven and hell. Each of his three levels is subdivided, if one understands the principle according to the enneagram, into three levels of its own.

The important point is that the diagram represents the transitional stage for man. If a man does not pass from the natural to the spiritual side of the diagram during his lifetime, through the spiritual effort that is required while he is forming, he is trapped in the natural or right-hand side of the diagram, which is dominated by egoism and personality. This is exactly how Swedenborg described the nature of those who end up in hell; and the left-hand side of the diagram represents those who have passed into spiritual influences, which is exactly what he said is necessary in order to enter heaven.

The right-hand side of the enneagram represents egoism, and above all selfishness, since all of the forces that dominate it are selfish ones in which the individual under the influence thinks only of themselves and how they can get and keep what is around them, always at the expense of others. Because this is the way the overwhelming majority of outward life is arranged, and because it represents such an inescapable attraction, most of us find ourselves in this piece of territory throughout most of our lives.

The left-hand side of the diagram represents a movement into community, where real Being, once manifest, acknowledges its subordinate position. This movement into relationship is accompanied by a determination to serve the greater good and to help others.

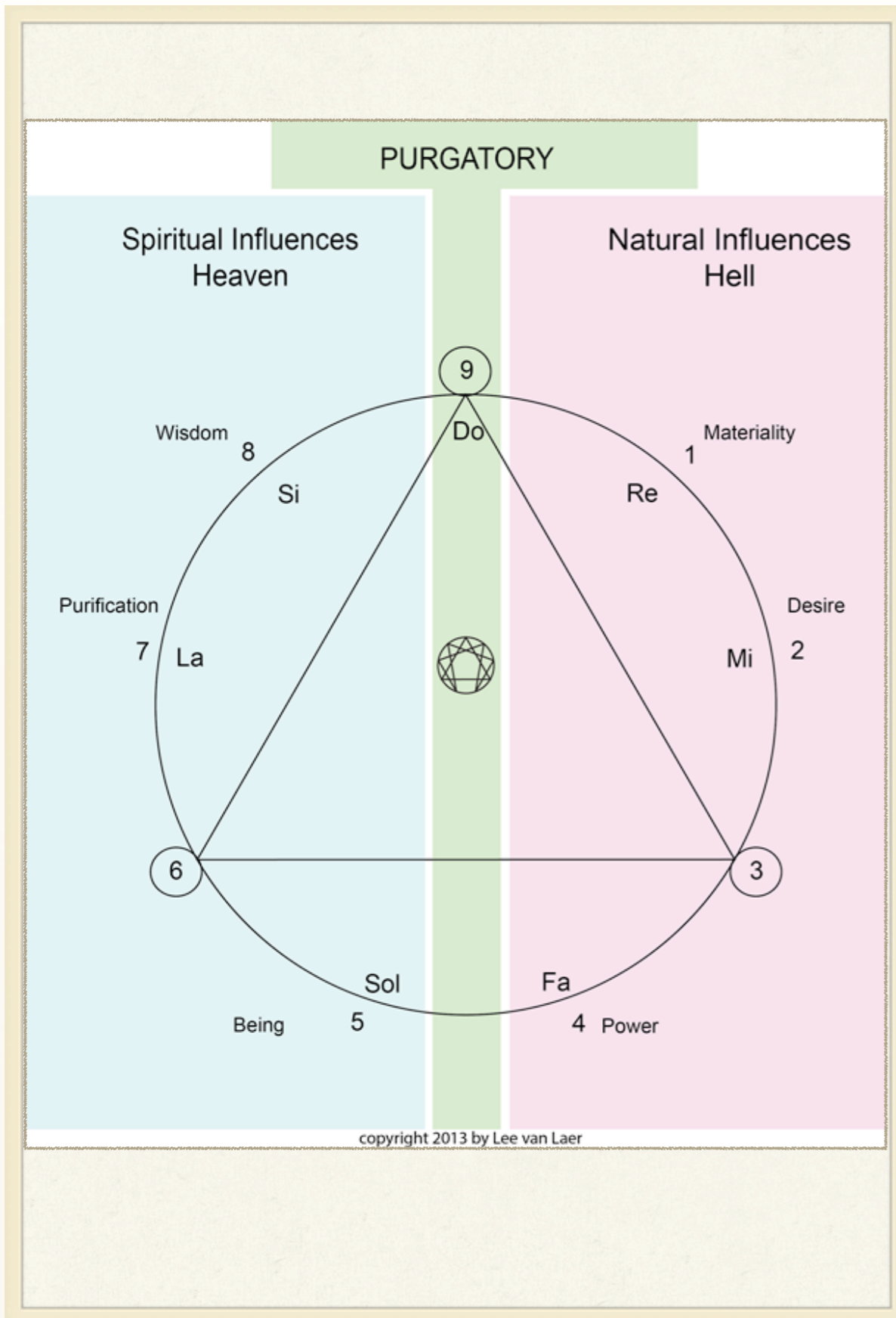
In this way, the enneagram provides us with a map both the process of life and death, and the nature of heaven and hell, all wrapped up in a single neat diagram that shows the interplay of forces and what happens after death. Along the way, it unites three major cosmological interpretations of heaven and hell — Dante's, Swedenborg's, and Gurdjieff's—each one of which, by the way, are entirely accurate, and all of which consonant when seen from the right point of view.

Purgatory

Readers of the last post are undoubtedly asking where purgatory lies in the scheme of heaven and hell.

We glean this from the structure of heaven as depicted by the diagram. Heaven and hell, lying so close as they do to God himself, are both subject exclusively to the law of three. This is why each one of these regions is divided into three levels — each of which levels, as I pointed out in the last post, is divided into three levels of its own.

But Purgatory is a separate and intermediate entity, so to speak, and as such, is subject to the law of seven — not the law of three. That is because unlike heaven and hell, where developmental possibilities have been completed, purgatory represents a final opportunity for development. That development cannot be accomplished without the interaction of both laws.



Readers will remember that Dante, in the Divine Comedy, accurately describes purgatory as having seven levels. The Divine comedy is, for all its apparently worldly trappings, a high esoteric text, with many precise revelations about the nature of the cosmos. It is here that we find the definitive description of purgatory is subject to the law of seven; and even though this may not have been a specific subject of Swedenborg's, the implication of development within Purgatory — the opportunity to complete that which is incomplete — assigns the action here to the law of seven.

Swedenborg explained that no soul dies in a state that is absolutely prepared for heaven; all of them who are qualified still need instruction, and this parallels the idea of purgatory in both Dante and Gurdjieff. Because we know that the progression of the law of octaves involves manifestation and submission, we do see an overall correspondence of concept between the three systems.

It's possible to understand of the entire process of creation and evolution as a process of purification; a concentration of coarser elements into finer and finer substances. The interaction of the law of three in the law of seven itself represents, in its essence, and action of purification, since purification has to be the ultimate aim and goal within the circulation of the octave. Purgatory, in other words, represents an octave of its own. Although there is no literal place for it in the diagram, we might conceive of purgatory as a "secret octave,"

an unseen yet absolutely necessary action that takes place in all souls throughout the process of life, and continuing after the process of death. If we were able to expand the plumb line that separates the two sides of the enneagram, we would discover an intermediary region between heaven and hell that comprises an octave of its own — and this is purgatory.

Although the diagram is strictly conceptual, it proposes an unusual situation. While heaven and hell are each directly proximate to God, the level that leads to heaven — purgatory — is the last level on which the law of seven interacts with the law of three. There is no simple way to depict this on the diagram, so we have to make do with an approximation.

A further note about the diagram seems in order. Swedenborg explained that heaven and hell are perfect mirrors of one another — which is, indeed, what we see when we look at the division of the diagram into heaven and hell. So the diagram contains an accurate visual representation of the arrangement Swedenborg described, up to and including the idea that the lowest level of heaven — note Sol — is directly proximate to the highest level of hell, note Fa.

I've put together a chart mapping the levels of heaven and hell — which, as Swedenborg so explicitly reports, are inner states, not places — according to this system at the following link. Just for fun, I have correlated the "seven" deadly sins

The nine levels of Heaven

Level	Influence	Quality
9	Wisdom	wisdom of intellect
8	Wisdom	wisdom of emotion
7	Wisdom	wisdom of movement
6	Purification	purity of intellect
5	Purification	purity of emotion
4	Purification	purity of movement
3	Being	being of intellect
2	Being	being of emotion
1	Being	being of movement

conscious influences

The nine levels of Hell

Level	Influence	Quality	Deadly sins
9	Power	power of intellect	pride; hubris
8	Power	power of emotion	vainglory
7	Power	power of movement	forcefulness
6	Desire	desire of intellect	Despair
5	Desire	desire of emotion	wrath; anger
4	Desire	desire of movement	Physical lust
3	Materiality	materiality of intellect	greed
2	Materiality	materiality of emotion	Sloth
1	Materiality	materiality of movement	gluttony

unconscious influences

to the various levels of hell. As readers can see, there are actually more than seven deadly sins, and I have had to use some creative impulses to make this list sensible. Still, I think people will get the gist of it.

One could draw many interesting inferences about the nature of Being from this particular arrangement and explanation. I leave it to the reader to ponder the implications.

Chapter 30

BIOLOGICAL ENNEAGRAMS

A group of speculations with enneagrams related to physics, biology and evolution.



Molecular Intelligence

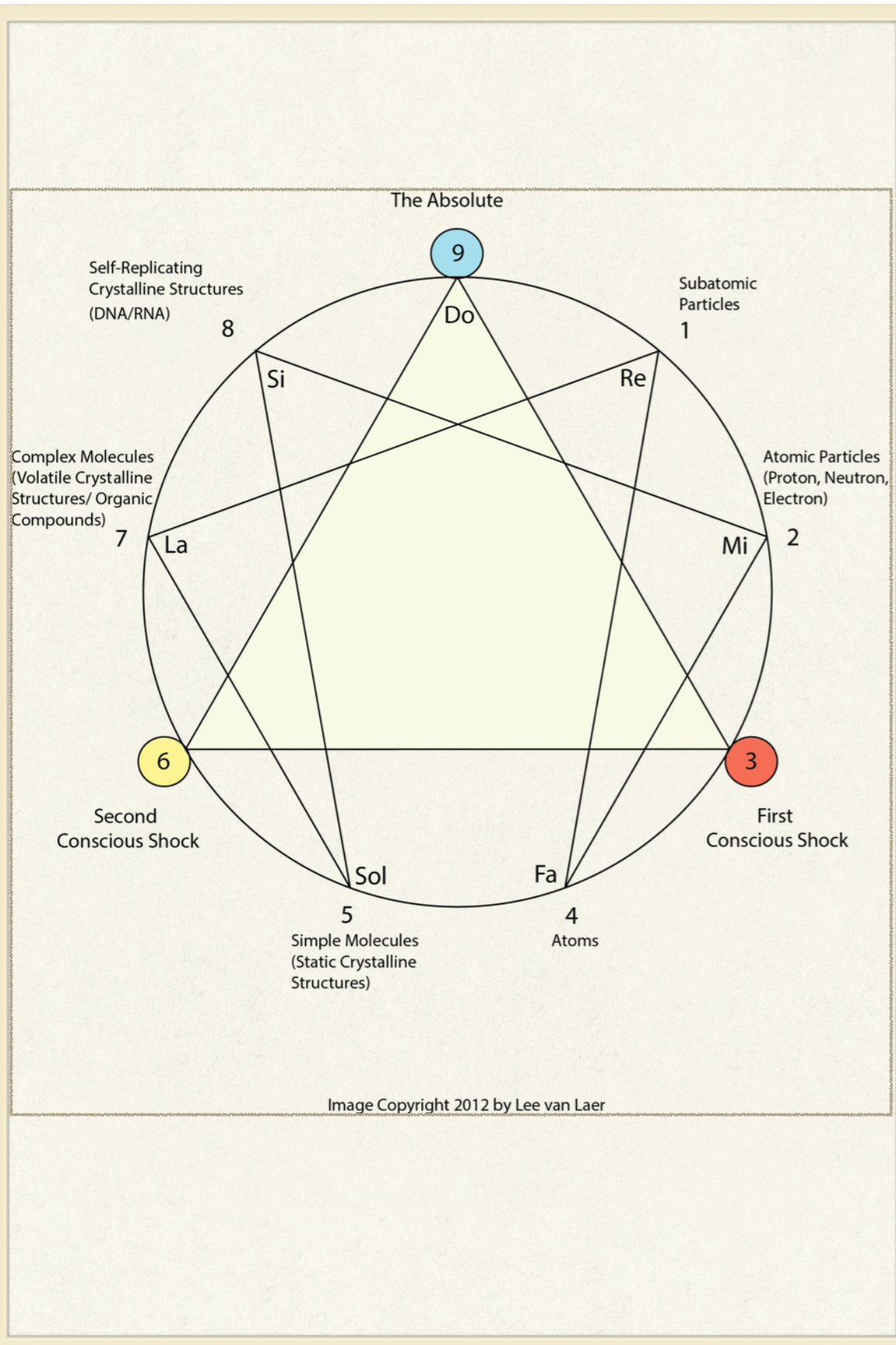
There's a good deal of speculation in today's philosophy, and biology, about how thinking works, what consciousness consists of, and man's place in the spectrum of awareness. According to Edward O. Wilson, for example, bees can be said to think. Dogs can also think. But they don't think like we do.

How does their thinking differ from that of man, and why?

The answers to this may not be so readily apparent, but the enneagram provides a ready structural approach to the question, as I will demonstrate.

First of all, we need to understand that consciousness is an inherent property of the universe, not a unique aberration.

Modern scientists describe “information” as the most essential (and basically indestructible) property of energy and matter, but fail to understand that information is, in itself, a form of intelli-



gence that manifests according to scale, in a fractal manner, in compliance with the laws of emergence.

Contrary to the overall laws of entropy, information in the universe organizes itself in lawfully predictable hierarchies.

What this means, in plain English, is that everything is alive—as Gurdjieff said to Ouspensky.

Furthermore, everything is intelligent, that is, it contains information in structures displaying relative degrees of order.

Said intelligence displays increasingly sophisticated interactive abilities, up to and including self-awareness, according to the level of its "note," as defined within the development of a particular octave. We might say that intelligence is determined by the ability of matter to interact. This is what Gurdjieff was alluding to when he told Ouspensky that a baked potato is more intelligent than a raw potato. In cooking, the carbohydrate molecules in the potato have developed enhanced abilities to interact with the digestive system in a man.

Second, it's important to understand that thinking and consciousness, in the context of the planet earth, form a completed octave. Different levels of biological consciousness are

manifested as notes on this octave. We might refer to this as "The Octave of Biological Intelligence."

In order to understand this, we first need to examine the question of atomic and molecular intelligence, which establish the foundational nature of intelligence and consciousness as they manifest in the universe.

The Octave of Molecular Intelligence is constructed in the following manner. (Click on the link to see a diagram.)

Do = emergent energy (dark matter/dark energy)

Re = subatomic particles

Mi = electrons, protons and neutrons

---first conscious shock---

Fa = atoms

Sol = simple molecules (static crystalline structures, eg. quartz)

La = volatile crystalline structures/organic compounds

Si = self replicating crystalline structures

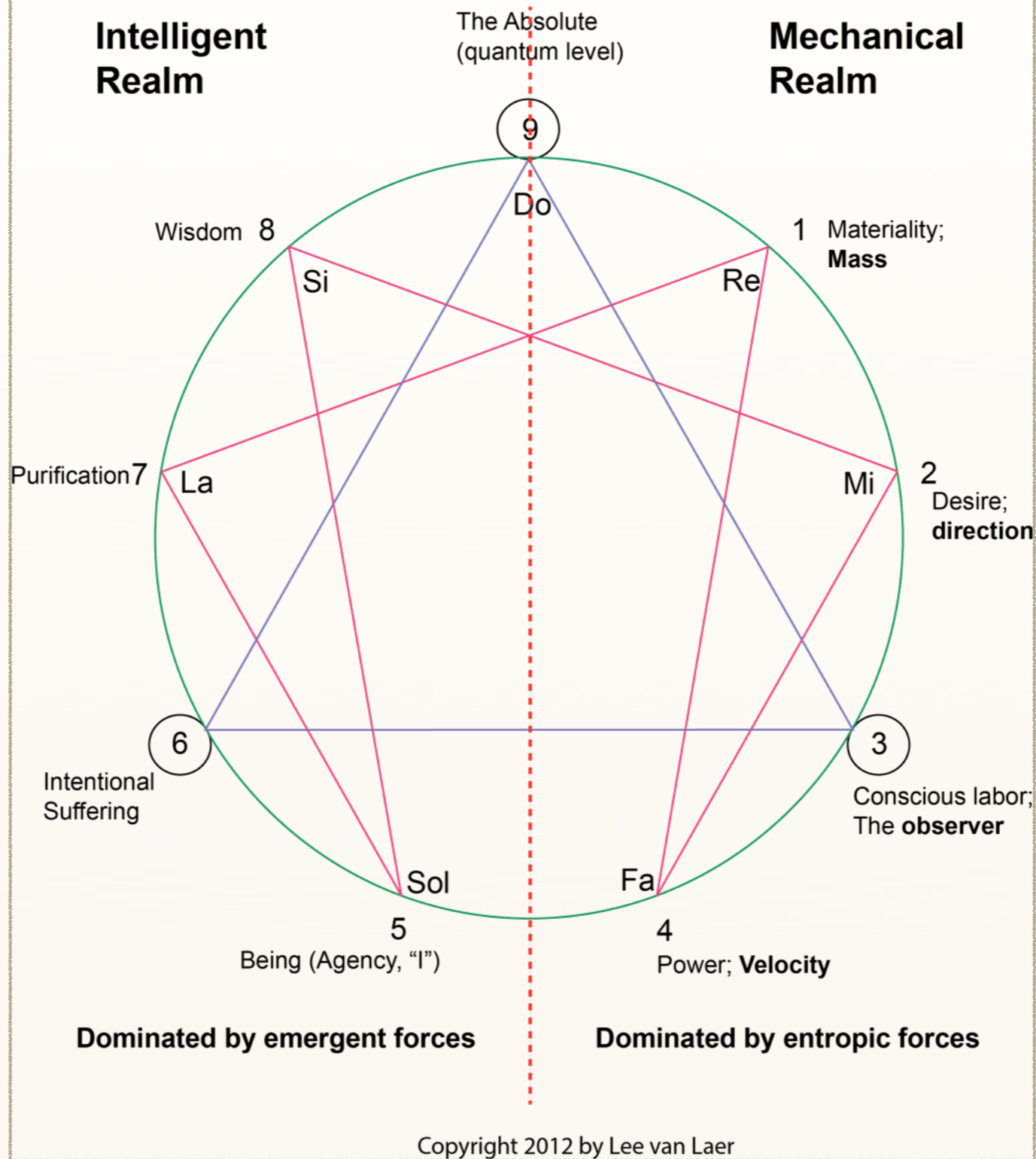
--second conscious shock--

Do = Biological level of consciousness.

With each step along the diagram, an increasing level of organization and complexity emerges, with properties that cannot be predicted strictly by looking at the elements that produce them. There are, furthermore, two levels at which quantum leaps take place between the nature of the constituent components and their resultant material entities. Atoms, the "Lego blocks" of the standard model in physics, represent an entire level of order higher than their subatomic constituents. And self-replicating crystalline structures forming entities such as RNA and DNA, that is, biological molecules, represent a quantum leap from "standard," that is, static, self replicating crystalline structures.

The critical point is that what enters between "Si" and "Do" in this first octave allows for the development of what is called agency—the ability of a molecular structure to undertake action on its own behalf. This is the difference between static self replicating crystalline structures, which can assemble themselves only under specific conditions over which they have no control, and molecular structures such as viral RNA, which can actively seek out the conditions under which replication is favorable. Agency represents the dividing line between the octave of molecular intelligence and the next-higher octave of biological intelligence.

The Quantum Enneagram



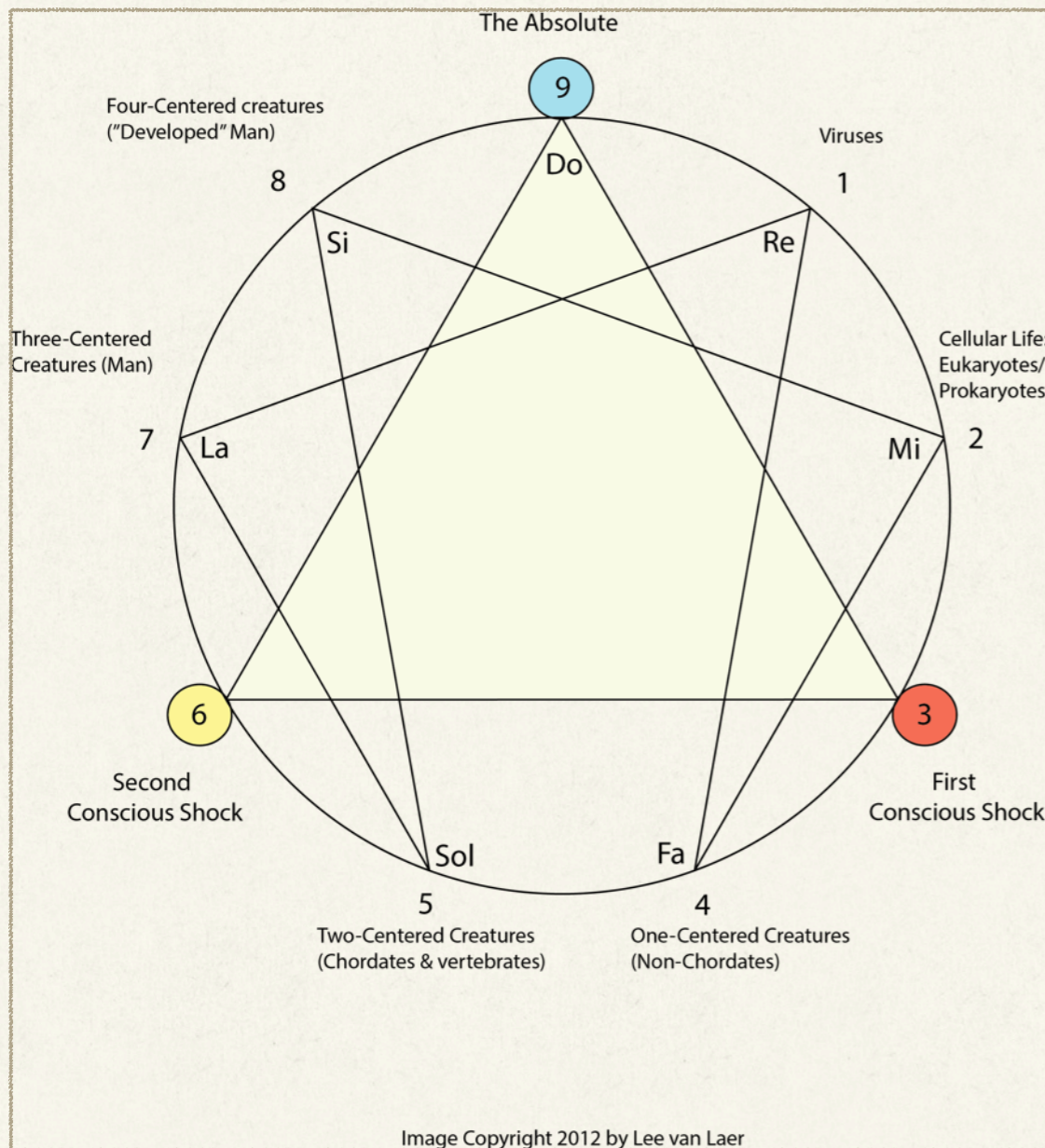
Biological Intelligence

The Octave of Biological Intelligence represents the development of intelligence within the context of life on earth. It helps to have a basic understanding of biology in order to see how this works, but it's not absolutely necessary.

Roughly speaking, it can be charted out like this:

Do = Matter.

Re = Viruses, mechanical intelligence. This is the intelligence of crystalline substances, which represent, by and large, what Castaneda called inorganic consciousnesses. (RNA and DNA are, in strictly technical terms, crystalline structures.) These differentiate themselves from self replicating molecules without the intelligence made inherent to this particular octave by the presence of agency. Atoms and molecules in the octave below this do not display the property of agency. All of the organisms within the



Earth octave display this property, which is the property we usually use to define the word "life."

Mi = Cellular intelligence, also mechanical. One level of organization up from viruses, including both prokaryotes and eukaryotes—that is, cells with and without an organized nucleus. This is the point where conventional biology as we generally understand it emerges from inorganic consciousness. (In this regard, viruses form a question mark in the field of biology, although the enneagram clearly illustrates exactly where they fall.) Formed from the building blocks of crystalline substances, cells are an emergent level of interactive awareness, or agency.

---first conscious shock--

Fa = The intelligence of moving Center, one centered creatures. These are highly emergent creatures of an entirely different order with distinctly differentiated organs and neural networks. Represented in part by the phyla Arthropoda (insects, spiders, crustaceans, etc.) and Mollusca (clams, cephalopods.) These creatures can display an unusually high degree of order.

This is the first true "mind" as defined by Gurdjieff, who explained that each center represents a fully formed and independent mind of its own; a mind capable of a complete

range of thinking within its own context. These minds, while still "mechanical" from a certain point of view, represent a much higher order of thought than bacterial, single-celled, and simple colonial organisms. What Gurdjieff called "conscious labor" results in the expression of "I am" in organisms formed from multiple interacting communities, referred to as organs in biology.

Sol = The addition of an emotional center. Two-centered creatures. Represented, in general, by all chordate organisms.*

La = The addition of a thinking center. Three-centered creatures. Represented by man, and potentially cetaceans.

Si = A three-centered creature who has developed to what Gurdjieff would have called "Man number Four." This is the necessary step before the implementation of the second shock, which involves surrender.

--second conscious shock--

Do = A higher level of consciousness.

* It should be noted that each note contains a whole octave within itself, leading to divisions of sophistication, intelligence, and consciousness within each class of creatures itself, so that the note "Sol," for example, representing the introduction of emotional intelligence in chordate animals, displays a range of emotive capacity ranging from very nearly none (most fish, for example) up through two-centered animals forming very complex social communities, such as birds and elephants. In another example, bees and ants represent the highest level of development for the octave under the note "Fa."

Basically, with a right understanding of the enneagram, this type of analysis can be applied to multiple systems in order to understand how complexity develops and, through the naturally emergent properties of matter, expresses itself as consciousness. The octave we're examining here happens, of course, to form a particular note in the development of an octave above us in the cosmic scale. It is lawful that information about the octave we are in contains much information about the octave above us, and even the nature of the note we occupy. Hence Gurdjieff's third obligolian striving.

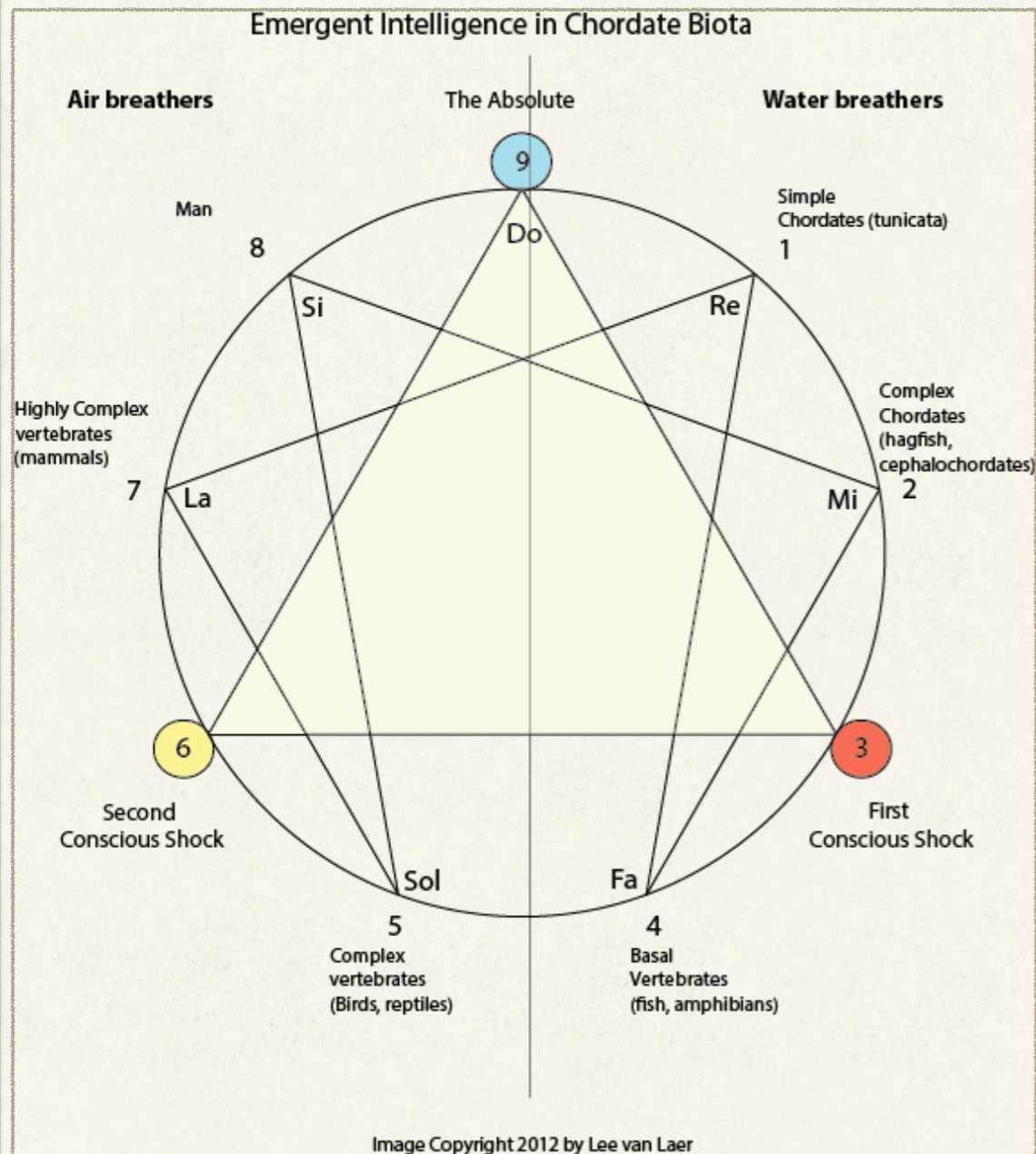
There are further implications here regarding the incorrect location of the second shock, and its placement between Sol (moving + emotional creatures) and La (moving + emotional + thing creatures) which deserve further examination.

Chordate Intelligence

This particular diagram takes a stab at showing how evolution itself follows octaves of development. That is to say, there is a definite scale of vibration that applies to the complexity of organisms.

Although this may seem like a reach to the reader, Gurdjieff made clear indications of this in his explanation of the ray of creation and the function of the octave in the development of organisms:

“Like everything in nature the human body which represents a certain whole bears both within and without the same correlations. According to the number of the notes of the octave and its ‘intervals,’ the human body has nine basic measurements expressed by the numbers of a definite measure. In individuals these numbers of course differ widely but within certain definite limits. These nine basic measurements, giving a full octave of the first order, by combining in a certain definite way pass into measurements of subordinate octaves, which give rise in their



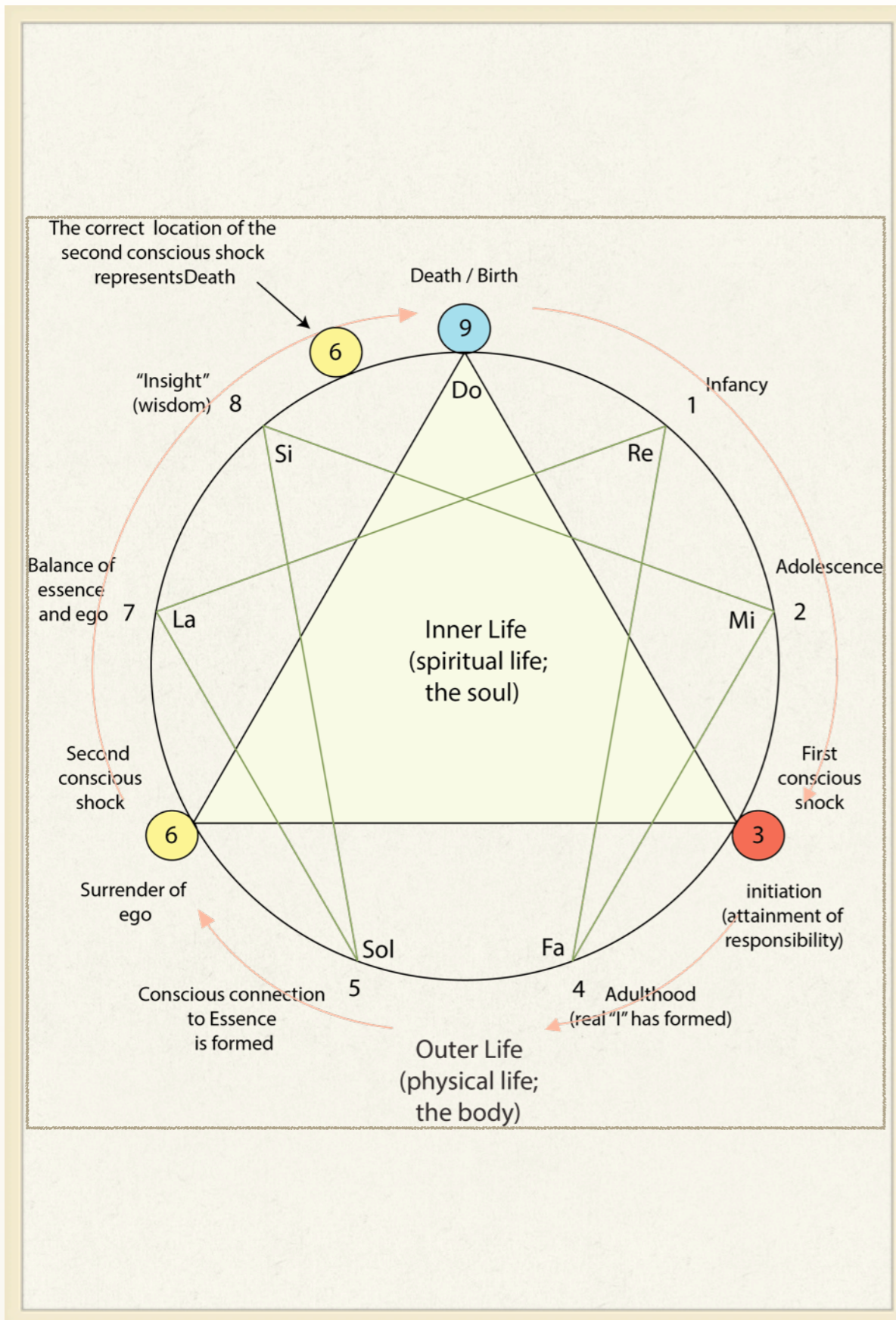
turn to other subordinate octaves, and so on. In this way it is possible to obtain the measurements of any member or any part of the human body as they are all in a definite relationship to one another.”

Excerpt taken from *In Search of the Miraculous* by P. D. Ouspensky, pub. Paul H. Crompton Ltd, 2004, p 135.

Given his unambiguous indication that the law of octaves determines absolutely everything, the complexity of organisms must of necessity proceed according to this law, with clearly discernible divisions, and in fact we do see such a hierarchy, which biologists have argued over for generations without resolving. The point is that the hierarchy follows a specific set of laws.

While this diagram should not be considered as set in stone, it gives us a rough idea of how these things proceed. One should note that it will take biologists many years of study to truly understand these principles, and no such study of any kind has been undertaken yet.

The Cycle of Life



This diagram takes basic principles discussed in many of the other diagrams and applies it to a single human life, from birth to death. Although the names for various features in the landscape change, they all refer to related or similar concepts.

It ought to be noted that physical death is located between the notes Si and Do in the above diagram. Although the requirement for this second shock is the requirement of a conscious shock, in the case of biological life, the shock is mechanical — that is, inevitable, lawful, and unavoidable — and cannot serve exactly the same purpose that it does if the shock is invoked intentionally.

It ought to be made clear here that the whole point of inner work is to die before the mechanical death of the physical body. This is exactly how Gurdjieff referred to awakening:

"It is impossible to awaken completely all at once. One must first begin to awaken for short moments. But one must die all at once and forever after having made a certain effort, having surmounted a certain obstacle, having taken a certain decision from which there is no going back. This would be difficult, even impossible, for a man, were it not for the slow and gradual awakening which precedes it."

Excerpt taken from *In Search of the Miraculous* by P. D. Ouspensky, pub. Paul H. Crompton Ltd, 2004, p2199.

Gurdjieff also made some remarks to Ouspensky about what may become possible for a man at the moment of death:

"But is it not possible for man to be at once transposed to another stage of being by a wave of emotion?" someone asked.

"I do not know," said G., "we are again talking in different languages. A wave of emotion is indispensable, but it cannot change moving habits; it cannot of itself make centers work rightly which all their lives have been working wrongly. To change and repair this demands separate, special, and lengthy work. Then you say: transpose a man to another level of being. But from this point of view a man does not exist for me. There is a complex mechanism consisting of a whole se-

ries of complex parts. 'A wave of emotion' takes place in one part but the other parts may not be affected by it at all. No miracles are possible in a machine. It is miracle enough that a machine is able to change. But you want all laws to be violated."

"What of the robber on the cross?" asked one of those present. "Is there anything in this or not?"

"That is another thing entirely," said G., "and it illustrates an altogether different idea. In the first place it took place on the cross, that is, in the midst of terrible sufferings to which ordinary life holds nothing equal; secondly, it was at the moment of death. This refers to the idea of man's last thoughts and feelings at the moment of death. In life these pass by, they are replaced by other habitual thoughts. There can be no prolonged wave of emotion in life and therefore it cannot give rise to a change of being.

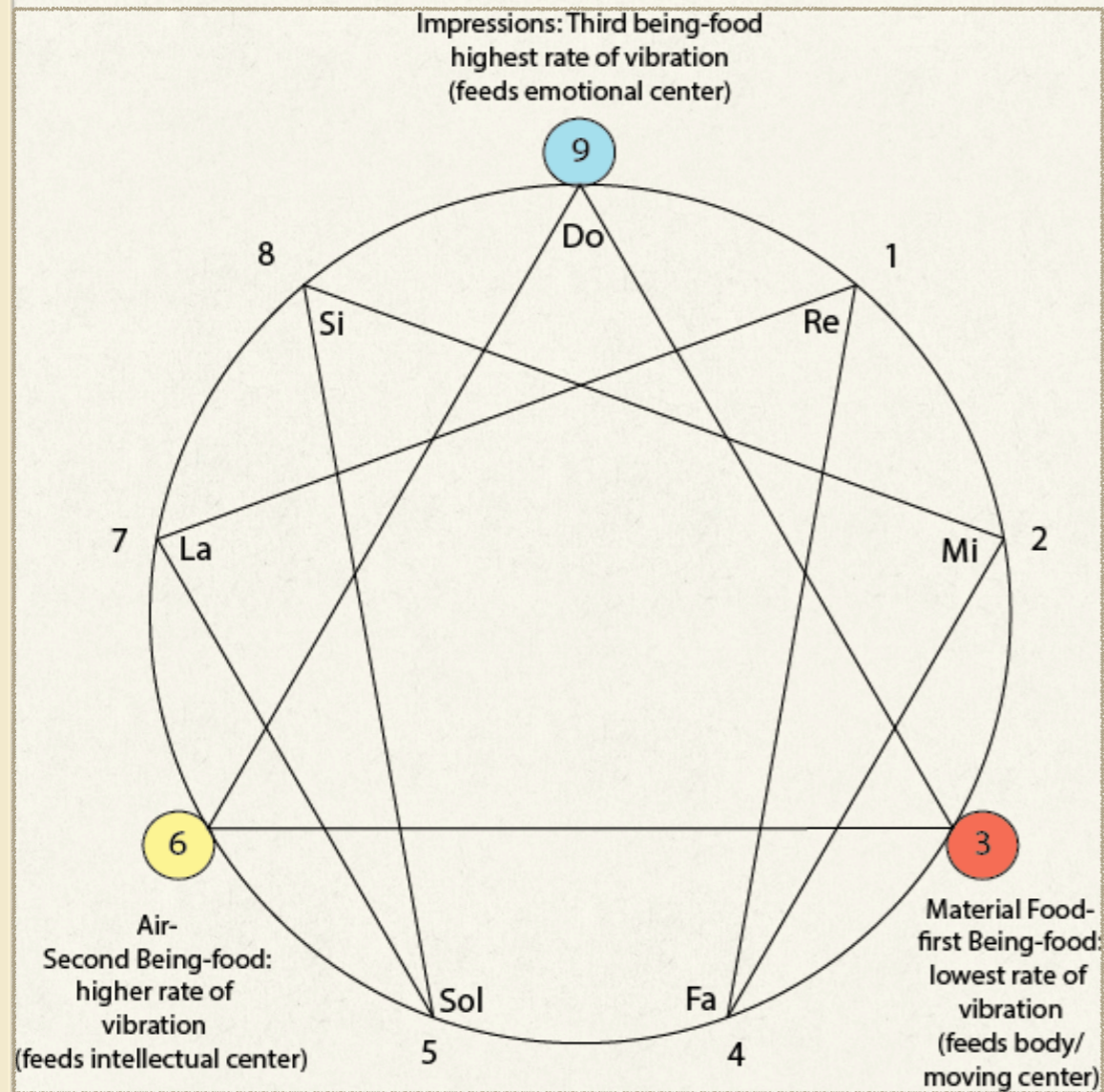
Chapter 31

BEING-FOODS

Being-foods and the enneagram



Being-foods in Man



In my general ponderings about the enneagram, essence, conscience, and related topics, this morning, my questions came around to an old subject—that is, being-foods in man and the universe.

Because, as Gurdjieff taught us, man is an accurate model of the universe in miniature, we can readily understand the idea that the universe has three being-foods, just as man does.

It's not difficult to relate man's three being foods to the law of three on the enneagram, and I have done so in this diagram. Each type of food, having a different rate of vibration, is appropriate to a different center, whose rate of vibration is at a corresponding speed.

What we see is that each center has a food appropriate to its own work.

What makes the subject more interesting to me is what happens when we look at the same diagram as applied to the universe. Readers can see this diagram at the following link, which also allows you to interactively toggle back and forth between being-foods of man and being-foods of the universe.

Readers who have been following my recent musings will know of my essays about the connections between the creation and nature of material reality, the flow of time, and my consequent inferences about the relationship between the consciousness of man and the consciousness of God. Let's just say that these subjects are all intimately connected.

The bottom line here is that the universe, like human beings, feeds on the material around it, and is constructed of it. The law of Trogoautoegocrat— I eat myself— is wholly expressed in the enneagram.

Matter itself—elemental matter—is the first being-food of the universe, the material food of the universe, which represents the initial incarnation of the divine in the flow of material downwards through the rate of creation. It's easy to understand how this works: the physical body, or moving center, of the universe, the vehicle through which all of the universe is expressed, is composed of matter. Matter itself represents the Holy Denying force: energy, emitted from the wholeness of

God, manifests itself as its own “I am—I wish to be”— a separate entity from God.

Time is the second being-food of the universe, playing the same role that air plays for man. Gurdjieff said to Ouspensky, " Time is breath— try to understand this." ([In Search Of The Miraculous, P. D. Ouspensky, page 213, Paul H. Crompton Ltd. edition 2004.](#))

Given that air is, in man, the "food" of intellectual center, let's take a shot at it, presuming that time plays a similar role in the universe.

The intelligence of the universe, its character and everything it knows, develops only through time. It is the progressive and interactive nature of relationship that creates meaning. The intellect of the universe, its ability to see, think, and understand itself, can only be developed by consuming the medium of time. Matter must surrender itself back into God through time: everything submits itself to time, creating its relationship to the second prayer, "Lord have Mercy." (See the diagram at this link for the position of the two prayers on the enneagram.)

The prayer "Lord have Mercy" is located on the diagram at the same place where Time, the Merciless Heropass, acts as the second shock in the universal octave. Time has no mercy... hence the prayer to the Lord to provide it.

The third being-food of the universe is Love. This force is at the highest rate of vibration, representing the point at which Divine Influence initiates and informs the entire octave of the universe. It corresponds to the food of impressions in man; and indeed, in the essay on the flow of time and its nature (see the above link) it turns out that the consumption of impressions is essential to the identity of Divinity, in its ongoing effort to know itself fully. This subject is treated in more detail in the essay on Chakras and the Enneagram.

Anyway, I thought readers would find this line of inquiry interesting. It's far from a complete work; nonetheless, the suggestions are provocative.

In summing all of this up, it occurred to me that it's possible to distill Gurdjieff's approach into a very few concise words. The Work consists of the following efforts and responsibilities, each one related to its own position on the enneagram in the law of three:

Always Beginning (note "do")

Always Working (first conscious shock- conscious labor)

Always Giving Back (second conscious shock- intentional suffering)

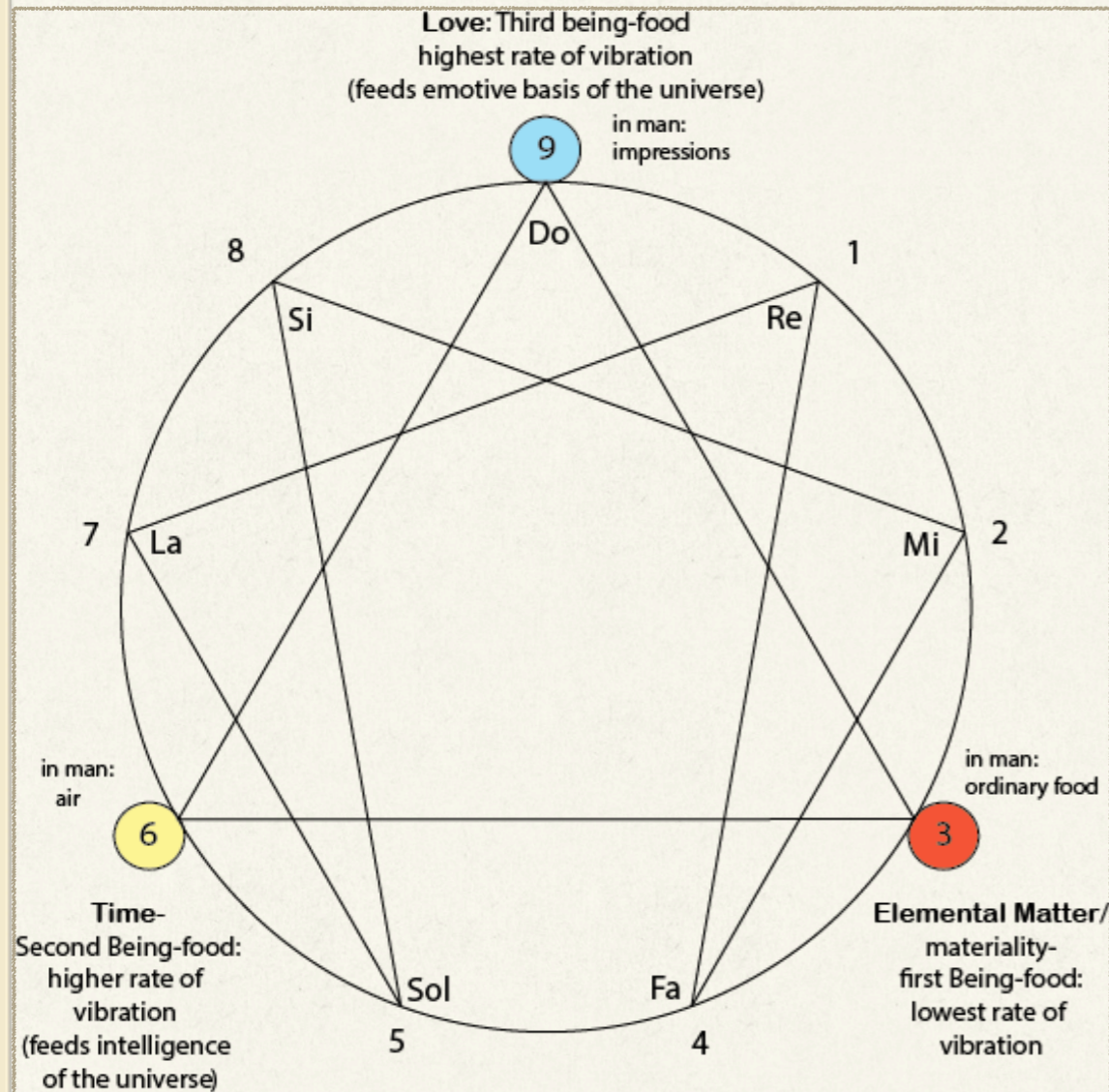
These three principles, applied throughout the development of any object, event, condition, or circumstance, are what we might call right action.

There are some further important inferences to draw here from the nature of time, its position on the diagram, and the sorrow of His Endlessness, but they cannot be addressed in this essay, which has more than enough theory in it already.

On a more practical note, it's hardly a theoretical exercise to try and have a conscious impression of the digestion, breathing, and impressions (especially as they may arrive under the influence of forces above the top of the head.) We are always in the midst of taking in all three being-foods.

To be human— to be a man without quotation marks— is to sense this organically.

Being-foods in the Universe



In order to understand this particular diagram, it's critical that readers refer to the remark made in *In Search of the Miraculous*:

“There is a great deal of material in what you have just said,” said G., “but this material must be elaborated. If you can find out how to elaborate the material that you have now, you will understand a great deal that has not occurred to you till now. For example, take note that time is different in different cosmoses. And it can be calculated exactly, that is, it is possible to establish exactly how time in one cosmos is related to the time of another cosmos.

“I will add only one thing more:

“Time is breath--try to understand this.”

The law of being-foods applies at all levels of the universe, and the universe itself has three principal being foods, of which the second is time. Understanding the interactions of these three being foods has a great deal to do with understanding the elementary structure of the cosmos.

Another interesting remark which is related but not necessarily germane to this diagram is below:

"I tried to remember everything that G. had said about cosmoses.

“Each cosmos is an animate and intelligent being. Each cosmos is born, lives, and dies. In one cosmos it is impossible to understand all the laws of the universe, but three cosmoses taken together include in themselves all the laws of the universe, or two cosmoses, the one above and the other below, determine the cosmos which stands between them.” “By passing in his consciousness to the level of a higher cosmos, a man by this very fact passes to a level of a lower cosmos.”

—In *Search of the Miraculous* by P. D. Ouspensky, pub. Paul H. Crompton Ltd, 2004, p. 333.

It should be noted that this cryptic remark is an allusion to the development of sensation on the cellular level, which is a manifestation of what Jeanne de salzmann called “permanent” sensation of the body. Such sensation is, in inner circles, widely agreed to be the manifestation of the development of the astral body.

Chapter 32

THE ENNEAGRAM AND THE REALITY OF BEING

A brief discourse on the relationship between de
Salzmann's teachings and the diagram.



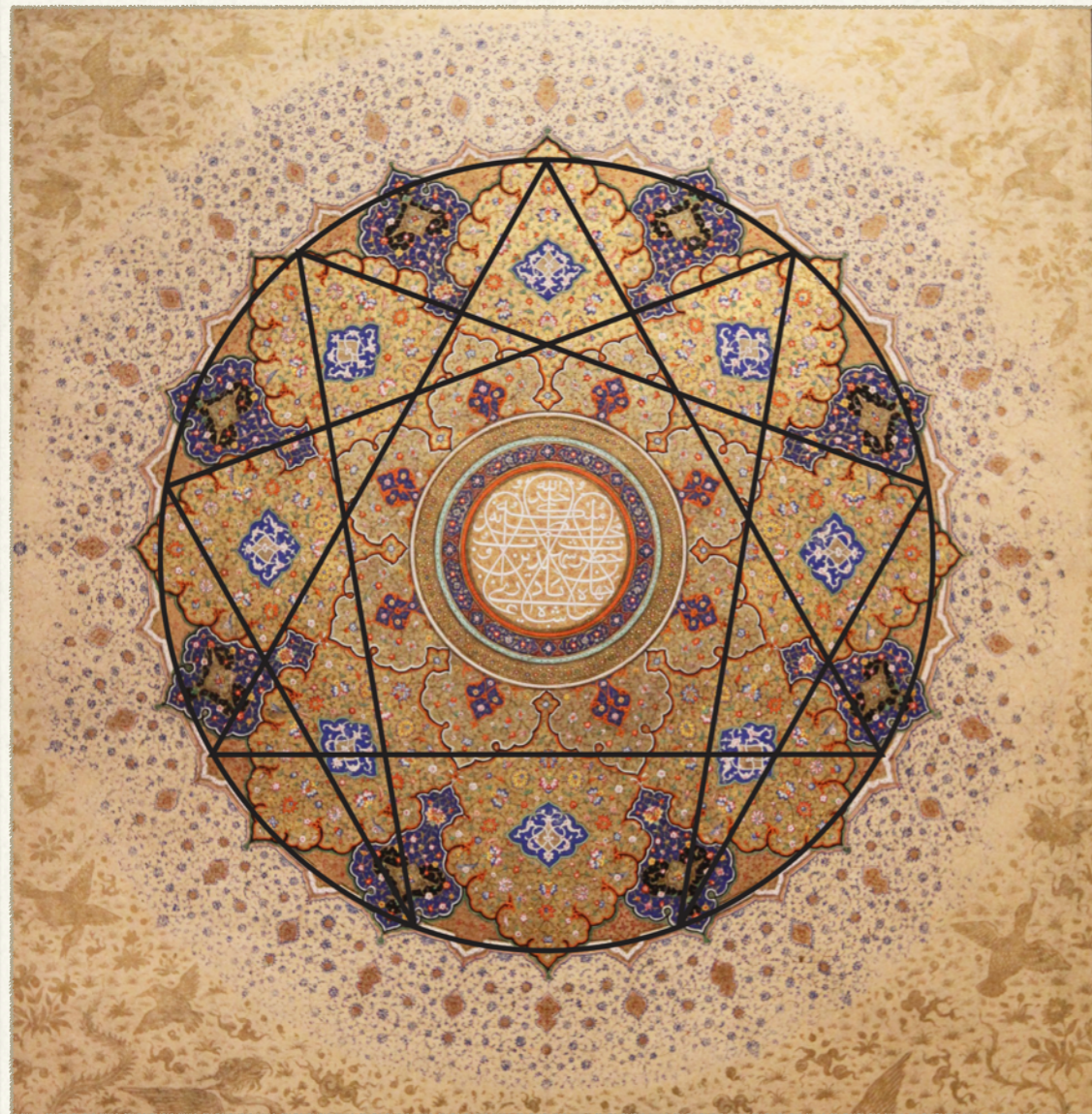
The Enneagram in *The Reality of Being*

I've explained on a number of occasions that the development of energy in the enneagram depends in large part on the development of the octaves of energy within the individual centers.

According to Ouspensky, Gurdjieff specifically developed a version of the enneagram showing the centers. This intimates the idea of the centers being applied directly to the notes on the diagram—as I have explained in my numerous essays on the centers and their relationship to the chakras.

Each center encompasses its own octave. The extent to which each center develops within its own octave has a great deal to do with the possibilities an individual can express. This iteration of notes within subordinate octaves is precisely what gives us Gurdjieff's 27 types.

More importantly, perhaps, we can see that if an individual developed in even one center to the degree of Sol, La, or Si, this



would produce a yogi of extraordinary powers, one who stood apart from other men.

This would not, however, be enough of itself, because it's only with a balanced development of each subordinate octave that the kind of stable inner evolution Gurdjieff taught can take place.

Jeanne de Salzman understood this, and explains it in some detail in section 86 of *The Reality of Being*:

"In order to provoke a stop, suffering is necessary so that a third force can appear. Then the attention becomes a voluntary — I wish not to be taken, I wish to remain free. at this very moment I feel I must have the freedom to be. I experience a will for freedom. The degree of this will of the attention produces an opening of my body to a finer energy. Everything depends on this opening. I need to feel the energy in my mind and in my body simultaneously with the same force. My attention needs to last and not diminish."

" All the centers are involved. If one reaches fa, it can draw the others toward fa. all the centers must be in front of the interval for the intensity of vibration to increase. The relation between the centers is the shock necessary to pass the interval, which will never be passed without it. In our working on this relation, a force appears, and we then feel a vibration

that opens the door to a different level." (*The Reality of Being*, page 185.)

In this section, she is speaking specifically of this development of the subordinate octaves on the right side of the enneagram, each one of which ought to develop to the note fa in order for all three of them to be able to pass to sol on the left side. This is a significant part of what harmonious development is all about. Significantly, she associates this particular action with a certain kind of will — that is to say, power, which is exactly what the note fa represents in its essence.

Perhaps more interesting, she goes on to explain that this level of development constitutes a new level of Being- exactly as it should, given the meaning of the note Sol relative to the actual forces, or influences, affecting each note, as detailed by the Names of God and their relationship to the diagram. The note Sol, after all, "means" Being. It represents the moment at which real "I" is formed.

Here we come to the crux of the matter, because at this point she advises us as follows:

"In proceeding further with the octave, the question of the second conscious shock can appear only when I have been consciously present for a sufficiently long time. In this effort of Presence, my feeling warms up and is transformed. It puri-

fies itself, and my emotions become positive." (ibid.) (Italics here are mine.)

Here she specifically indicates that the next step- the note la- is one of purification, exactly as the diagram must read based on the iteration of influences at each note.

The need to understand the diagram as an abstract of inner relationships and inner movement is, of course, essential—as is the need to understand that these relationships are not linear and do not by default follow the traditional channels and paths as shown in yoga, tai chi, and other practices. Only the enneagram provides an accurate, if two dimensional, model of the way inner and higher energies actually relate to one another.

One final note. De Salzman repeatedly urged us to prepare ourselves for the arrival of higher influences. The word influence means, quite exactly, that which flows into. She was, in fact, using the word in exactly the same manner and for the same reasons that Swedenborg used it three centuries ago—to indicate the inward flow of the divine substances of Love, which are the animating force that creates all matter, and gives birth to life. I might add, there is only one way of understanding these forces; both their presence and action is agreed on when they are available. Anyone who argues about it does not have a right understanding.

Sensing and understanding these influences, or inflows, of the divine will help to better understand the diagram from a practical perspective.

It's possible to understand this diagram with a number of different layers superimposed upon it, each one of which has a meaning and relationship to the centers; and in some versions of the diagram, the centers fall in different positions, for reasons too complex to explain here. The point is that because the diagram is always in motion, it contains within itself a flexibility that allows a continuous, flowing interpretive ability.

Chapter 33

THE FOUR BEING
BODIES

The four Being-Bodies of man, and their integration



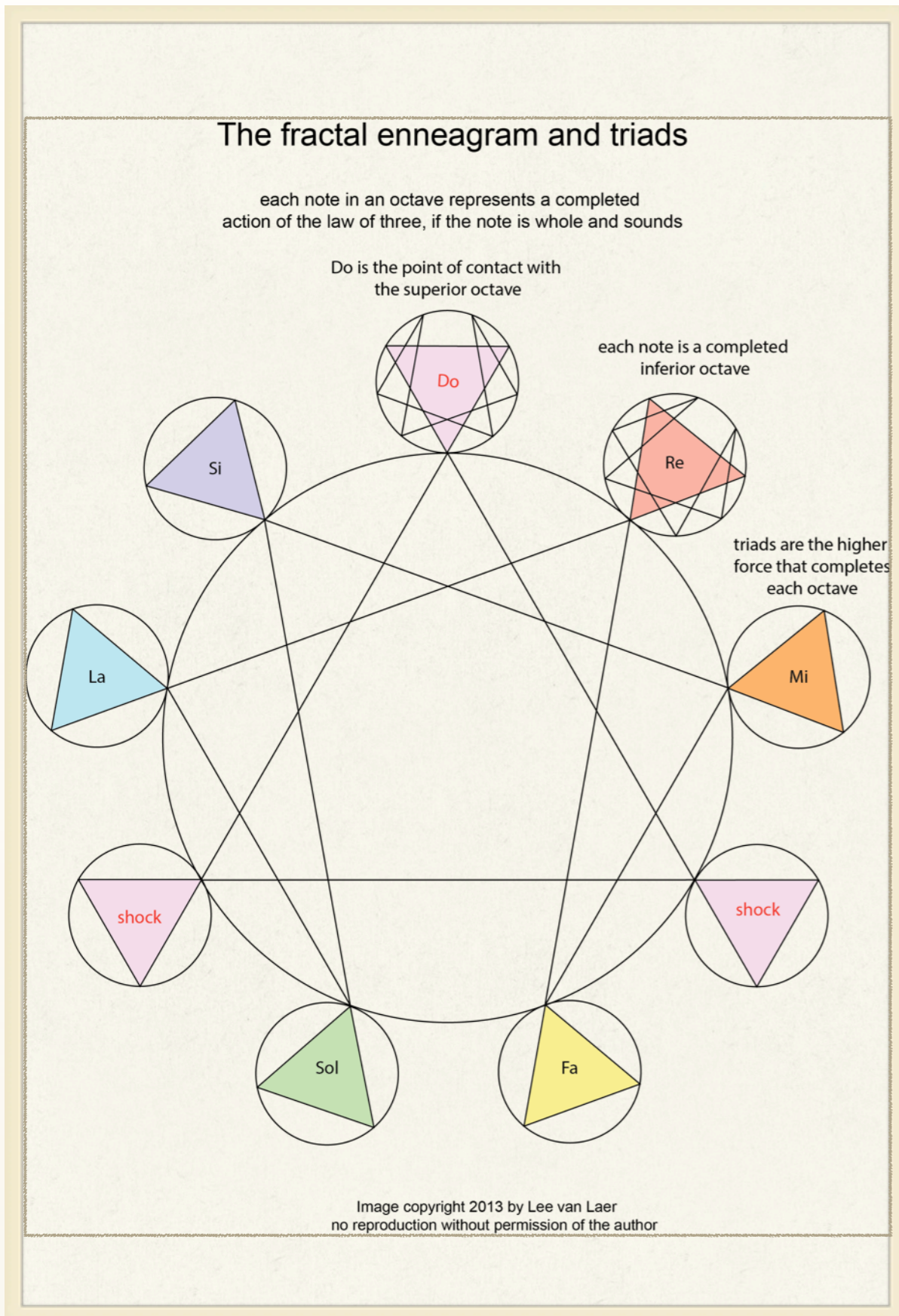
The Fractal Enneagram and Triads

Most of the movements contain specific information about the Gurdjieff teaching. The ideas which we read about in the books or hear about from the various historical figures are reflected in the movements themselves.

Today we're going to take two specific examples of movements that have meanings directly related to the teaching. Both of them derive from a specific comment on page 184 of *The Reality of Being* (Jeanne de Salzmann) which must be pondered at great length in order to understand.

At the end of the essay *Degrees of the Octave*, we are told, "The octaves are superposed and must not mix. Descent is obligatory if one mixes with vibrations of lower notes."

As some readers may know, I have been working for many months on a book called *The Enneagram and Inner Work*. I had to stop work on the book at the beginning of this year be-



cause I did not understand exactly what she meant by this sentence, and I couldn't go any further with the considerable material developed from this particular essay till I did so.

I'm able to report that I do now understand this particular remark; and the book will resume progress in the near future. In the meantime, I've developed a group of diagrams expounding the specific teaching related to this idea, which is a very complex idea but at the same time extraordinarily simple to grasp if one understands what she is getting at.

The point is that octaves develop simultaneously. As one begins the first octave on a path to develop a Being, under the correct transformational conditions, one completes the first triad re-mi-fa— which is what essay number 85 is all about.

What she is getting at in the end of the notes here is that when one passes to the note sol, the second triad of this octave is directly related to the beginning of the first note of the next octave. Thus, as one completes the first triad for the development of the astral body, one simultaneously begins work on the second octave related to the mental body.

Octaves for all of the three higher bodies develop in conjunction with one another, but they can't be mixed.

In order to understand this fully, it's important to understand that each triad of an octave actually represents a completed note for the octave above it. And, if you click on this link, you will see that the movement for enneagram in question specifically positions individuals at all points which are necessary to physically illustrate this principle. In the diagram, each blue circle represents a person — and there are three at each subordinate octave.

In another well-known movement which cannot be depicted graphically, two arms circle in front of the participant in opposite directions, at two different speeds—one at twice the speed of the other. These two arms actually represent the two superposed octaves mentioned in de Salzman's notes; and the point of the movement is to experience the fact that the two movements are, at the same time, simultaneous and independent of one another; and that they also depend on one another, even though they cannot be allowed to "mix." (If one confuses the arms, the movement collapses.)

Readers who feel ambitious and want to try to understand this material without the supporting text I intend to write are welcome to browse the additional diagrams at the below links. The diagrams themselves may give some intimations as to exactly what was meant by this one simple sentence, which opens up the door to an extraordinary world related to the questions of inner development.

The enneagram movements and triads: one enneagram example (partial representation)

In this enneagram movement, three people occupy the position of each note in the octave
(re, mi, fa, sol, la, si)

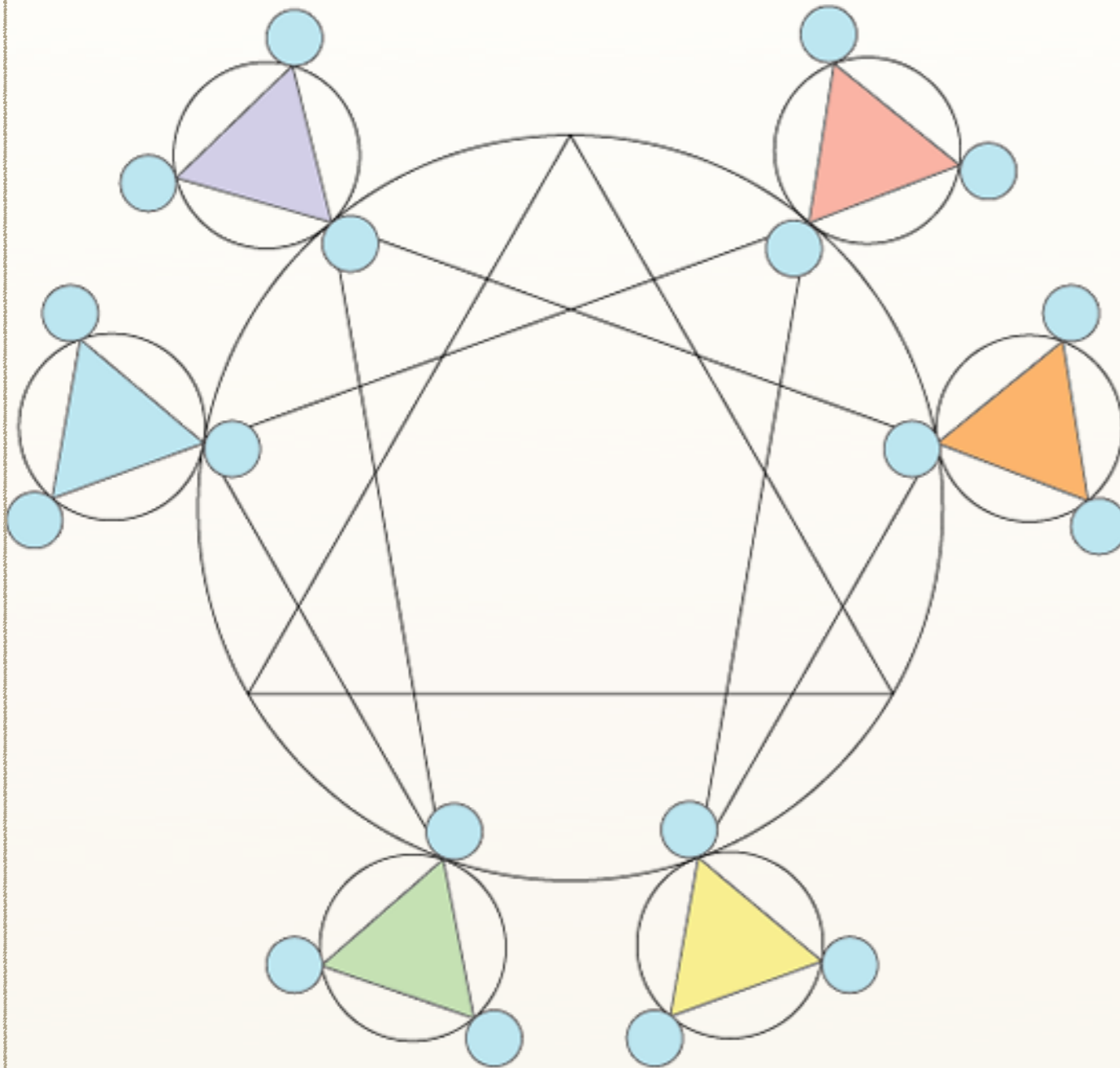


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Take note that this diagram does not reveal all the positions or individuals taking place in the movement. It simply illustrates the fact that the movement reflects the diagram of the fractal enneagram and the role that triads take the formation of notes.

In the diagram, each blue circle represents a person—in other words, there are three people located at each note, representing the triad for the subordinate octave below that note, which forms it.

The fractal enneagram and triads

each note in an octave represents a completed action of the law of three, if the note is whole and sounds

Do is the point of contact with the superior octave

each note is a completed inferior octave

triads are the higher force that completes each octave

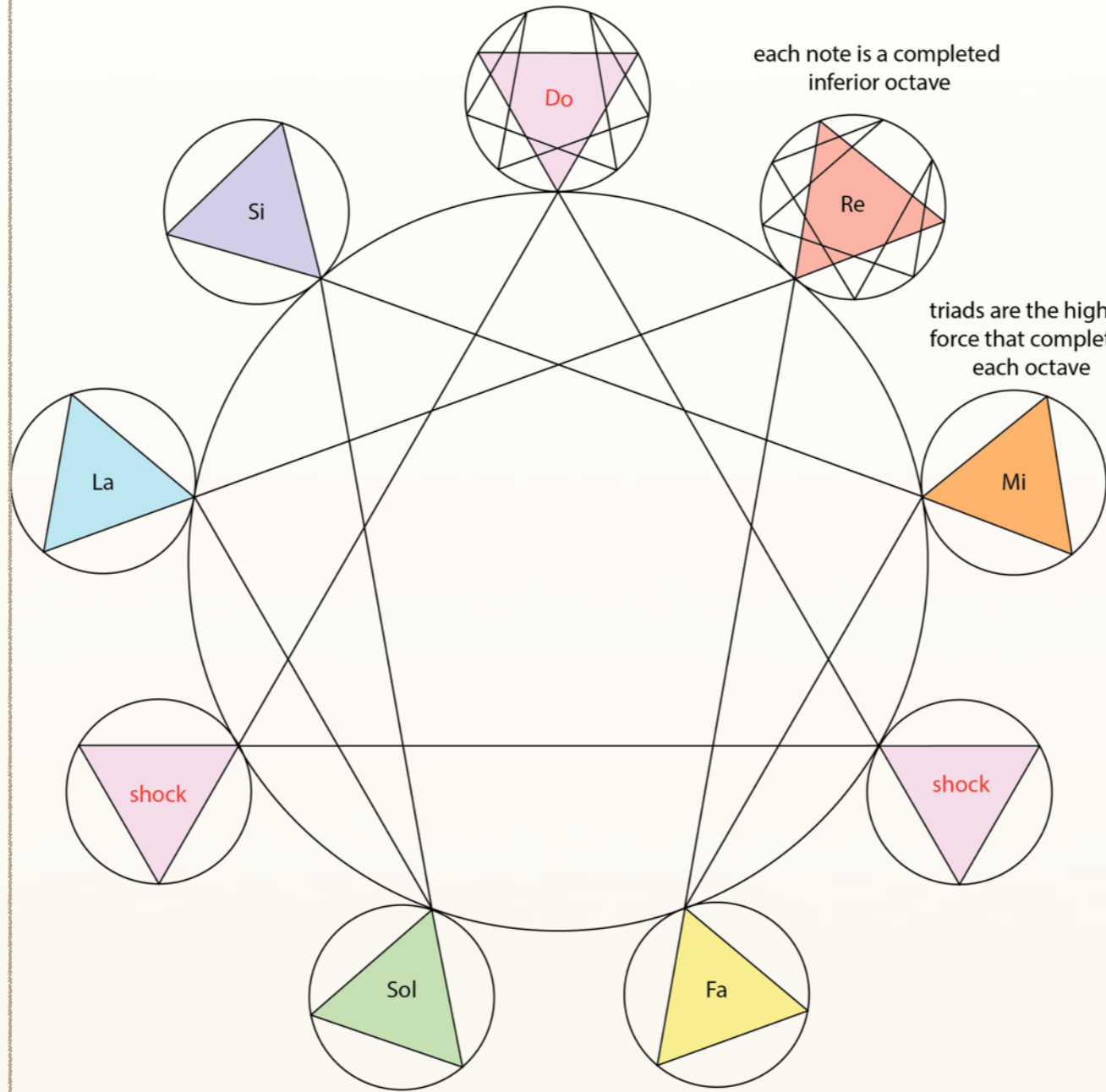


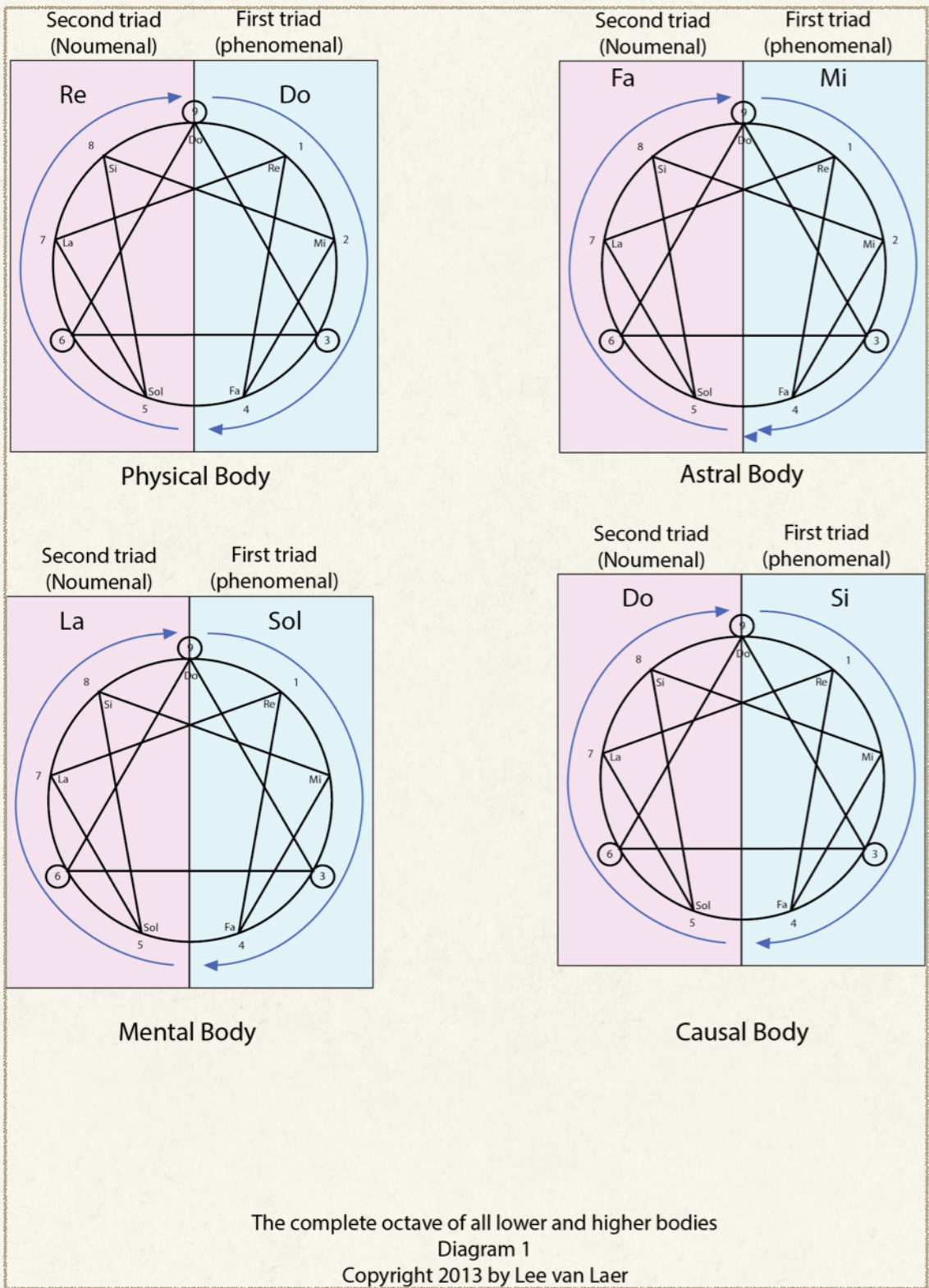
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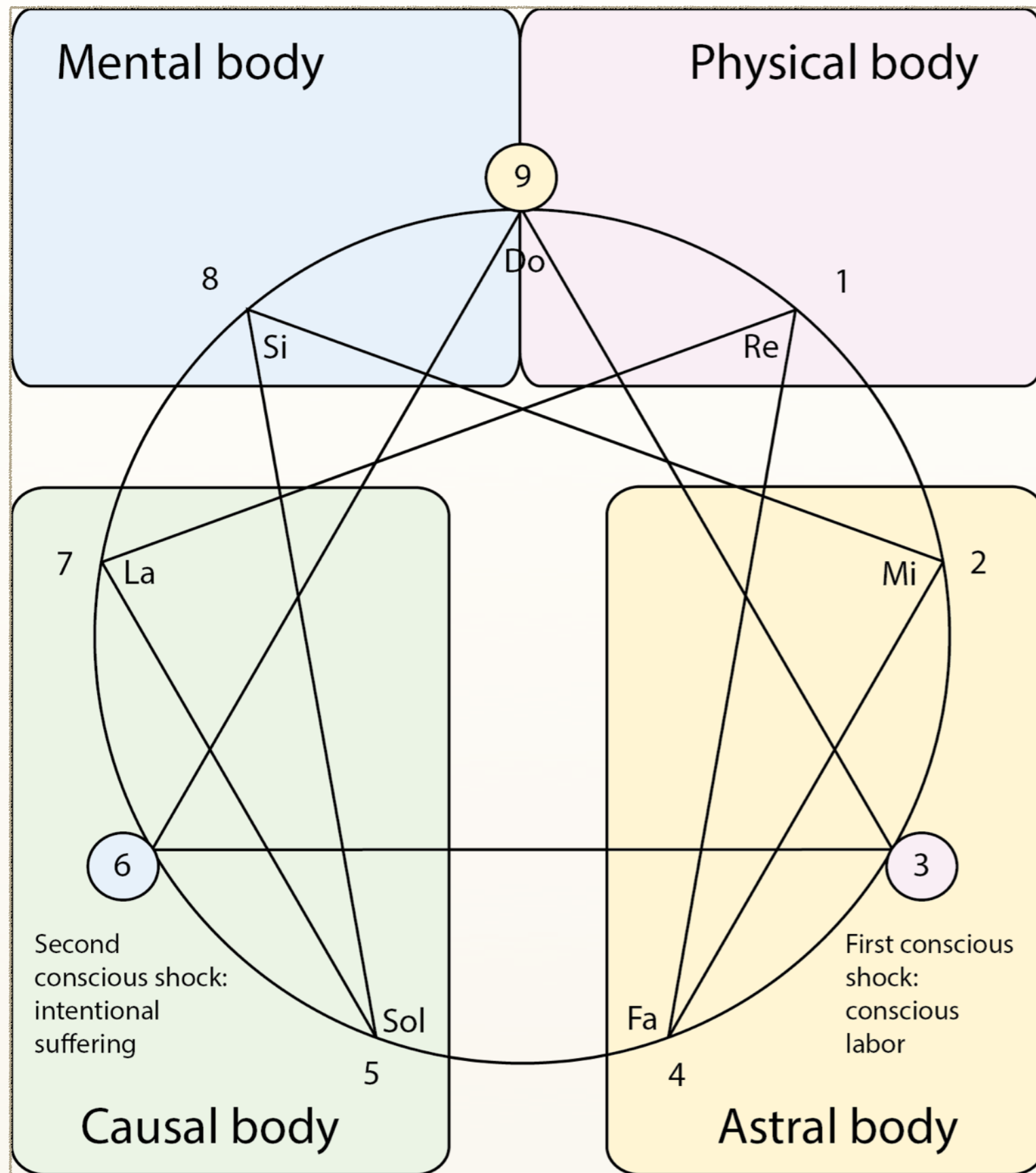
The Octave of Being-bodies

In Gurdjieff's original comments to Ouspensky, he outlined four *being-bodies* which mankind was capable of developing. In many ways, the teaching is consistent with other esoteric systems, including those of yoga; and indeed, Gurdjieff made much of the fact that man's aim, at least his *initial* aim, was the formation of the astral body, which, he said, man is not born with.

Much time could be spent discussing the implications of his system and the numerous remarks he made about such matters; but what concerns us here is the *structure* of the higher being-bodies he cited which, as we shall see, fit neatly into his fractally arranged model of the universe as described by the enneagram.

The diagram on the next page details all four being-bodies and their place on a larger scale, placing them in the context of the octave within which the four being-bodies develop.





The diagram may seem confusing at first, because each being-body is created from not one but *two* notes on the octave. The physical body occupies do-re; the astral, mi-fa; the causal, sol-la; and the mental, si-do.

The diagram which the chapter opens with details why this is the case. Each completed triad in an octave represents a specific stage in development. The reason that the relationships of sets of three notes is essential to understanding the enneagram and its operation is the the law of three governs not only the overall working of the diagram, *but also the relationship between each interacting set of three notes.*

Students of the movements and multiplications will certainly grasp at least the implications of this understanding, if not its essentials. The point is that the law of three and the law of seven interpenetrate one another; and no operation within the law of seven is “free” of the law of three, because the law of three is both the superior *and underlying* law.

The key to understanding this can be found in *The Reality of being*, page 184: “The sensation

must be definite; fa needs to become established. It must exist in my Presence as a complete sensation—stable, with all the new ideas and feelings that accompany it—in order to pass to the degree sol. Then, exactly what took place with the original idea begins again.”

What she is saying here (and I recommend readers turn to the whole chapter for a complete explanation) is that a triad has been completed; that is to say, the notes re, mi, fa interact in such a way that *a new actions is triggered*.

The note fa passes to the note sol. This represents the transition from unconsciousness to Being in the system of the enneagram; and a new kind of inner work begins, one which initiates the ascent of energy back towards the source of its arising (do.) This is the beginning of a second triad; and upon its completion, the note of a new octave is reached.

Because of this progression, we can understand that each of the being-bodies has an inherent duality and an octave unto itself. Each one consists of a material and a spiritual side; and each being-body must, in its own turn, go through its own passage from unconsciousness to consciousness. The astral body, for example, begins at its own note do and cannot acquire being until it has completed the first triad of its own internal octave; so there is a point or note sol in the octave of the astral body at which the astral body acquires Being.

The various octaves of the higher being-bodies are, in theory, all active and operative simultaneously; she says, later in this same section, “The octaves are superposed and must not mix. Descent is obligatory if one mixes with vibrations of lower notes.” (*ibid*)

Chapter 34

TECHNICAL DIAGRAMS

A range of technical diagrams regarding levels and structure within the system of octaves

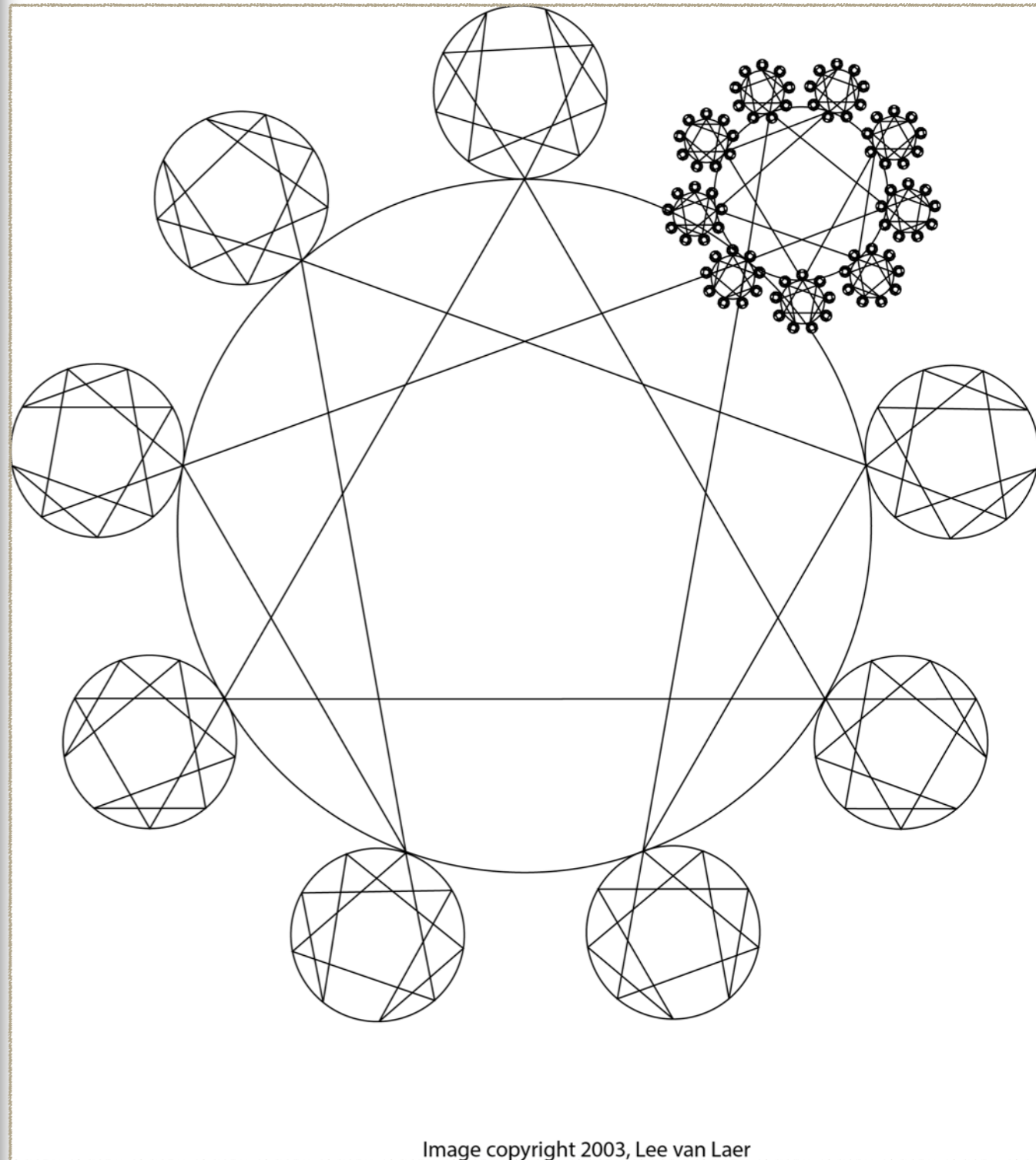


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The Ray of Creation

A table detailing the relationships between the two major hierarchic systems (centers, ray of creation) which Gurdjieff introduced and the standard hierarchy of yogic chakras.

The chart also indicates correlations between these systems and various principle attributes, or names, of God, as expounded in hierarchic Sufi doctrine (Ibn a' 'Arabi.) These attributes of God share a close identity in both character and hierarchic structure to that of yogic chakras. We thus have six different systems, all of which can be assigned to Gurdjieff's enneagram in an internally consistent manner without violating what we know of them, based on the available material.

1. The numeric system, characterized by the multiplications.
2. The notes of the Western musical octave.
3. The yogic chakras.
4. Gurdjieff's centers
5. The ray of creation

Chakras		Ray of Creation
Absolute Sahasrāra	Do	
Second conscious Shock	—	
Third eye Ājñā	8 Si	All Worlds
Throat Vīśuddha	7 La	All Suns
Heart Anāhata	5 Sol	Our Sun
Solar Plexus Manipūra	4 Fa	All Planets (solar system)
First conscious Shock	—	
Belly Svādhīsthāna	2 Mi	Earth
Root Mūlādhāra	1 Re	Moon
Absolute	Do	

6. The six essential principles of inner work

Readers should note that this system produces a general consistency of both concepts, language, and interaction, which one would expect of any cosmology which claims to be based on Gurdjieff's objective principles.

Readers may want to note that my original version of this chart positioned moving center at the note Fa and intellectual center at the note La. Later research suggests that the opposite is true, because of the role assigned by the various characteristics by the chart. The current version, revised in 2013, is consistent in some ways, but not in others. Technically speaking, in the strictest terms, the progression ought to be Fa, intellectual, Sol, moving, and La, emotional, but because the diagram is flexible, is always in movement, and because notes can exchange places with one another for various reasons too complex to go into here, it seems likely to suggest that any one of these notes can suggest any one of the centers under certain conditions. The movements freely use just such substitutions, in which one note morphs into another, taking on its position and role, suggesting that Gurdjieff also saw it this way.

The question will have to remain open for now. In any event, I like this version of the chart better, for the time being; and

aside from the question of where the centers fall, the assignments are accurate.

Number	Note	Yogic Chakra	Gurdjieff's Center	Ray of Creation	Attribute
9	Do	Seventh Chakra-Sahasrāra	Higher Intellectual	Absolute	the Essence
6		Second Conscious Shock	Intentional Suffering		Death
8	Si	Third Eye-Ājñā	Higher Emotional	All Worlds	Knowledge; Wisdom
7	La	Throat-Viśuddha	Intellectual	All Suns	Purification; prayer
5	Sol	Heart-Anāhata	Emotional	Sun	Being/ I
4	Fa	Abdomen-Manipūra	Moving	All Planets	Power; Will
3		First Conscious Shock	Conscious Labor		Manifestation
2	Mi	Sex-Svādhīsthāna	Sex	Earth	Desire/ Wish
1	Re	Root-Mūlādhāra	Instinctive	Moon	Materiality
9	Do	[absolute]	[absolute]	[absolute]	[absolute]

The Energy Flow

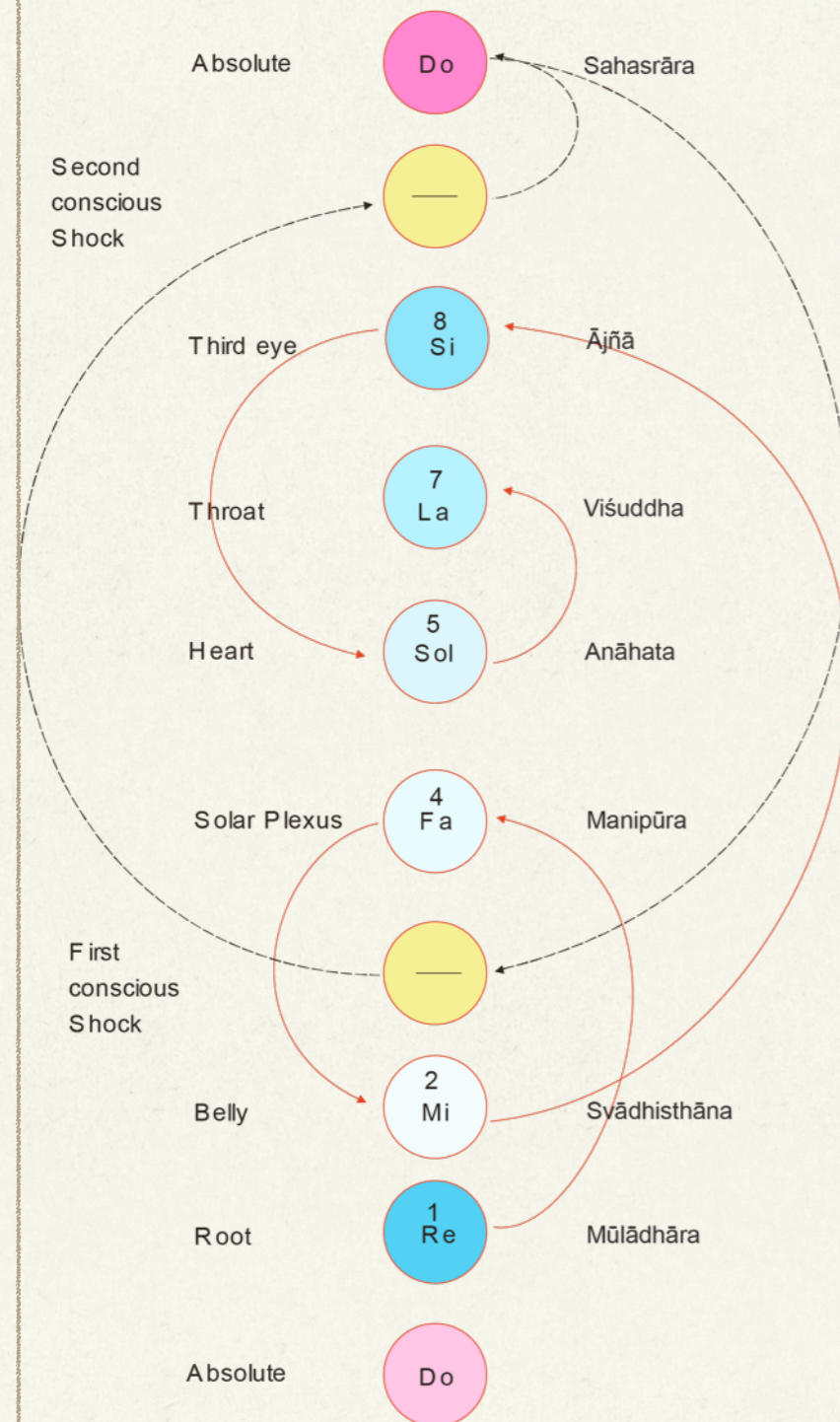
The energy in this diagram represents the energy of the enneagram itself. The movement of the energy isn't linear; it is complex and interrelated, and moves in a dynamic related to the connections between the energy centers in the body, not up and down the spine in the simplistic movements assumed by many modern yogis.

Gurdjieff pointed out that the energy in our bodies, and in the law of octaves and the enneagram itself, is in constant motion.

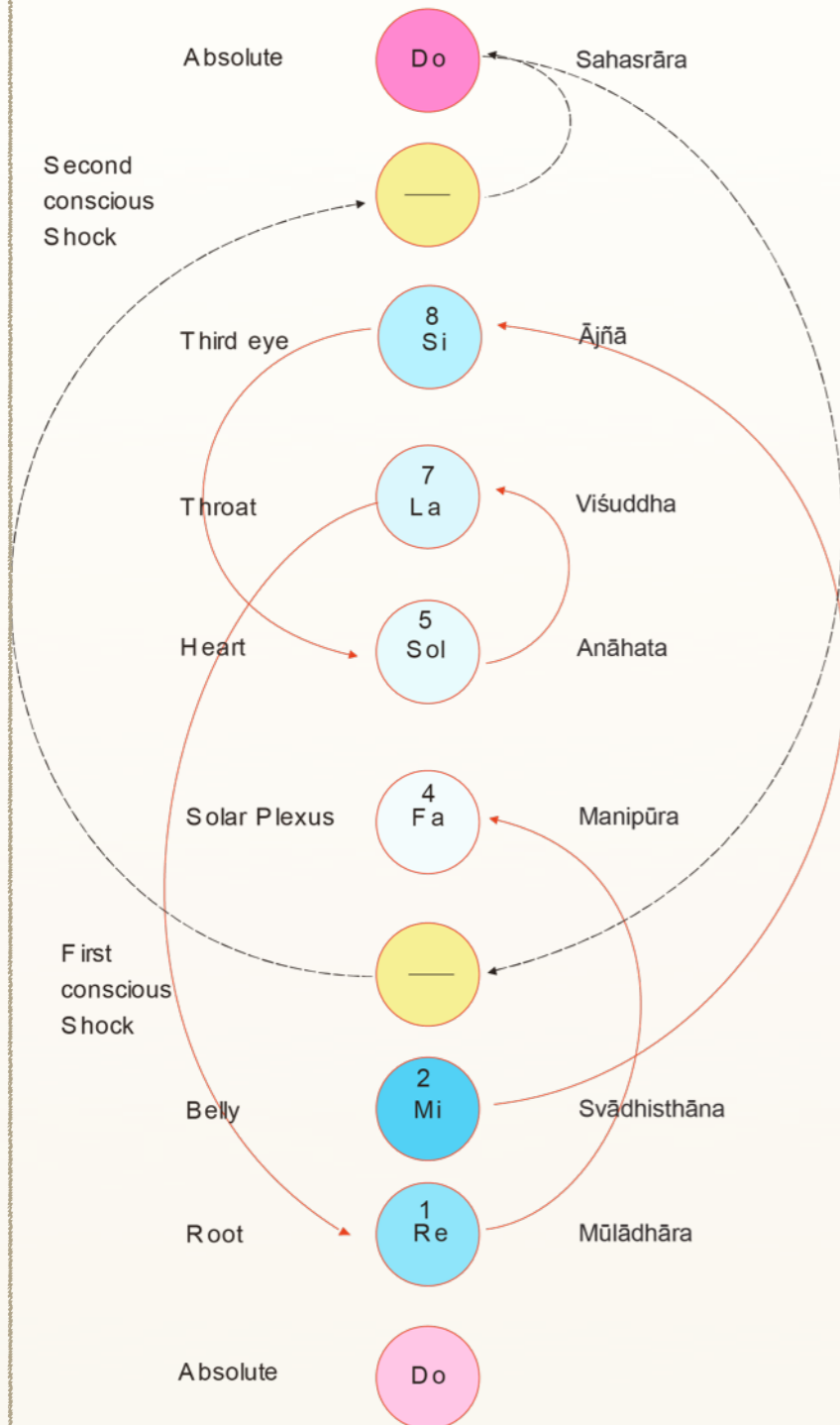
The multiplications map out the lawful movement of this energy depending on the particular iteration at hand. If one knows what note an energy movement begins on, one can exactly predict its lawful relationships in progress.

This lost science would take many years to study and fully understand, but the graphics at least lay out the interactions in a comprehensible manner.

1 4 2 8 5 7: energy flow in the basic state



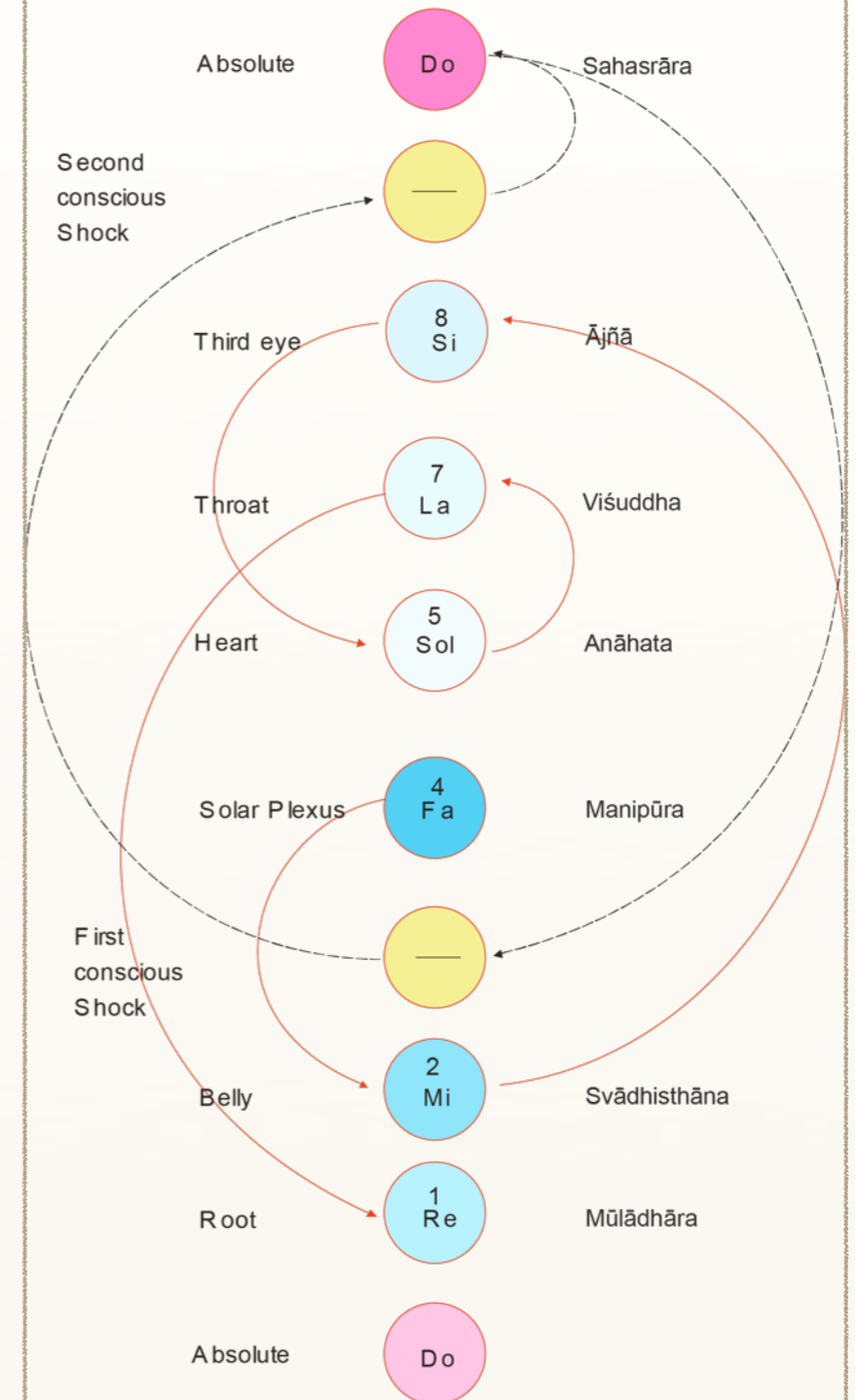
285714: first multiplication



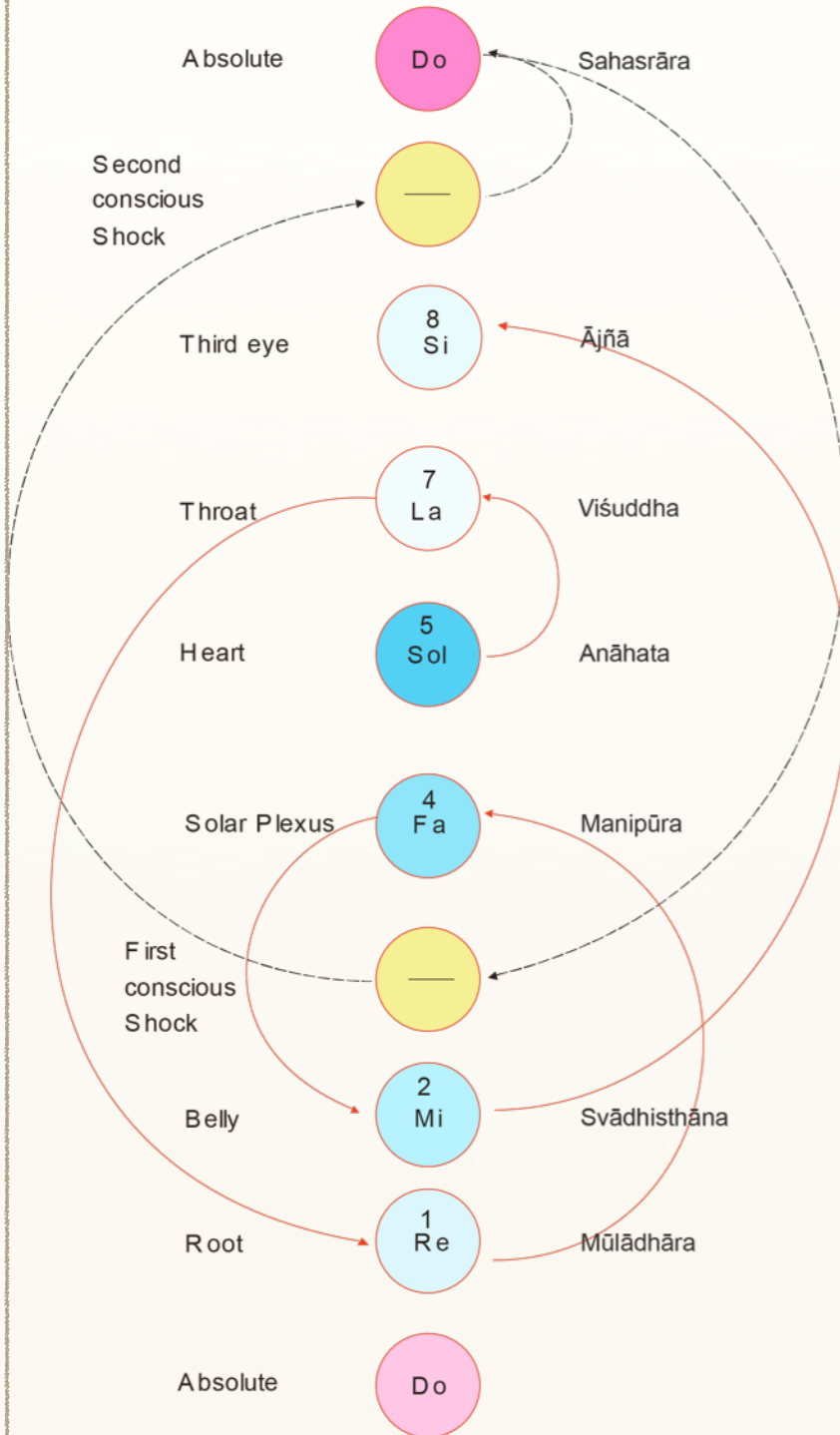
The study of types, divisions of centers, chakras, and triads can be combined with these diagrams to create dynamic understandings of human behavior, as well as the movement of energy between centers in the body.

There are a number of esoteric inner exercises connected with these diagrams that are not taught to the public, and are largely forgotten, even in the Gurdjieff work.

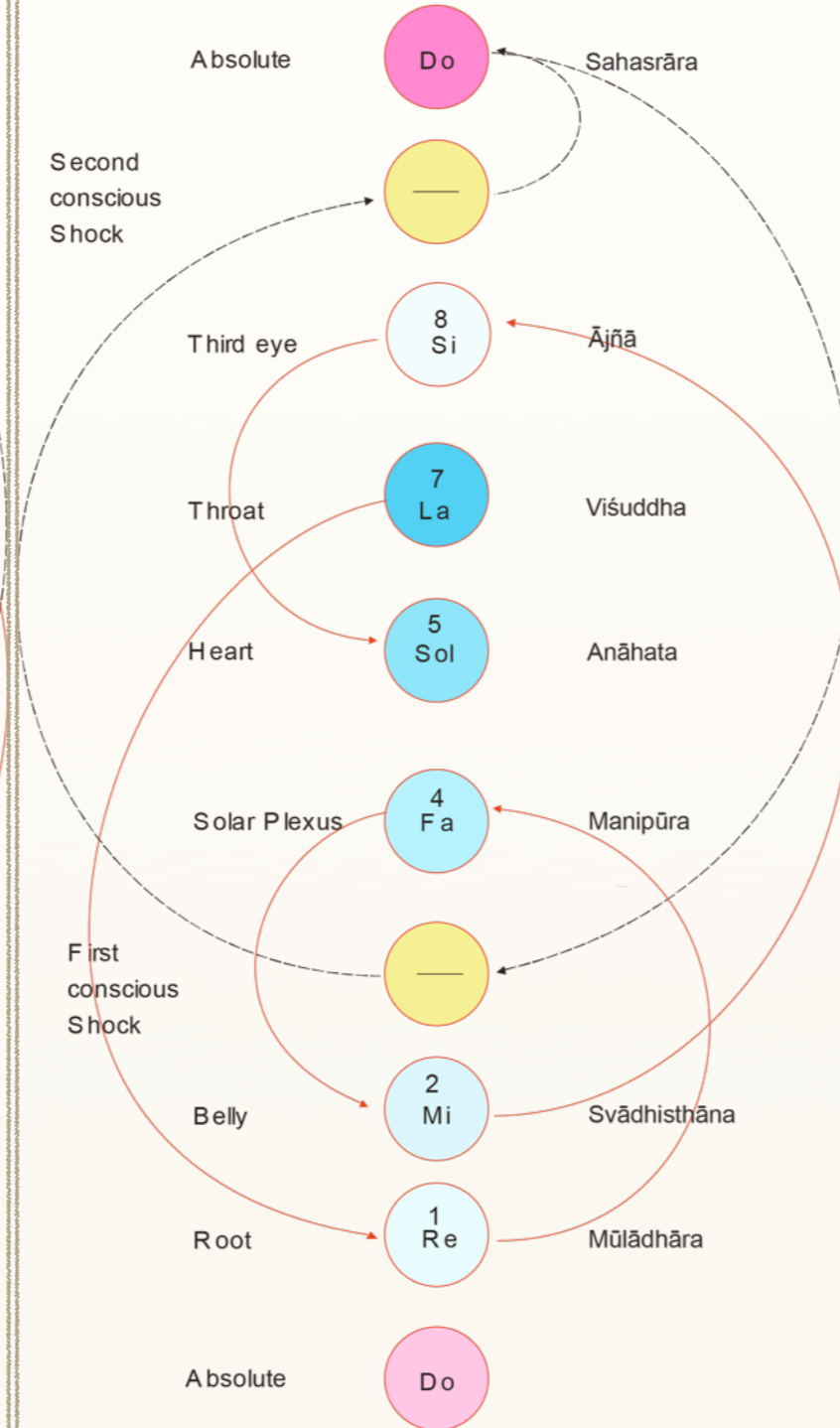
428571: second multiplication



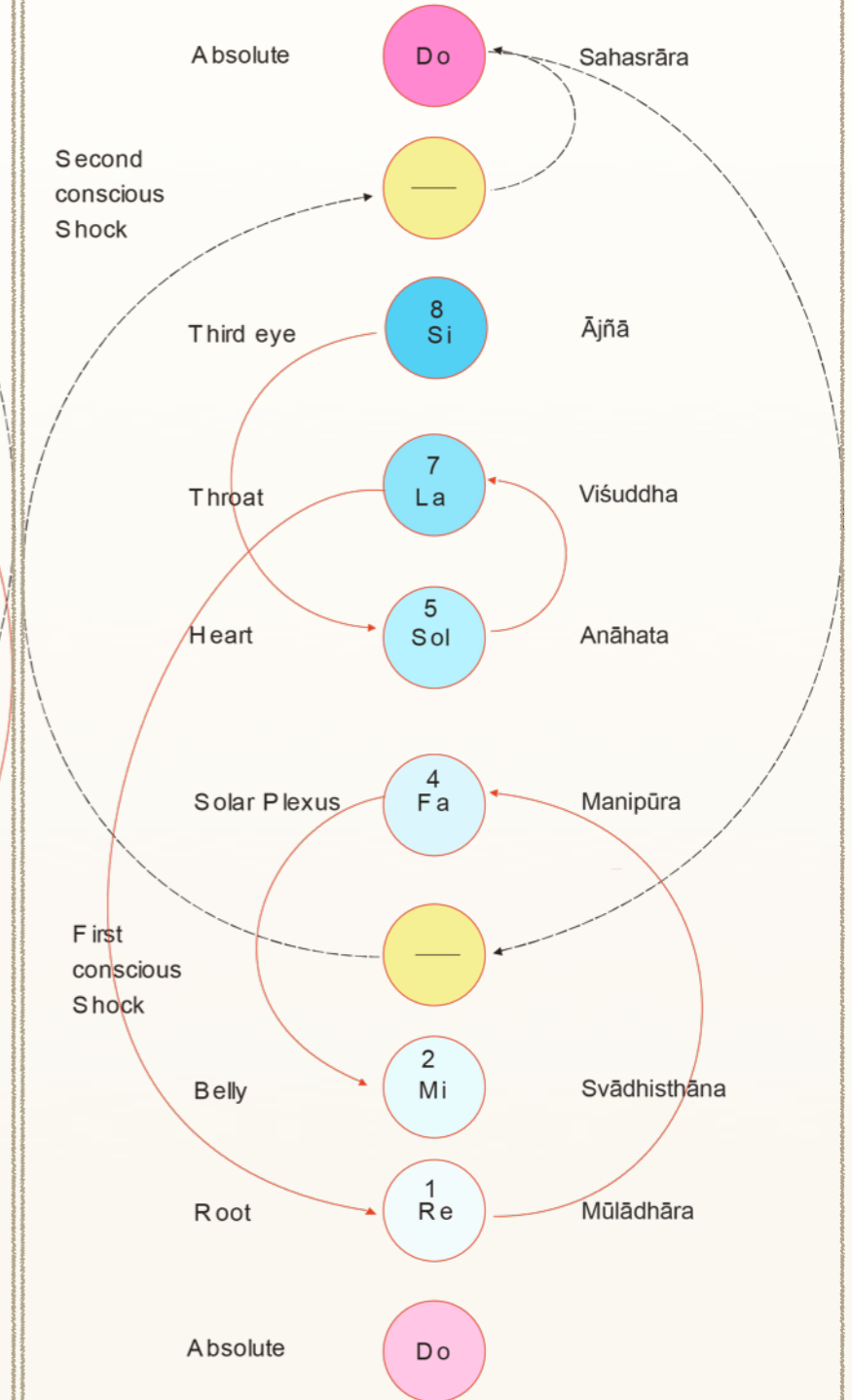
571428: third multiplication



714285: fourth multiplication



857142: fifth multiplication



Triads

Triads representing steps on the path as indicated by Gurdjieff's multiplications

142 material power desire	857 wisdom agency purification	Man number 1 Man's initial state
285 desire wisdom agency	714 purification material power	Man number 2
428 power desire wisdom	571 agency purification material	Man number 3
571 agency purification material	428 power desire wisdom	Man number 4
714 purification material power	285 desire wisdom agency	Man number 5
857 wisdom agency purification	142 material power desire	Man number 6 The lower subordinate to the higher

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Readers will note that the first quality of the first multiplication in each triad corresponds to the man number in Gurdjieff's system; thus, man number one corresponds to material (body), number two, emotion (desire), number three, intellect (power), number four, real "I" (agency), number five, higher emotional man (purification) and six, man with a developed higher intellectual connection (wisdom.) Each level defines an inner order which (in the case of the first triad) exists and can be worked with, and (in the case of the second) must be completed before the next stage can be reached.

Man number seven represents completion of the path, and lies outside the realm of the multiplications.

The chart indicates the character, properties and challenges facing man at each stage on the path of inner development. As Gurdjieff explained, the diagram is constantly dynamic, with the same elements (notes) constantly changing their relationships

to one another in a harmonic interaction of inner principles. The scale of inner development reflects this.

One can furthermore predict the weaknesses and strengths of man according to his level of development. Readers familiar with the tarot may notice that this system is related to some of the conventions associated with card order, indicating a common origin at some time in the distant past.

Each triad hence represents a specific step on the path of inner development, with consequent iterations of vibration and defined obstacles. A great deal more could be said about each multiplication, both about the individual triads and their relationship, along with the obstacles and intervals they incorporate. In general, on each level of development, the first multiplication represents what is given, or, the initial environment under which the work on the path takes place. The second defines the aims that must be undertaken.

The point is that treating the diagram as a completely impenetrable mystery does it little justice. With careful study, the elements and principles it incorporates can absolutely be known. The enneagram defines an ancient science of Being, whose principles are today almost completely lost; and this explains Gurdjieff's succinct remarks to Ouspensky about the diagram.

To take one intriguing example, the story of Faust represents 428 / 571. Faust fully embodies the first triad in his embrace of wisdom, and his desire for power. Unfortunately, his failure to understand his own personal responsibility for himself (agency), his lack of purification, and his misunderstanding of the material nature of his quest, cause him to lose his soul, because he doesn't know what he's doing. He has arrogantly reached into and even past the level of development represented by the second half of the octave he is in, in a deal with the devil, presuming that the power he gains will be enough to offset what it costs him.

This particular multiplication also has other interesting esoteric meanings.

The iteration of each first triad in a multiplication represents a danger, because within its own context, it represents what one would call the mechanical side of that level of development, in other words, one with an extended interval (the first stopinder) that requires a special kind of conscious labor to pass it. Failure to do so will always cause the initiate to overestimate their ability; and each, in a different way.

The second iteration of each triad represents qualities that must become completely acquired and incorporated into Being, purified, understood, and then surrendered. So each left side triad of the enneagram represents a heroic labor made

without any expectation of recompense; in other words, service. The results of that service, furthermore, must be fully surrendered as an offering to God.

Readers may be interested in considering the possibility that Beelzebub's error lay in the multiplication $857 / 142$, which is the rough equivalent of the development level of man number six. (Within each octave, at each level, there is an equivalent progression of development from 1-6. Entities such as angels are subject to this law, just like everything else.) Like Faust, he thought he would be able to master the second triad because he overestimated his progress in the first.

Beelzebub had real "I" (agency); He was wise, and he had purified himself. Unfortunately, he had not conquered his egoistic desire to exercise power over material reality (rebellion against the natural order, where God is the only entity with this ultimate power.)

This carefully crafted character intentionally represents the last temptation of Christ by the devil, which gives us some intimations of what level Gurdjieff felt Beelzebub was on.

The final iteration of development represents the ultimate submission to God: material, power, and desire, all practice Islam, that is, they must be surrendered after they are attained.

It's important to stress this consistency of the development of vibrations within octaves at every level. It doesn't matter whether you are a molecule, a man, or an angel: within your own octave, the given material conditions, the necessary shocks, and the obstacles are consistent for each level of development. They don't change over and over. Although different language would be used to describe the conditions within each triad, or multiplication, depending on the level, the overall principles underlying the situation remain absolutely consistent.

Gurdjieff stressed this consistency of principle across multiple levels of the cosmos over and over again in *In Search of the Miraculous*. Even if one argues that the enneagram somehow means something quite different than what has been proposed in these studies, one cannot escape this particular conclusion.

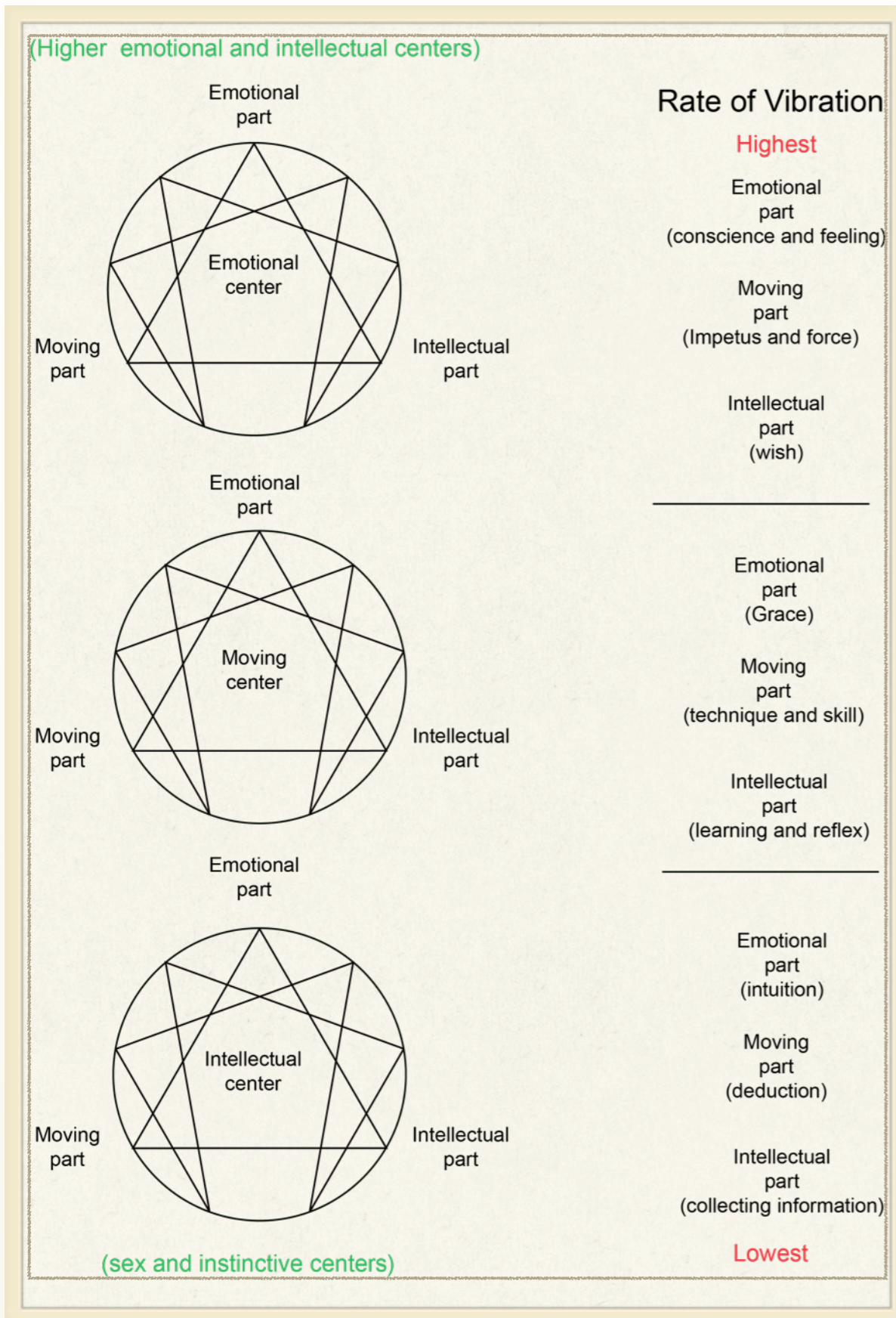
The Hierarchy of Centers

We know from the text in *In Search of the Miraculous* that the centers work at different speeds:

“The centers of the human machine work with different ‘hydrogens.’ This constitutes their chief difference. The center working with a coarser, heavier, denser ‘hydrogen’ works the slower. The center working with light, more mobile ‘hydrogen’ works the quicker.

“The thinking or intellectual center is the slowest of all the three centers we have examined up to now. It works with ‘hydrogen’ 48 (according to the third scale of the ‘table of hydrogens’).

“The moving center works with ‘hydrogen’ 24. ‘Hydrogen’ 24 is many times quicker and more mobile than ‘hydrogen’ 48. The intellectual center is never able to follow the work of the moving center. We are unable to follow either our own movements or other people’s movements unless they are artificially slowed



down. Still less are we able to follow the work of the inner, the instinctive functions of our organism, the work of the instinctive mind which constitutes, as it were, one side of the moving center.

“The emotional center can work with ‘hydrogen’ 12. In reality, however, it very seldom works with this fine ‘hydrogen.’ And in the majority of cases its work differs little in intensity and speed from the work of the moving center or the instinctive center.

Excerpt taken from In Search of the Miraculous by P. D. Ouspensky, pub. Paul H. Crompton Ltd, 2004, pp 193–194.

What may not be immediately apparent — but it logically follows, if one applies just a little bit of thought — is that the parts within the centers also work at different speeds, since each one of necessity has to work at a different rate of vibration. It is, after all, the harmonizing of rates of vibration within and between parts, or centers, that creates what Gurdjieff would have called right work of centers.

What this leaves us with, after creating what is actually a fairly simple chart (above) is a hierarchy of rates of vibration which gives us nine different levels of vibration from top to bottom. This has direct implications for understanding why

Gurdjieff said there were 27 types, in this quote from Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson:

"Here it is important to emphasize that the learned three-brained beings who belonged to the group of the mysticists in Babylon did indeed reproduce amazingly well and accurately the subjective features of the perceptions and manifestations of various types foreign to them.

"And they were able to do this not only because they possessed the being-property of 'ikhriltatzkakra,' but also because, like all the learned beings of the plant Earth of that time, they were well versed in what is called the 'law of type,' and were well aware of the twenty-seven quite distinct types of three-brained beings on their planet, and even of what the beings of each type would inevitably perceive in this or that situation, how they would perceive it, and what would have to be their reaction."

Beelzebub's Tales to his Grandson, G. I. Gurdjieff, Viking Arcana, 1992, p.443

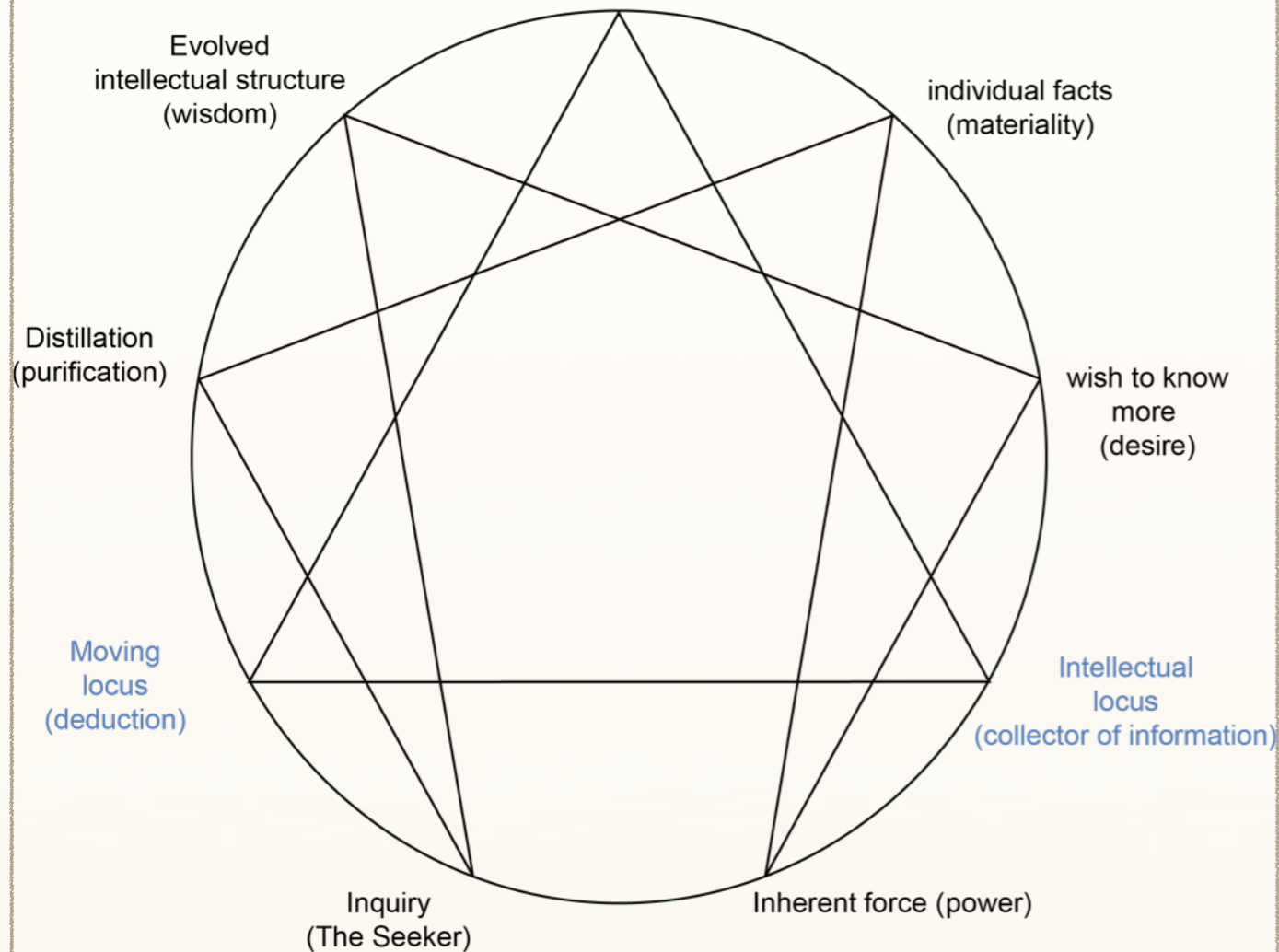
The diagram is marginally deceptive, because a full extension of the system would include the two centers at the top and the bottom of the chart, extending the total table of rates of vibration within centers to 21. This explains why man's being, if fully developed, could span the entire range of cosmic

proposed structure for the functional subordinate octave
of intellectual center in man

Higher impulses

biological impulses

Emotional
locus
(intuition)

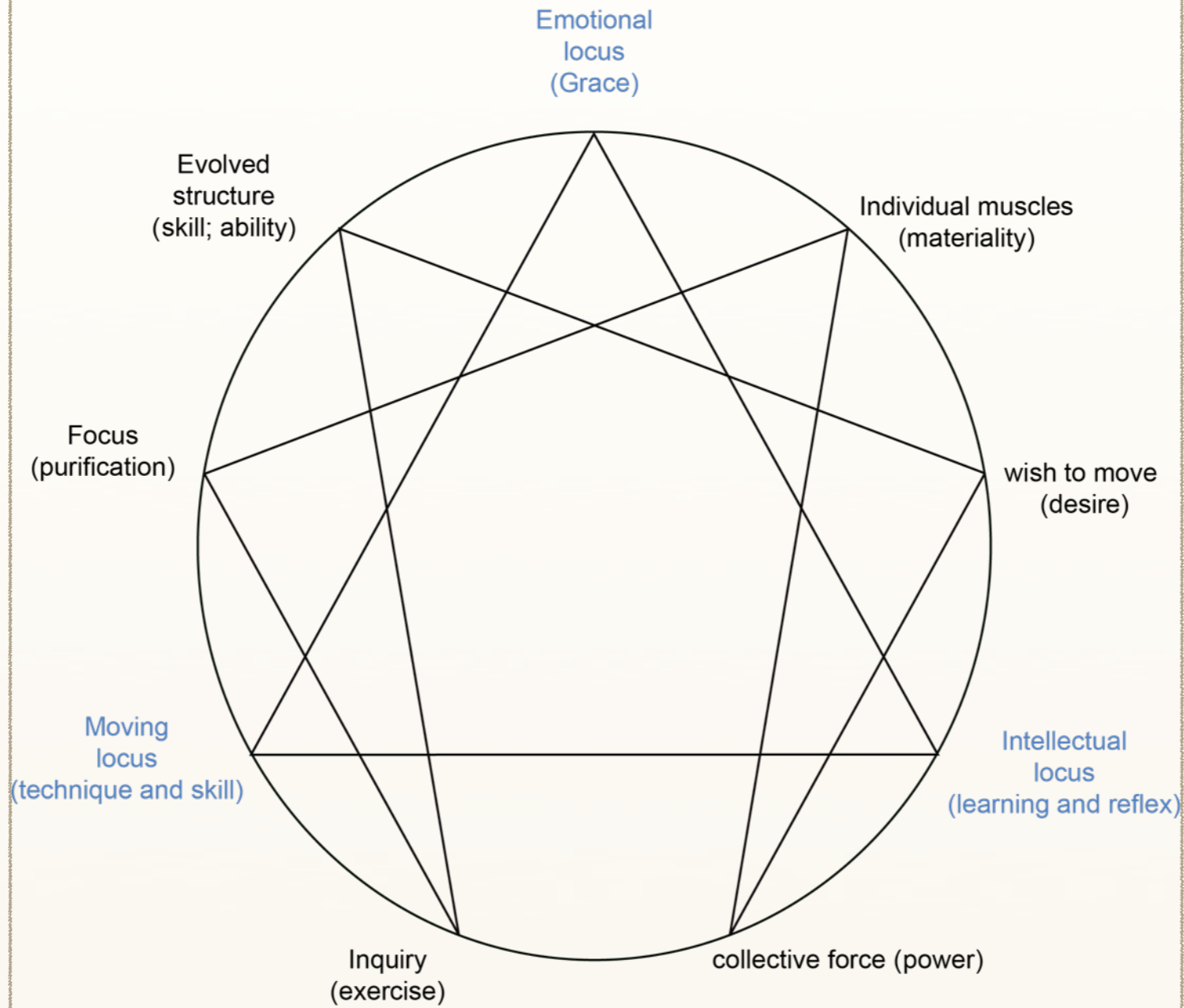


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vibration. (" "Man's possibilities are very great. You cannot conceive even a shadow of what man is capable of attaining."— ISOTM, p. 145.)

It would take many years of work by a specialized school to completely understand how all of this functions, but one could rough out some general proposals for the structures within the various types, to the left, and as follows.

proposed structure for the functional subordinate octave of moving center in man

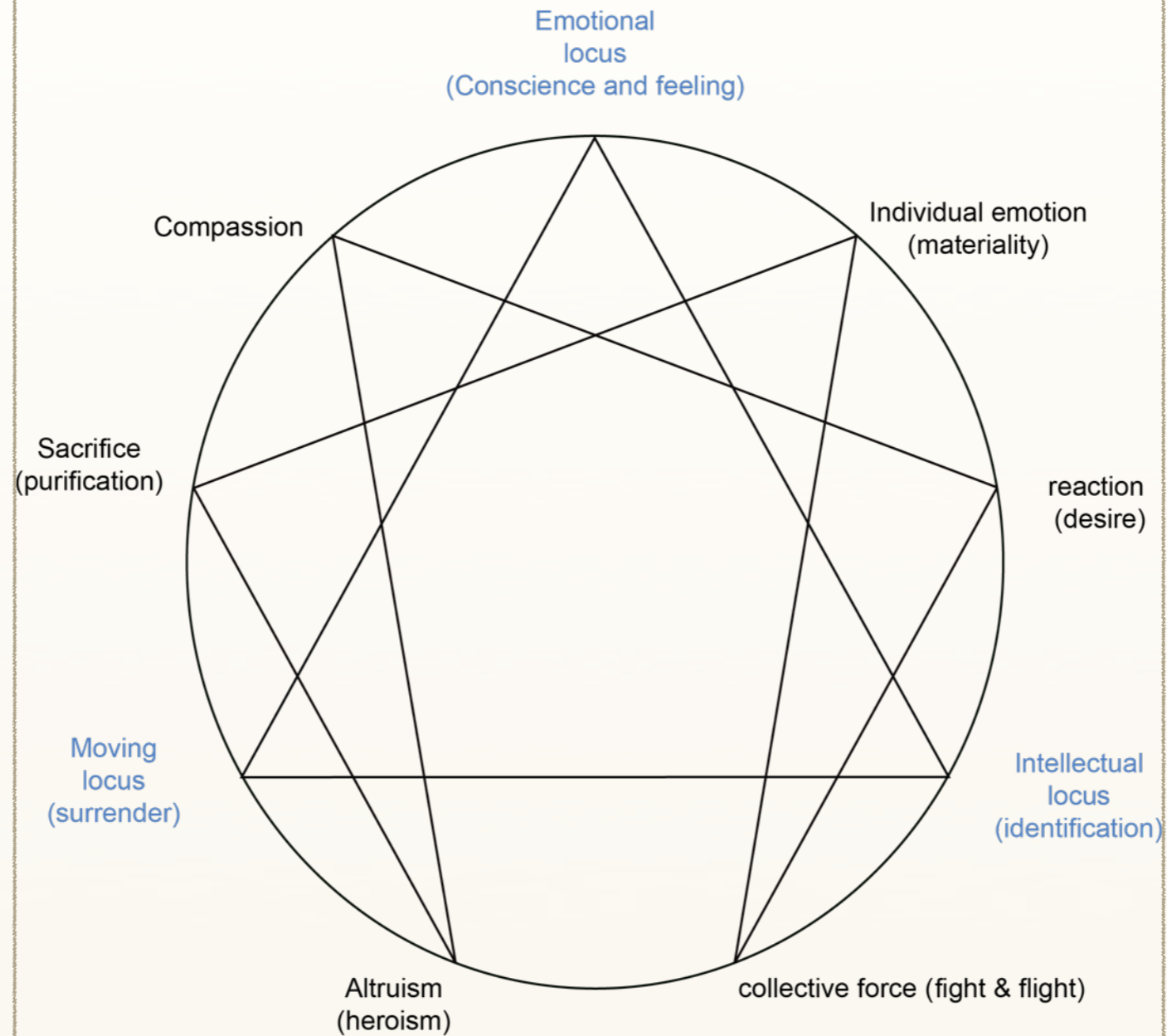


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proposed structure for the functional subordinate octave
of emotional center in man

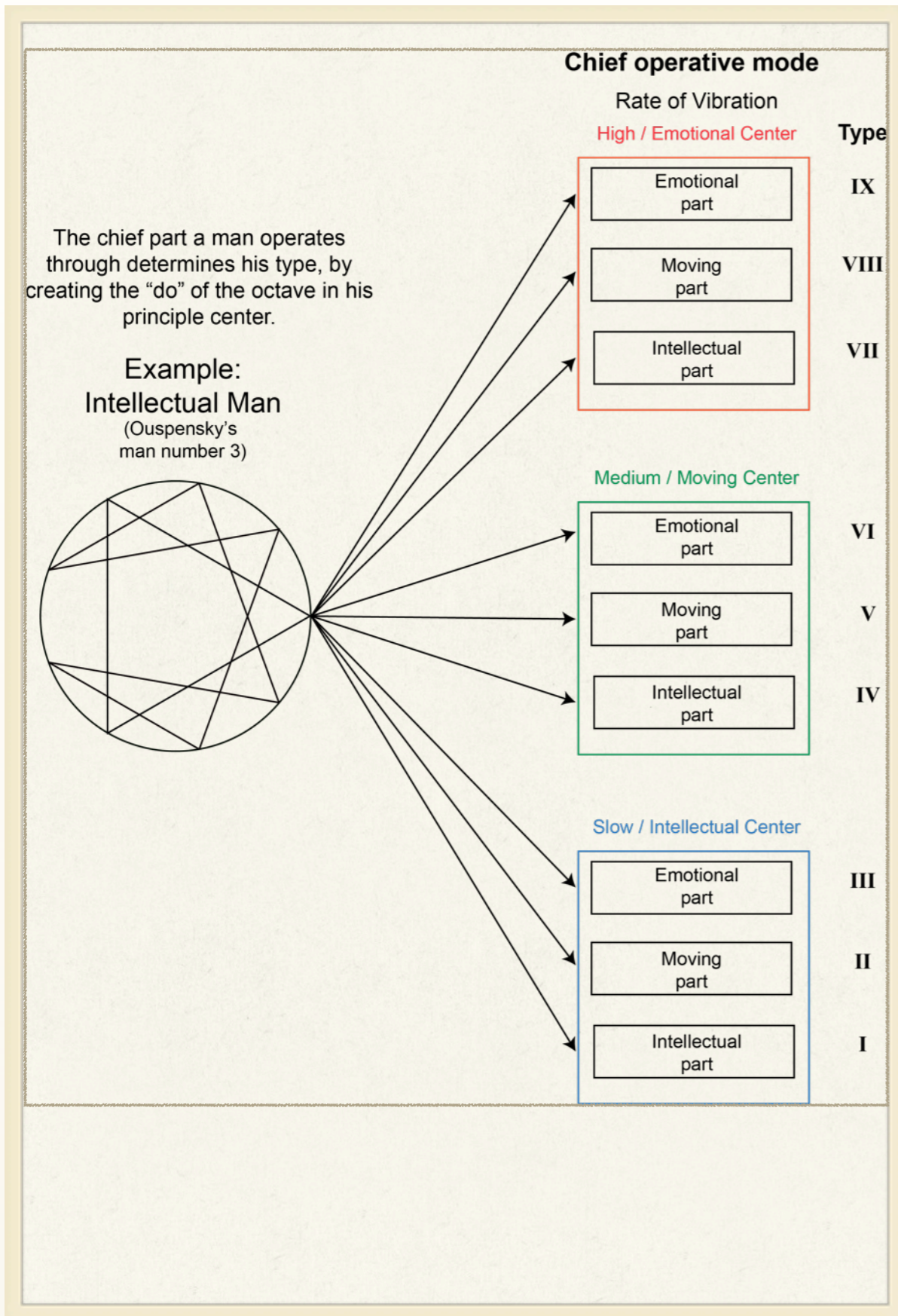
Higher impulses

biological impulses



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The 27 types



A higher rate of vibration in any scale generally represents a higher level of understanding. Thus, paradoxically, an intellectual man working through the intellectual part of his intellectual center turns out to be the stupidest man around, in fact, the stupidest man possible. His only capability is the absorption of facts. Doing anything with them is impossible. There are, in fact, levels of autism identical to this, such as the depiction that Dustin Hoffman gave us in the movie *Rain Man*. Things of this nature, which seem relatively inexplicable in the ordinary world, are instantly understandable when we apply the basic principles of the enneagram to them.

Because of this inherent quality of vibration relative to understanding, a great deal about a man can be discerned by determining the general level of vibration he works at. And moving through the progression (for example, the above progression) towards the highest level of vibration, in each case, the emotional part of emotional center for that particular man, we see a scale of development within the octave of that particular man from

the least developed (as above, man number three working through his intellectual part of his intellectual center) to the most developed (man number three working through his emotional part of his emotional center.)

Because of this hierarchy, the 27 types can also be ranked according to their abilities, because they represent an inherent hierarchy among human beings.

Once again, it would take the concerted effort of a specialized school to completely iterate this structure and populate it with the appropriately defined types. This kind of work was indeed done in ancient times by schools, but those days are long over.

APPENDIX



1 Corinthians 13

King James Version (KJV)

13 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,

5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil;

6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

8 Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.

9 For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.

10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

Chapter 35

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

[Lee van Laer](#) was born in Yonkers, New York, and spent a good deal of his childhood in Hamburg, Germany.

Mr. van Laer is an import professional by trade, and has traveled extensively worldwide, especially in the Far East. He holds a degree in fine art from St. Lawrence University, and is an artist, musician, photographer, poet, and writer.

At the time of publication, he is the poetry editor for Parabola magazine (www.Parabola.org).

Mr. van Laer's principal web site is at www.nefersweetie.com. His blog is at www.zenyogagurdjieff.blogspot.com

