

The relation between the Gurdjieff/de Hartmann music and *Beelzebub's Tales*

There are two basic kinds of material in de Hartmann's rough notes and on the 'title pages' of his manuscripts.

1—Indications of the actual content of the piece, sometimes a title, sometimes notes regarding sources for the music, etc.

2—When and where the composition of the music took place – usually the date plus occasionally indication of a festive occasion, an event at the Prieuré, a trip somewhere, or the name of a person.

Often only the second kind of information was given, which means [presumably] that there is not necessarily any connection between the substance of the music and the occasion of its composition. It may be, for example, that de Hartmann recorded his note about the reading of the Bokharian Dervish because, perhaps, the reading itself brought him up to a certain state in which he was able to reserve a quality of music about something else. [?]

Stories circulate, about music intended to be played while a specific chapter was read. It is worth remembering that such stories can arise from someone being struck by an intense association but at the same time not noticing one-or-another word in what is said or written about the piece. For instance, correctly noticing that a piece of music was related to the reading of the chapter on the Bokharian Dervish, but not noticing that the statement made about the music performance, was that it was, "After supper, after a reading about the Dervish Hadji Asvatz (in Russian of course.)

When one becomes familiar with de Hartmann's systematic way of keeping notes, that this goes no further than telling when it was given.

I myself heard a very beguiling story about that piece of music (which I already loved then) when I was once at Mendham in the early 1950s. The story was that this music was written while Gurdjieff's wife was dying. And to me it seemed so appropriate, even stressing so emotionally those rising arpeggios as if a psyche was seeking to arise from what it was caught in, along with the blood-beat bass, with its occasional missing a beat, and the touching final escape at the end with the ceasing of the heart. It really felt like that to me, and still feels so.

But when we checked it out later, the simple facts are: Julia Osipovna Ostrowska died on June 26, 1926 not noted in the music notebooks, though a note simply saying "9th day" is connected to a melody line only, never finished, on the important Orthodox ritual 9th day after her death). The Bokharian Dervish is dated March 19, 1927.

With that long preamble, I'll note down each and every item in de Hartmann's notebooks or final manuscripts which relates in some way specifically to *Beelzebub's Tales*. (Gurdjieff began to dictate the story to Olga de Hartmann on Dec. 16, 1924. He began giving the non-movements music on July 29, 1925 with a prayer).

- 1 — 31 July, 1925 – a piece called *Atarnakh, Kurd Song*, see Ch. 43, pp1094-1104; Schott vol. 1, pp34-35.
- 2 — 6 June, 1926 – *Hymn to the Endless Creator*, see Ch. 47, p1174, "Hymn to our ENDLESSNESS"... "Thou Long Patient CREATOR ..." Schott vol. 3, pp90-91.
- 3 — 8 June, 1926 – *Rejoice Beelzebub!* See Ch 47, p1178, [after Beelzebub's transfiguration, the archangel proclaims, "And now let us all together exult and rejoice over such a worthiness

...(and everyone aboard the) *Karnak* began to sing the prescribed sacred canticle entitled 'I Rejoice'." Also and less obviously, Schott, vol. 3, pp44-45, contains the piece, *Joyous Hymn*.]

- 4** — 23 June, 1926 – *Song of Makary Kronbernkzion from the Planet Purgatory*. An undeveloped melody line,[apparently not published in the Schott volumes. A candidate for canonization, author of the Boolmarshano *The Affirming and Denying Influences on Man*, and member of the society Akhaldan, Makary was unjustly blamed for the consequences of the notions of GOOD and EVIL. His fate awaits such time when three-brained-beings begin to "existing as it is becoming for three-centered beings to exist. See Ch. 44, pp1127-33, 1136-38, 1140.]
- 5** — 8 Oct, 1926 – *Holy Affirming, Holy Denying, Holy Reconciling*, [see recurrent discussion, particularly] Ch. 39, [p752 and 138, 146-47, 757, Makary's notions, 1138-39.]
- 6** — 19 March, 1927 – *After supper, after reading about the Dervish Hadji Asvatz Troov*, see p 714, 870, Ch. 41, 871-917, 874-5, 879-81, 885, 887-95-897, 901-903, 905

NOTE: The previous 1st person commentaries are drawn from private correspondence of a member of the Schott editorial team (for the 4 volumes of the Gurdjieff / de Hartmann music) who was responding to a specific question from one of Gurdjieff's descendents about music to accompany specific chapters in *Beelzebub*. This keyboarder has examined the correspondence and excerpted the above information, leaving out the personal parts of the letter. The correspondence dates from before publication of the 4 Schott volumes, so Schott page numbers, have been added.[brackets indicate my editorial additions.]

The Schott volumes reveal two additional pieces which may be related to *Beelzebub's Tales* and one clearly related to *Meetings with Remarkable Men*.

7 — *Reading from a Sacred Book*, Schott, vol. 3, pp54-57. Might the "Sacred Book" be *Beelzebub's Tales*? And if not, the title of the piece is eminently appropriate for the composer's book.

8 — *Trinity*, Schott, vol. 4, pp64-65. On page 1109 of Ch. 43, there is a reference to the "sacred law which they [the Atlantians] call the 'Holy Trinity'."

One wonders if the music has to relate to only a specific chapter; key ideas (if not characters and terms) in *Beelzebub* and in Gurdjieff's other books, are common to his entire body of writing. Perhaps that should be considered in selecting Gurdjieff / de Hartmann music to accompany readings from any of his writings. Further study of the titles of musical pieces, including the Movements music, and terms in Gurdjieff's writings seems warranted in this regard. Alan Poole's digitally generated *Concordance to All and Everything*, Trafford, 2004, and his companion volume, *Concordance II*, (2006) provide exhaustive indices for Gurdjieff's writings.

Note: There is also at least one piece related to *Meetings with Remarkable Men, For Professor Skridlov*, Schott, vol. 2, pp24-25.

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Music for the Piano: Definitive Edition in Four Volumes, edited by Linda Daniel-Spitz, Charles Ketcham, and Laurence Rosenthal. Archives and Research, Thomas C. Daly, Mainz: Schott, paperback, sewn bindings.

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