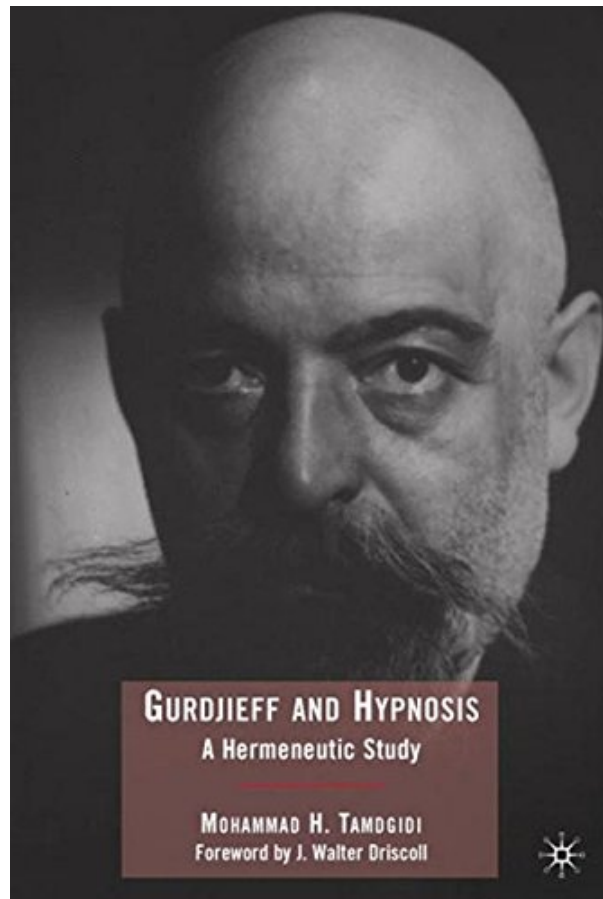
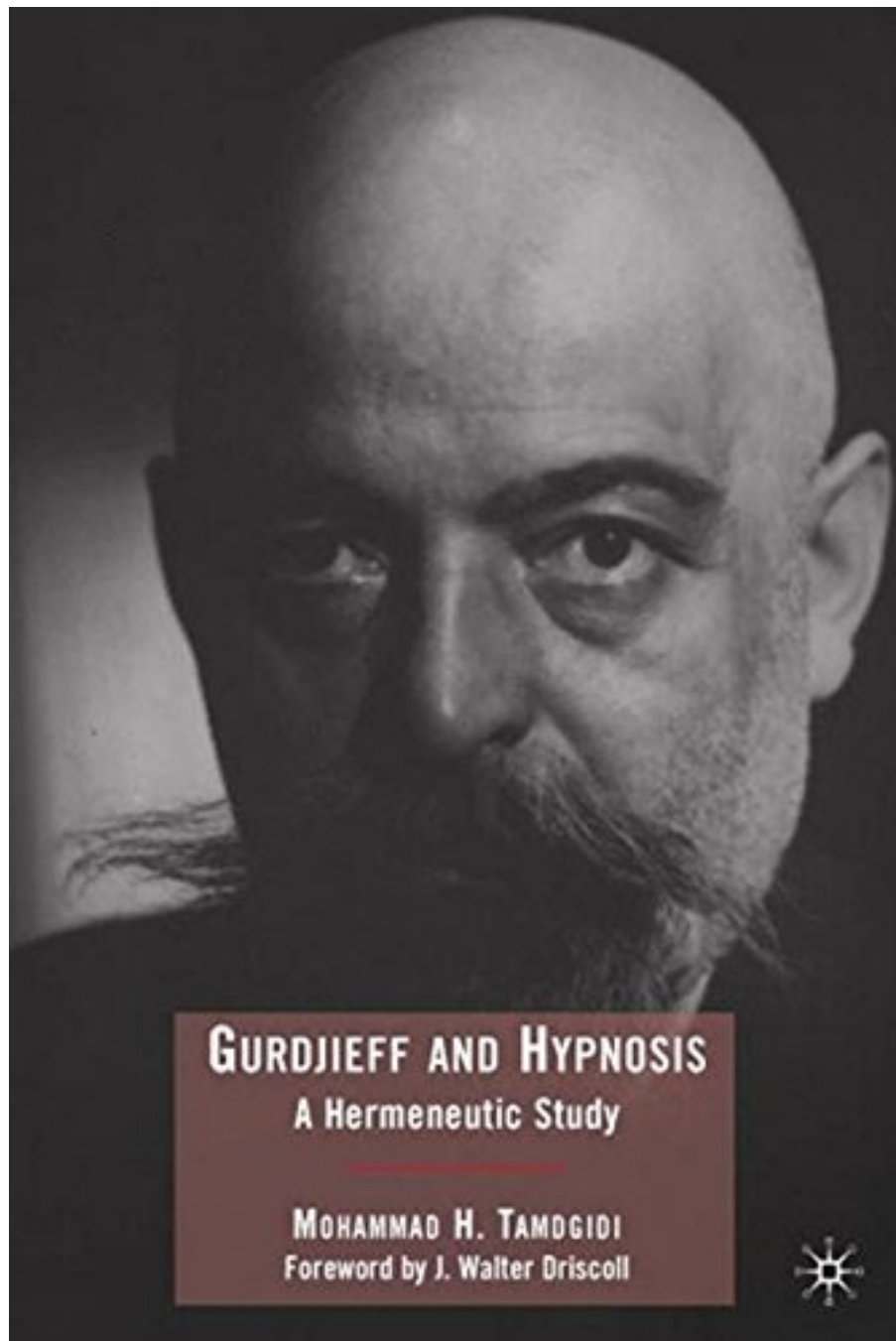


GURDJIEFF AND HYPNOSIS: A HERMENEUTIC STUDY BY M. TAMDGIDI



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Review

"Tamdgidi sets a benchmark for Gurdjieff Studies in relation to two recognized but insufficiently explored areas, his writings as a unified field and his exploitation of hypnosis in its broadest sense. His compact interpretation of Gurdjieff emphasizes - for the first time - a search for meaning based on recognizable keys within about 1,800 pages of Gurdjieff's four texts as a single body of work, with particular focus on subliminal and subconscious dimensions of impact and interpretation, an approach which might be termed the 'Hermeneutics of Gurdjieff.' Thus, Tamdgidi's work is an important original contribution to the constructive, independent, and critical study of Gurdjieff's four books. Anyone who has seriously attempted to read Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson or Meetings with Remarkable Men can vouch for their intentionally beguiling or 'hypnotic' effect. These readers will appreciate Tamdgidi's interpretive virtuosity and focus - he keeps each tree and the entire forest in sight throughout." - From the Foreword by J. Walter Driscoll, independent scholar and bibliographer; editor and contributing author, Gurdjieff: A Reading Guide, 3rd Ed.; contributing editor, Gurdjieff International Review (1997-2001); co-author, Gurdjieff: An Annotated Bibliography

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About the Author

MOHAMMAD M. TAMDGIDI is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology, University of Massachusetts, Boston, USA.

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This book explores the life and ideas of the enigmatic twentieth century philosopher, mystic, and teacher of esoteric dances George Ivanovitch Gurdjieff, performing a hermeneutic textual analysis of all his writings to illuminate the place of hypnosis in his teaching. Foreword by J. Walter Driscoll.

- Sales Rank: #3197337 in Books
- Published on: 2009-11-15
- Released on: 2009-11-24
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.50" h x .81" w x 5.50" l, .95 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 264 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

5 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

In support of the author's comments to MJ Thomas

By John Amaral

When I read the author's response to MJ Thomas mentioning William Patrick Patterson, I did a Google search for both names and found a lot of hits. I also substituted another negative reviewer's name and found a lot more hits with WPP. Other reviews are solidly positive. This makes me wonder why they have gone to the trouble. There must be more to this story.

I agree with the author that at least some of Thomas' comments seem sophomoric. For example, using In Search to contrast and compare with The Tales seems reasonable, since many people, including Gurdjieff, have commented that Ouspensky was a very good reporter of his words.

Finally, I agree with Paul Taylor that "Gurdjieff and Hypnosis" is worth careful attention.

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

"Great masterpieces will be written based on All and Everything"

By Amazon Customer

Gurdjieff has been quoted saying something like "Great masterpieces will be written based on All and Everything", and this book is certainly along that line in the sense that it is a truly profound effort of understanding the "gist" of Gurdjieff's writings.

All evidence of Gurdjieff's teaching and life witness to the fact that he didn't want blind "followers" who would accept uncritically all his "utterances" and this book strives sincerely to this direction.

What is very interesting and at the same time amusing (in one word, tragic-comic) is that this book is in no way "against" Gurdjieff, on the contrary, Mr. Tamdgidi, having devoted so much real effort in understanding the "gist" of Gurdjieff's teaching, is more than for Gurdjieff... even if he might not seem so by his blind "followers"!

The "holy rage" that is felt by the blind "followers" of Gurdjieff, even by the mere title of this book, proves what this author very painfully tries to show: if you are hypnotized in a "bad" way by Gurdjieff and his teachings then you'll get nowhere, if you are hypnotized (or awakened) in a good way, then you might get the expected benefit.

In simpler words, if you think Gurdjieff was a "prophet from Above" (as Mr. Tamdgidi very accurately explains in his answer to a blind review) then you'll delight in being his "apostle" and fight furiously with everyone you assume belittles your "God"; if you acknowledge in a real way that Gurdjieff had something of real value to offer, then you'll strive to understand it.

This book can help one in this direction.

P.S. The author's answers to the "negative" (in the really negative meaning of the word!) reviews, proves all the more so his sincere attitude and considerable effort in sharing with his (even hostile) fellow "three-brained beings" the meaning of Gurdjieff's teaching.

9 of 13 people found the following review helpful.

Yezidi Misinformation a Symptom?

By Henry Korman

Tamdgidi holds the oft-repeated view of the Yezidi circle as a hypnotic device to be broken from. However the real purpose of the circle was as a reminder of the consequences of lying. As I wrote in a two-part essay, "Gurdjieff and Yezidism" in "The Gurdjieff Journal," #s 17 & 18 (also to be found on the Yezidi website [...]):

"Pir Khidir a member of a contemporary Yezidi community, offers a deeper explanation of the tradition. For a Yezidi, the circle represents their religion and the community of Yezidis. In time past, Yezidis drew the circle around a Yezidi in order to have them speak the truth. If the person wouldn't speak truly, they couldn't leave the circle until released by their Sheikh or Pir. A person who did leave the circle without speaking the truth, would have knowingly left behind their religion and community, the worst of all possible circumstances for a Yezidi. Unfortunately, non-Yezidis, Muslims in particular, misunderstood the tradition and would draw a circle around a Yezidi to imprison him. A Yezidi, such as the child Gurfjieff saw, who himself, as yet hadn't an understanding of the deeper meaning of the circle, would nevertheless follow the custom. Consequently, observers ignorant of the tradition would see nothing more than enactment of black magic or mere superstition. They could not know what was at stake was the whole of their life."

If this perfunctory repetition of misinformation is representative of Mr. Tamdgidi's approach, one can hardly have confidence in what the book purports to demonstrate.

See all 7 customer reviews...

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