

George Mountford Adie and Joseph Azize, *George Adie: A Gurdjieff Pupil in Australia*, Third Edition, Revised and Enlarged (Sydney: Gurdjieff Society of Newport, 2023), xxvi, 107 pages; ISBN: 978-0-6459274-1-2; RRP: AUD \$42.25.

I reviewed the first edition (2007) of this important book and am impressed to revisit it after two revisions which expanded it significantly and situated it more clearly in an emergent and growing area of scholarship. The academic study of G. I. Gurdjieff (1877-1949) and his pupils was embryonic in 2007; in 2025 major monographs by Michael Pittman, Johanna Petsche, and two by Joseph Azize himself have transformed the field, with important books by Work members memorializing their teachers, memoirs of experience within the Fourth way, and digital archives of teaching sessions greatly increasing the materials available to researchers. The front matter sites George Adie in good company; there are epigraphs from the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, *Ecclesiastes*, William Shakespeare and Gurdjieff; Azize honours his teacher's "spiritual ideas" as "fruit of the tree" of Gurdjieff (p. 3). His discovery of Gurdjieff via the books and in community with other male friends and family while a student at the University of Sydney in 1978 led to a meeting with George Mountford Adie (1901-1989) and his wife Helen Craddock Adie (1909-1996), by then living in Sydney, Australia to which they had emigrated in 1965.

The Adies acquired a house in Newport on Sydney's northern beaches; by the time Azize met them in May 1982 Mr Adie was over 80 and Mrs Adie would turn 73 that year, but their spiritual authority and personal charisma still shone. Information about the six sub-groups (each named for a tree) of the Gurdjieff Society of Newport, the activities students pursued (Movements, teaching sessions, manual labour on the weekends), and the particular abilities of the Adies – Helen was among the finest interpreters of the Gurdjieff piano music and an exceptional Movements teacher – as well as their special status as direct pupils of both Gurdjieff and P. D. Ouspensky (1878-1947) – creates a rich picture of Azize's spiritual journey and that of his fellow pupils. From Chapter IV, "The Joy of Creation," the focus is on the Adies' teaching of Work ideas, but the biographical details come into focus when other Gurdjieff pupils like the Ouspenskys feature in the Adies' lives, for example. It is impressive how many first-generation Gurdjieff pupils the Adies were close friends of and maintained spiritual relationships as well as friendships with. The description of their friendship with Jeanne de Salzmann (1889-1990), and the summary of correspondence between them, is especially interesting.

The core Fourth Way texts – Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous* (1949) and Gurdjieff's *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson* (1950) – underlie much of the exposition of George Adie and his teaching. The Laws of Three and Seven, and key concepts like identification, inner considering, the collected state, attention, buffers, the importance of aim, and the development of the kesdjan body ("the coating of the second body," p. 255) are discussed, though not in great detail. The key principle of testing everything via experience, as well as the division of work between the sexes at the Newport property are explained. Mr Adie's courage and forbearance in the face of an unnecessary surgery in 1951 that made him an invalid who struggled with every breath are conveyed with great power, and prepare readers for Part Two, in which Adie's teachings

are reproduced. The question and answer format, familiar from other Work teaching books, like *Exchanges Within: Questions from Everyday Life Selected from Gurdjieff Group Meetings With John Pentland in California 1955-1984* (1997) and *Inside A Question: Works of Henriette Lannes* (2010), permits the personality of pupils to be visible and the appropriateness of Mr Adie's responses to be perceived. The primacy of the body as the site of esoteric transformation, the core place of being in the Work, and the necessity of constant repetition in doing exercises, practicing Movements, and the role of commemoration of Gurdjieff and other revered teachers, which Azize continues for his own teachers, the Adies, are all compellingly conveyed.

This third edition contains all material in both the first and second editions, and Azize's book on Helen Adie that will be published in 2026 is eagerly anticipated as a valuable companion piece. A book like *George Adie: A Gurdjieff Pupil in Australia* enriches the available scholarly resources in that it is both a primary source (the excellent accounts of Adie's teaching, presented almost verbatim) and a secondary source (in that the framing narrative constructed by Azize is informed by academic as well as personal perspectives). Very important primary data, such as a complete text of the "Toast to the Idiots" (pp. 262-265), and several teachings by Mrs Adie, which act as a taster for the next book, as well as the provision of a bibliography, make this book a crucial investment for anyone interested in the academic study of Gurdjieff and the Work, or indeed in the practice of the Work itself. Highly recommended.

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