

Ker -

Nov. 95

A Bulgarian scholar named
(approximately) Slavov will be approaching
you for info on a Bulgarian Methodist
(later cultist) named Peter-Dunoff or
Dunov who attended Drew ca. 1890.
enclosed is some background info.

Drew

BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

School of Theology.

This certifies, that

Peter Dumoff

has satisfactorily completed the regular three years' Course of Study in this School,
and is entitled to the rank and privileges of a

GRADUATE OF THE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY,
OF BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

Given at Boston, Massachusetts, this *10th* day of *June*
year of our Lord eighteen hundred and *1894*



William F. ...

President of the University.

Henry C. ...

Dean of the School of Theology.

Boston University School of Medicine.

DEAN'S OFFICE, 66 MARLBOROUGH STREET.

BOSTON, *February 3* 1894

*This is to certify that Mr. Peter
Constantine Dumoff is a member
in regular attendance of the
Boston University School of Medicine
Session of 1893-94.*

J. F. Talbot

Dean of the Faculty,



ка, той е трябвало да работи, за да изкарва прехраната си. Благодарение на изключително добрата характеристика и препоръка, която е получил от гр. Свищов, ръководството на факултета му предоставило възможността на работа в кухненския блок на университета. Напалало се е също така да работи като работник на пристанището или гарата. Разбира се, Петър е оползотворил и това време, като е опознал и анализирал бита и живота на ниско платените работници.

След Костон Петър става редовен студент в ДРУ Теологическия факултет в Мадисън на щата Ню-Джърси. Така на 15 октомври 1890 година е издал следния атестационен документ със следното съдържание:

ДРУ
Теологически семинар
Факултет

Мадисън, Ню Джърси.
Октомври, 15. 1890 г.

С това се удостоверява, че Г-н Петър К. Дъноф е студент в основния и редовен курс на ДРУ Теологическия семинар. Той прояви великолепен характер през време на престоя си при нас и е трудолюбив и съзнателен. Това е формална атестация за неговото отношение към ~~кх~~ института и за неговия отличен характер като студент.

Атестиран в присъствието на Ректора, Осществения Нотариус на щата Ню Джърси в САЩ, Америка.

Хенри А. Бътц
Президент на ДРУ
семинара по теология.

15. окт. 1890 г. А. Д. Раствум.

/в оригинал/

DREW
Theological Seminary
Faculty

Madison, N. J. October, 15 th. 1890

This is to certify that Mr. Peter K. Dunoff is a student in good and regular standing in Drew Theological Seminary. He has borne an excellent character during his stay with us, is industrious, and faithful. This is to attest in a formal way his relation to this institution and excellent character as a student.

/Attested in the Presence of
the Subscriber, a Notary Public
in and for the State of New Jersey, United States
of America, this fifteenth day of October A. D. 1890

A. G. Rasthum
Notary Public of New Jersey

Henry A. Buttz
President by Drew Theol. Sem. N. J.

АМЕРИКАНСКО НАУЧНО-БОГОСЛОВСКО УЧИЛИЩЕ
 в
 СВИШТОВЪ

АТТЕСТАТЪ

Петър Н. Дюнов
 Български

роден в с. Калевца Западна Сърбия

Присъдено

Учители	Марио Дюнов	Учители	Учители
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24 Юни



Петър Н. Дюнов

American Scientific-Theological School / Theology-science
 in
 Svishitov
 (Bulgaria)

June 24
 1887

P. Dunooff's ~~graduation certificate~~ graduation certificate
 from the "American Theological School" in
 Svishitov on the Danube river of 1887

It was run by
 a graduate of
 Dren born in
 Kotel
 Bulgaria

119-120 str.

1966

212

THE ACADEMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF A STUDY ON THE WHITE BROTHERHOOD

The goal of this volume is to introduce the heritage and current practices of The Universal White Brotherhood (later WB) into academic circulation.

The author has been convinced of the importance of this topic for quite some time, and - what with having tried to find the personal time and support to develop a research project on the WB without any success, and what with the prospects for the future being so dim, - he has found it necessary to offer this small contribution to those who might wish to follow it.

So - what about The Universal White Brotherhood, or as its followers called it in Bulgarian: "Byaloto Bratstvo," popularly known as "Dunovism" (in French - Fraternite Blanche Universelle)? Why study it?

A spiritual movement based on popular occultism, The Universal White Brotherhood is a marvelous study case of East European mysticism and its perseverance under totalitarian regimes. The understanding of its aims and the role it played in Bulgarian society will be a significant contribution to the understanding of Eastern Europe as a whole. While the study of political and economic life in the Soviet sphere of influence is well focused, the research on its spiritual life is somewhat out of balance. It shows interest only in the ways in which present-day regimes direct matters of faith and moral values in their effort to eliminate the traditional guidance of the Church in that area.

A study on the WB will demonstrate that the alternatives to Marxism in Eastern Europe (which the non-Marxist mind seeks) are found not only in the official Church, but to a large extent, in non-

ecclesiastic mysticism as well; the ratio of the clients for the two alternatives, of course, being quite different in different countries; i.e., from an extremely strong Church and a relative lack of non-ecclesiastic mysticism in Poland to a relatively weak Church and a strong non-ecclesiastic mysticism in Bulgaria.

The author is convinced that in addition, the addressing of this problem will lead to a better understanding of nonconformist alternatives in the search of "The Outsider" for his spiritual self, be he the angry young man of K. Wilson and the beatnik of Norman Mailer of twenty five years ago, the transcendentalist of Thoreau of 140 years ago, the heretic of the past, or the malcontent of the future.

The White Brotherhood movement was formally established in Bulgaria by Peter Dunov, after his studies of medicine and theology in the U.S.A., during the first decade of this century. The First Universal Convention of the Brotherhood was attended by only three disciples of his.

When Dunov died in 1944, a couple of months after the Soviet Army entered Bulgaria to reverse its course in history as a parliamentary democracy, the WB had almost 100,000 members and sympathizers one-third of whom (i.e., the active, proper members of the WB) lived in Brotherhood Camps (*lageri*) in most of the major cities of the country. It had three publishing houses in Bulgaria (Slavyanski and Zhitno Zurno in Sofia, and Bratstvo in Sevlievo), and one in France (*Le Grain de Ble* which was succeeded by *Le Courrier du Livre*). It had a monthly magazine (Grain of Wheat). The WB had spread into Yugoslavia, Finland, Sweden, France, Switzerland, Italy, America, Japan, Spain, Czechoslovakia, and exercised a significant influence among the Bulgarian intelligentsia.

A noted disciple of Dunov (the writer Lyubomir Lulchev) became the adviser and personal astrologer of the Bulgarian king, Boris III, for which he was executed by "The People's Courts" in 1945. It is said that the Teacher didn't approve of Lulchev's contact with Boris.

The king's sister, Eudoxia, even built her residence next to the Camp of the Brotherhood near Sofia supposedly to be close to Lulchev who was her personal friend. It deserves noting that before dying in 1985, Eudoxia was interviewed on the subject by the son of

the master of ceremonies of the Bulgarian Court. According to Mr. Groueff, Eudoxia had stated that she never was a member of the Brotherhood, and remained a faithful Catholic, although she was a friend of Lulchev's.

During the pre-war period, the White Brotherhood was criticized by the military for its pacifism and cosmopolitanism, and by the Eastern Orthodox Church for its creed that all religious feelings are innate and are a personal matter between the individual and God. The king's court persistently headed off those attacks to preserve its lines of communication with all interest groups, although there was a good deal of truth in the criticism.

Some members of the White Brotherhood did accuse the bureaucracy of the Church of being part of the "Black Brotherhood," aiming at the disruption of the direct link between the individual and the Universal Spirit (God), and of taking advantage of the innate feelings of faith in common believers and transforming them into an instrument of its ambitions for political power and personal wealth. The symbolism of "Black," of course, is related to the concept that there are powers which eclipse the light of the "Universal Spirit"; and, as the Montreal publishing house of the White Brotherhood has it on the jacket of some of its books, "the word 'White' as in 'Universal White Brotherhood' does not in any way refer to color of skin. Just as the color white is the synthesis of all colors, the 'Universal White Brotherhood' concerns all men and women without exception. The teaching of the Brotherhood urges them to bring about a harmonious life where all are brothers and sisters, where each race, each religion, each nationality is respected."

After the establishment of the Marxist legislation in 1947, the publishing houses of the Bulgarian Brotherhood were confiscated; and in 1951 a trial against the council of the WB (on financial grounds) put an end to its legal existence.

The Brotherhood went on with its activities unofficially in intolerable circumstances. Yet it found ways to not only sustain its undercurrent presence in the intellectual life of Bulgaria, but to also recruit some new members.

Although political analysts label Bulgaria the most loyal Soviet satellite, close observers have quite often recorded the striking

esence of mysticism and the taste for the occult in common Bulgarian thinking and everyday life, Bulgaria is the only East European country with a state-supported institute for research on extrasensory perception (ESP), which studies the practices of popular Bulgarian clairvoyant Vangya in one of its departments: the Institute for Suggestology, under the direction of Dr. Lozanov. Folk and occult medicine and nutrition schools have been legalized. Colonel Dimkov's volumes on do-it-yourself medicine (which were strictly forbidden in the last couple of decades) were republished, and the media reported a secret Brezhnev visit to him before the Soviet leader died. A book on the proto-bulgar zodiac and astrology was published by N. Todorov's Institute for Balkan studies (the author of which, Dr. Rogev, just like colonel Dimkov and Dr. Lozanov, is known to have been connected to White Brotherhood circles).

Through young consultants, advisers, and experts (directly related to the White Brotherhood), who have been working in the artistic and research fields, a constant influx of Brotherhood ideas penetrate into the Marxist vocabulary and thinking of officials to such an extent that the speeches and writings of the daughter of the Bulgarian leader T. Zhivkov - Lyudmila Zhivkova (shortly before her early death) - became the subject of special studies clearly showing their linkage to White Brotherhood concepts such as "The Universal Spirit", "Universal Love", etc., although an erroneous effort was made to relate those concepts to the teaching of Caucasian-born popular occultist, Gurdjieff.

Present day Bulgarian Literary and Art magazines are full of criticism against elements of mysticism and occultism in newcomers (especially in poetry), and there have been reports of a series of trials against illegal yoga and spiritual fitness schools established by self-proclaimed masters. Yoga, by the way, is one of the main sources of the physical fitness theory of the White Brotherhood. The first book on yoga exercises in Bulgaria (published in the '60-ies) was done with the participation of one of the masters of yoga in that country and an inside member of the White Brotherhood, the artist Vasil Ivanov.

Today the influence of the White Brotherhood in the West is small, but the number of recruits seems to be growing. The chief

proponent of influence is a disciple of Dunov's, Michael Ivanov, who is accepted as "Master" by his followers in France, the USA and Canada (although he is considered to be only another "brother" and not a real "teacher" by most of the White Brothers of the older generation in Bulgaria). Ivanov served two years of prison in France. The Roman-Catholic clergy was not at all happy with his Krishnamurtian - or, if you will, Gene-Scotian - criticism of the church bureaucracy, and it disapproved of his call for an Universal religion and a Solar Civilization: "The Sun contains one God for all men..." he had written. "Thousands of people have never heard of Christianity! Unfortunately, perhaps they are better off that way." It will be proper to point out in relation to this that Dunov himself in his time was excommunicated by one of the Bulgarian bishops whom he had called "the crooked beam in the structure of the Bulgarian church."

Michael Ivanov broadened the foundations of the White Brotherhood group that had existed in Paris before World War II, and later on, established a WB camp in southern France. Today there are White Brotherhood camps in Canada, the largest of which is in Laval, north of Montreal, and has two publishing houses in France. One of them belongs to the Bulgarian White Brotherhood Council - "Le Courier du Livre", - and one to Mihael's faction - "Prosveta" (formerly - "Izgrev"). There is a publishing house in Laval, Canada, as well (with distributors in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Spain, USA, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Sweden). A small publishing operation existed for some time in California in the U.S.A., and some brotherhood books have been published in West Germany (the author of this is not sure whether they were done by a White Brotherhood publisher or by a commercial publishing house).

Eastern Europe (and for that matter Bulgaria) was the home of two significant, entirely original movements accompanying its modernization throughout the last hundred years that had nothing to do with conventional Occidentalism and Liberalism: the movement known as Agrarianism, and Dunovism (the White Brotherhood movement). Stamboliyski's Agrarianism captured the imagination of Eastern Europeans with the idea that the small owner can do it all by himself without giving way to big business. It became a

popular and strong political movement throughout the area, but unfortunately has now lost its influence in the political and ideological arena. Dunov's White Brotherhood built its popularity on the idea that every human being can grow spiritually without giving way to church bureaucracy and ideological indoctrination. The WB was not the sole center of such beliefs. The Theosophical Society, the Bulgarian Masons, the Bulgarian Tolstoist communes, and the Esperanto cooperative movement deserve special attention and a close parallel study with the White Brotherhood in this respect. Yet all these movements were foreign implants and have entirely died out, although the set of ideas that brought them to life and kept them going are not dead at all; they are deeply implanted in the Bulgarian ethnic consciousness. The ideas of the White Brotherhood are the only set of ideas in the large sea of non-conformity that, although anonymous, still attracts new ideological clients. Ironically enough, under Marxism Bulgaria today - more than before - is a country of everyday coffecup reading, palmistry, astrology and ESP experiments; and the social innovations of the Brotherhood of the '20s and '30s like vegetarianism and health-food restaurants; high-mountain camping and hiking, and the studying of cosmopolitan languages such as Esperanto, have brought forward a number of firmly established, present day life styles.

Agrarianism has been thoroughly studied. Sound monographs on its political and ideological heritage have been published, even in the U.S.A., by professor John Bell, professor Charles Moser and others. Surprisingly enough there hasn't been a single study on the White Brotherhood either in Bulgaria, in Eastern Europe, or in the West, although its significance has been grasped in its own time by the Soviets (academician N. Derzhavin visited Dunov a short month after the Soviet army moved into Bulgaria), and by the British (soon after Dunov died, Hullett Johnson of Canterbury appeared at the White Brotherhood camp near Sofia).

It is unfortunate, but any study of the WB rises so many questions, and will have to spread out into so many fields, that even putting down a crude outline of the topics it should touch upon seems like quite a loadwork. The author hopes someone will do it though, for it will, no doubt, be a rewarding experience.

WHITE BROTHERS AND SISTERS AND THEIR BROTHERHOOD

What follows is a brief sketch of what the White Brothers and Sisters were like, and what distinguished them from the rest of their fellow citizens. Our description is based mainly on the Bulgarian White Brothers, although we visited the Montreal and Laval Brotherhoods (bookstores, camps, restaurants, publishing house, etc.) and interviewed a couple of the most active members of their society.

HOUSING

Most of the White Brothers and Sisters (*Belite Bratya i Sestri* or *Dunovisti*, as they are called by nonmembers of the Brotherhood) lived mingled with the population of large cities in Bulgaria. About one-third of them though lived in mostly suburban communities known as "camps" (*lageri*).

The largest one, called "The Dawn" (*Izgreva*), was located at the southeastern outskirts of Sofia on the sunny slopes of Dolni Lozenets hillside (the kind of topographical exposure preferred for all campsites of the Brotherhood). It stretched down the slope in the shape of a huge triangle outlined by the eastern edge of the, then, King Boris Park - *Borisovata gradina* (Today "The Park of Freedom") - to the west; by The Durvenitsa Highway (Today "Boulevard Bulgaro-suvetska Druzha") to the north and the northeast; and by the rail-way tracks connecting those two borders to the south and southeast.

Everyone living within the camp's borders was a member of the Brotherhood, with the exception of the owners of two houses (Durvenishko Shose 2, and 8): the evangelical pastor of Sofia (whose name I cannot recollect), and the best known Forddealer in

town - Savitski. Where the Soviet Embassy looms today, rested the Hall (*salonut*) of the White Brotherhood where the Teacher (a preferable translation for "*Uchitelyat*" to the more commonly used "the Master") delivered his talks (*besedi*) three times weekly, the lawn (*polyanata*), for the sunrise Paneurythmia, the local printing house of the Brotherhood, the cafeteria (*kuhnyata*), the fountain (with its important symbolic images), the rose garden, etc.

Many members of the Brotherhood, though, lived in the adjacent neighborhoods: Diana Bad (across the railroad tracks), "Vitosha" (along the highway to Simeonovo at the foot of the Vitosha mountain where, Boris Nikolov, one of the most respected brothers, lived), and the large area to the north known as "The Fourth Kilometer" (today - "Iztok"), where the King's sister Eudoxia built her mansion (now known as Vasil Kolarov's residence on Kolarov street).

Nothing in the camp was regulated in any specific way, and The Dawn was not a commune. Everyone either owned his property or just lived in cabins, which each one constructed for himself on the property, bought for the Brotherhood by a sympathizer without any written agreement or any strings attached. This later (in 1951) became grounds for the present regime to outlaw the Brotherhood and confiscate the lands on which The Dawn stood. Only the hall (in a room on top of which the Teacher Dunov lived) and the kitchen were common property in the sense that they were built jointly by the brothers. Yet no papers for the ownership of those properties (except for the land) were ever held by anyone. In short - the White Brotherhood was not a "legal body" as far as any public law was concerned. Even its funds were held by trusted members and sympathizers.

Although the brothers and sisters were free to build for themselves any kind of house they wished, only very few of the houses were solidly constructed. The common belief was that since everyone is "just camping for a short time on Earth" there were more important goals to pursue and things to do than to get chained down to structures of brick, stone and concrete. Most of the White Brothers lived in plywood shacks, in comparison to which, Thoreau's cabin at Walden would have looked like a palace.

The cabin of King Boris's adviser Lulchev was three by three yards: one window, one door, one cot, and a microscopic kitchenette with one warm plate. (In order to depict Lulchev as a spoiled courtier, Ivan Paunovski, in his book about the Bulgarian establishment during World War II *Vuzmezdieta*, described this shack as "The Villa" of Lulchev). The cabin of the most respected member of the Brotherhood after Dunov - Boyan Boev - was a three by two yards one with no kitchenette. The extremely successful businessman and owner of the popular publishing house "Atanasov" lived together with his wife and two daughters in a 2 room plywood cabin.

Similar camps existed in large towns such as Burgas, on the Black sea, which was called *Izgreva* (as the Sofia one) and the location of which still carries its name; Sevlievo, where the largest publishing house of the Brotherhood was; Ruse; Plovdiv; and Turnovo, among others.

HIGH-MOUNTAIN CAMPS OF THE WHITE BROTHERHOOD

During the months of June, July, and August the White Brotherhood built high-mountain camps in which the brothers and sisters enjoyed the positive powers of unadulterated nature for months in a row.

Most important of all was the camp (*bivacut*) at the second lake of the Seven Rila Lakes, where the Teacher usually stayed for a month or so. The camp was high above the timberline (at 2,100 meters altitude) and usually muletrains were hired from the villages in the Iskar valley below (mainly from Govedartsi) to bring up the tents, dishes, pans, and the bedclothes (most nights freezing temperatures prevailed).

The first thing to be organized was the kitchen in the only permanent site: a two by four yard, stone-wall construction, for which no masonry was used; stone plates made up the roof. A couple of big kettles were installed, and every day, an hour before sunrise, the head of the Brotherhood household, brother Simeonov, made the glaciers around resound with his call: "*Voda za chai!*" ("Tea 's ready!" - literary: "Hot water for tea!"). The tea was brewed of

wild herbs picked on the spot, of course.

There was a barge on the lake. There were two "fountains", where icy cold water ran through marble spouts shaped in the form of two open palms. These fountains were located between the second and the third, and between the fifth and sixth lakes. The immediate area around the Camp, in which the Brothers and Sisters hiked, played, and meditated, included the entire cirque of the old glacier of the Seven Lakes, and the bordering glacier to the Northwest which held the Lake of Purity (*Ezeroto na Chistotata*) and the Lake of Contemplation (*Ezeroto na Suzertsanieto*). The Seven Lakes were given names related to parts of the human body: The Heart, The Lungs, The Head, The Kidney, etc.

The sun was greeted and sent away with meditation from The Peak of Prayer (*Molitveniyat Vruh*). The whole area was dominated by the Guerrilla summit (*Haramiyata*) which rose between the two glaciers of the Seven lakes and the lake of Purity. This peak was the favorite spot for meditation by the best hikers of the Brotherhood.

Hundreds of people camped here in freezing nocturnal temperatures, and some of the photos taken during the '40-ies and published in White Brotherhood books, show about 200 Brothers and Sisters doing the Paneurithmiya. The White Brothers strongly believed that, when the end of today's civilization would come with the end of the twentieth century, people of all races, from all over the world, would come by helicopters to dance the Paneurithmiya on the huge meadow next to the fifth lake. They had no doubt that the glacier of the Seven Lakes was one of the few sacred spots on this planet (together with Everest in the Himalayans, Ararat in the Caucasian mountains, Haleakala in Hawaii, and Olympia in Washington, to name a few others.)

Other mountain campsites of the White Brotherhood have been built at Ravna Reka, north of Chatal-kaya in the Sliven Mountains (believed to be an old eruption site that was the mystical antipode of Haleakala in Hawaii); *Bivacut*, north of the village of Simeonovo on the slopes of Vitosha mountain; and between the summits of Sokolets and Musala in Rila (the highest camp of the Brotherhood ever, with its 2,400 meters of altitude).

HYGIENE, CLOTHING, DIET

The houses of the White Brothers and Sisters carried the somewhat unusual, but pleasant, smell of dry fruit and natural body odors. The Dunovists didn't use any perfumes, deodorants, makeup or skinlotions, but they washed more often than the average Bulgarian did. Quite popular was the so-called "sunny water" (*Sluncheva Voda*), which was any water kept in open containers and exposed long enough to the sun. It was believed to have a healing effect, and was widely used for bathing.

The White Brothers and Sisters could be recognized very easily by their distinct clothing. They wore clothes with light colors (most often white, light grey, and azure blue, and sometimes pink or yellow). Red was undesirable: as the color governed by the planet Mars, it was believed to carry aggressiveness. Black was evaded by all means as the color of the planet Saturn (or the Old Man), and was believed to carry the forces of the Black Brotherhood, which repressed the positive influences of the sun.

The most distinctive feature of the White Brothers was their long hair: the men wore it to their shoulders and even longer. It was believed that the hair served as a means of "catching" some important, positive cosmic influences.

Sunbathing was forbidden between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M. because of the infrared rays, which were considered to be "Marsian."

The drinking of ice-cold drink and even cold water was absolutely forbidden. All White Brothers and Sisters were vegetarians just as the Bulgarian Esperantists, Tolstoyists, and Masons were. The taking of drugs and medicine was undesirable. Surgical work, too. Most White Brothers healed themselves by following the instructions of folk-healer Dimkov (his 12 volume system was published in the thirties), or by taking long and severe fastings, sometimes accompanied by dehydration.

Spices were welcomed. Herb teas, too, as well as coffee in small quantities. Although the minutes of the first three Conventions of

the Brotherhood show that at the Brotherhood dinners that accompanied them, a glass of red wine was served, by the twenties and thirties, the White Brotherhood took to perfect abstention from alcohol.

It was believed that one should go to bed at sunset and rise at dawn.

The dead were kept unburied for three days before they were given back to the ground in common public graveyards. The only exception is the grave of the Teacher, Peter Dunov. He was buried in the small park southeast of the Soviet Embassy on Nezabravka and Georgi Mirchev streets, which once was the topographical center of the Dawn.

COMMUNAL LIFE

Loose as they might seem to be on the outside, the social structure and traditions of the White Brotherhood were held dear by the Brothers and Sisters.

The heaviest obligation of the Brotherhood was each member's contribution of one-tenth of his earnings, which was done voluntarily. No one really kept record of whether this obligation was fulfilled or not. Poor Brothers and Sisters helped in the kitchen or worked in the vegetable gardens and orchards instead. The produce of the gardens sustained the kitchen.

Most of the money was put to work in the Brotherhood's main fields of interest: number one, the publishing of the monthly magazine *Zhitno Zurno* (Grain of Wheat) and the multi-volume series with the Talks of the Teacher; number two, the musical education of the children of Brotherhood families. The most talented among them got grants to carry them through musical schools around Bulgaria and the Musical Academy in Sofia. A number of them - violinists, pianists, singers, composers and conductors - later gained worldwide recognition and high national awards and positions.

The kitchen served daily vegetarian lunches, which were absolutely free for all, be they brothers or not. At the end of the lunch, a pot was passed around for donations.

On special occasions (mainly Spring and Autumn equinoxes) Brotherhood Dinners (*Bratski Vecheri*) were held, accompanied by songs and musical performances.

Special concerts were organized mainly on Sundays after the Sunday Talk of the Teacher. On many occasions world-famous performers touring Bulgaria would give free concerts at the Dawn. A common visitor here was the tenor of the Vienna Opera, Theodor Mazarov, and at one occasion during World War II, the Italian violinist, Paolo Chompi, played in the Brotherhood Hall.

On Sundays before and after the Talk, the Dawn was the gathering place of prominent Bulgarian intellectuals, who took their walk through the Boris Park to get together for a chat with distinguished Brothers. Among those visitors were the poet and Agrarian Union activist, Trifon Kunev, the popular essayist Tomalevski, the professor of philosophy at Sofia University, Mihalchev, general Stoyanov, and many others.

THE TEACHER

The focal figure of those gatherings on the lawn and in the rose garden of course was the Teacher, Peter Dunov, himself. He was not always to be seen here, yet - often enough to keep open the communications with those members of the Bulgarian elite that showed interest in the Brotherhood. It is hard to convey with simple words the incredible magic of his presence: Slender, tall, with an extremely delicate and beautiful face, silken hair falling over his shoulders, large hands with thin elegant fingers, he kept his distance from those with whom he spoke. Yet his overwhelming magnetism and his extreme kindness arrested everybody's interest. He *was* the Teacher, and one wanted nothing but to sit and listen to him. At the encounters on the lawn, though, he preferred to listen and stimulate others to express their feelings and search for their places at the Dawn. The time for him to speak was during his Talks (*Besedi*).

Before coming to the Dawn, he used to share a house on *Opulchenska* street with the future communist leader Dimitrov - both of them long-haired, former American-protestant alumni.

It is appropriate to add at this point that Dunov had started as a scholar, traveling the country over his anthropological research on the skulls of Bulgarians. In order to sustain himself during his travels he lectured, utilizing his studies in the USA. He was extremely successful in that, and although he was able to complete and publish his first scholarly book, the tremendous response he got during his lectures helped the teacher in him to win over the scholar.

However his taste for systematic, quantitative analysis never left him entirely it seems. During the last few decades of his life from his small observatory on top of the hall-building, he made astronomical observations of sun spots and eruptions, which he meticulously entered in the daily charts he had obtained from the British Royal Astronomical Society (if that was the right name - the author of this is quoting from memory).

THE TALKS OF THE TEACHER

The Talks of the Teacher were held several times during the week: on Monday - for the inner circle of Brothers and Sisters; on Wednesday before dawn was the so-called Youth Class (*Mladzhi Klass*); and on Sunday at 10:00 A.M. was the talk for the general public.

Although the hall had a stage for concert performances, the Teacher's wooden chair was placed in the middle of the aisles facing the eastern, all-glass wall. The Brothers and Sisters sat in a circle around him, and there was no feeling of any artificial distance between students and teacher. It was rather an ancient Greek circle; a forum, in which the intellects and the feelings of the students were fused with those of their teacher's in a common surge at grasping a certain topic.

The Talks themselves were not intellectual at all in the common sense of the word. They were poetic, mystic, suddenly lit by anecdotes and stories, or citing basic spiritual formulas, which the students were expected to remember and live by. The important thing here was the process of the spiritual blending between teacher and students, and the Teacher's "Word" was only a technical instru-

ment used to stimulate this process. The Teacher had in mind only the topic of his delivery as he walked into the hall and the rest was worked out in accordance with the reactions of those present (a definite reason to call those deliveries "Talks" and not "Lectures"). In spite of that, a couple of Brothers and Sisters, supervised by brother Boyan Boev, took down in shorthand every talk; and later on, the texts of the talks were published by Kalimenov publishers, in Sevlievo. Before the White Brotherhood was formally dissolved and its possessions confiscated, about 100 volumes of talks were published. It is important to mention here that the Teacher didn't edit the texts of those volumes. For him the "living word" was what mattered; yet he didn't discourage his students in the publishing of the texts as long as they grew through the process.

THE PANEURYTHMIA

Together with the Talks of the Teacher, the Paneurythmia dancing was the second most important activity that made the White Brotherhood what it was. Just as the Sunday talks were open to the public, so was the dancing, and anyone could join in, since its purpose was precisely what the Brotherhood was all about: to unify the spirit of every man on this earth with the basic, positive forces of the Universe.

At the Dawn Camp the Paneurythmia took place on the lawn every morning at sunrise between the Spring and the Summer Equinoxes. In the old days it was performed barefooted, but in the late thirties and during World War II no one did that any more.

A group of students played their instruments in the center of the lawn: usually there were some violins, a viola, a cello, guitars, clarinet and a flute. The Brothers and Sisters formed a circle around them and performed the Paneurythmia which was something between a rhythmic exercise and a dance and took between thirty to sixty minutes.

It had a powerful effect. Not of meditation or prayer, but of a fulfilled sense of unification with the Universe.

The Paneurythmia was composed of three unequal parts con-

sisting of several numbers each. (Sometimes shorter versions were dabced.) The first cycle was "the awakening" of the Brothers and Sisters; the bringing up of their awareness of their immediate surroundings. After this had been accomplished, the second cycle came. It was of "the Universal awakening"; the blending of the Brothers and Sisters through the powers of nature (of which they had become aware during the first cycle) with The Universal Spirit (or - God himself). The third - short part - consisted of the pronouncing of a certain verbal formula and performing a short breathing exercise, which had a cleansing effect, and was aimed at the smooth bringing back of the participants in the Paneurythmia to the realities of their everyday life.

Here are the separate numbers in the three cycles:

Awakening for Nature : Awakening, Reconciliation, Giving, Rising Up, Elevation, Opening, Liberation, Clapping of Hands.

Awakening for the Universal Spirit : Purification, Flying, Jumping, Weaving, Thinking, Sunrise, Square, Beauty, Mobility, Awakening, Joy, Getting Aware Of, Beautiful Day, Being Content, Stride by Stride, At Dawn.

Meditation : Breathing, Providence, Pentagram.

Paneurythmia dances were played by the Brothers and Sisters at the mounts of downtown Plovdiv, on the hillsides outside Turnovo, and on top of the slopes of Russe vineyards.

HIKING

Hiking was the main hobby of all Brothers and Sisters. This sprang out directly from the teaching itself, which was aimed at blending one's spirit with the positive powers of nature.

There were some hikes that the Teacher himself have given. Some of them were easy ones like the hike to the Camp above Simeonovo at the foot of the Vitosha mountain, which took one and a half hours. Others were extremely hard. One should bear in mind though that the Brotherhood had the best hikers in the country - some of them working for long years in meteorological high-mountain stations and rescue teams during the winter. The very best among them were brothers Galiley, Atanas, Savata, and Ignat Kotarov. The latter was described by another famous mountaneer -

the novelist, Assen Hristoforov - in his book *Sketches From Rila* in the short story "The Zeus of Musala."

After the dissolving of the White Brotherhood quite a number of Brothers and Sisters sought some of the values of their lost life-style by withdrawing into the high mountains as hut attendants, or workers at meteorological stations.

THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OUTSIDE THE BROTHERHOOD

In the years following the outlawing of the White Brotherhood, its members were integrated into the post-war Bulgarian society. Many of them probably do not wish to be reminded of their previous affiliations. We should add though that even before the dissolution of the Brotherhood they were actively involved in the social and creative life of the country.

Andro Lulchev, the brother of the king's adviser, Lyubomir Lulchev, was a very important political figure as were the entire family of writer Tomalevski. Among related to the king's court figures was general Stoyanov. Here belonged artists such as Vasil Ivanov, Tsvetana Simeonova, Dimanov; conductors, composers, many of the instrumentalists in the opera and the State Symphony; academy and university professors of music, linguistics, mathematics; distinguished lawyers, publishers, journalists, successful businessmen, and industrialists. Some members of the Brotherhood had come from abroad to live close to the Teacher at the Dawn. Among them was a Czech ballerina (sister Radmila), an Italian expert in mosaics and stone-carving Bertolli, and the granddaughters of the celebrated poet of the Croatian Renaissance, Nadzor.

Many brothers and sisters indulged in more humble occupations. The two distinguished astrologers and writers of the Brotherhood - Ivan Antonov (who wrote under the name of Ivan Izvorski) and Vlad Pashov (who wrote the first systematic book on astrology in Bulgarian) - farmed the Brotherhood gardens. One of the closest associates of Dunov - Boris Nikolov (who was a magnificent writer of poetry in prose) - together with Bertolli established the Brotherhood school of working in mosaics, which gave a well-paid

occupation to many White Brothers. Among them was another member of the inner circle of the Brotherhood - brother Metodi - who studied diplomacy at the University of Warsaw in Poland before the Second World War and for a short time had a diplomatic career before he joined the Brotherhood.

Another well-paying craft, almost as popular among the White Brothers as working in mosaic and stone carving, was parquet installing.

The flooring of many important buildings in Bulgaria have been executed by teams of White Brothers; the masterpiece of Bertolli's school being the floors and wall mosaics of the former Palace of Justice in Sofia next to St. Nedelya Church. The mosaics of the Ministry of Defense and Foreign Affairs next to the National Theatre are also worth mentioning.

THE TEACHING

For the scholar it would be hard to pin down the teaching of the White Brotherhood. There isn't a definite text from which to study it. The published Talks (*Besedi*) of the Teacher were just the oral part of the multi-level fusion between students, Teacher, and the positive powers of nature as they saw them. As to the words of the songs that we offer here, although they are more of a "fixed text" given by Dunov to be kept as is, they still were one of the three elements of the Paneurythmia in which poetry, music and dance were blended. Yet the basic characteristics of the Brotherhood, which appealed to the growing numbers of Dðnovists in the late thirties and early forties of this century are clear enough.

The first feature of the Teaching is that Dunov wanted to build a universal religion in which all races, ethnic groups, classes, cultures, nations, age and sex groups would feel equal as brothers and sisters. In order to achieve this he centered the religion around the basic, simple, elements of human life that bred positive feelings. This, it was believed, would eliminate every historical burden that might stimulate group rivalry and religious animosity from which our civilization has suffered so much in the past.

The focus of those positive elements is the only universal "God" that humanity has had up until now - The Sun and its powers, which have been worshipped consciously or instinctively deep in the biological, psychological, and spiritual heart of every man and woman since the beginning of time. There were many elements that (according to popular occultism) directly or indirectly orbited this focus of worship, and the Brothers and Sisters kept them dearly. These were: Light, Illumination, Clarity, Warmth, Joy, Health, Happiness,

Growth, Nourishment, Naturalness, and the universal dependence on Love, Graciousness, and the vastness of a cosmic behavioral space.

The bottom line is that according to the Teaching of the Brotherhood, our Universe is one with the "Universal Spirit", or God, and in this form of existence, in this material life on Earth human beings could "see" The Universal Spirit in no other way but projected through the powers of the Sun and its numerous transformations.

The second important characteristic of the Teaching is that it rejects the material substance of the universe. According to it, everything - from the nuclear particles to the galaxies and the human brain - is alive and is a conscious part of the Universal Spirit. This requires a great responsibility toward one's surroundings and carefully "thought through" relations not only with every human being but with animals, plants, and objects, as well as the elements and powers of nature.

According to the Teaching, the process of evolution has brought up the atom to more complex and better-organized (i.e., "more conscious") forms of existence through minerals, plants, animals, humans, White Brothers and Sisters, Teachers, Saints, and Angels. Parallel to this process of evolution, a process of envolution could occur (designed to "broaden the roots of a spirit"), in which humans could be reborn into animals, animals into plants, plants into minerals, angels into saints, etc.

The third characteristic of the Teaching is that the main objective of the Brothers and Sisters, in their duty to trace the future of strife-ridden humanity, is to grow up step-by-step in the atoning with The Universal Spirit; or - translated into plain English - until they come into full harmony with their surroundings. The instruments for this are the main forces serving the evolution in the universe:

Love : The only force through which we can feel and envisage (as humans on this earth) The Universal Spirit, or rather - through which we can feel the process of our gradual unification with it.

Wisdom : The force that can bring us at peace with the real-

ization that every form in which the Universal Spirit exists is ephemeral and transient; or, to put it in a nutshell, that we are going to die.

Knowledge : The force that can illuminate for us the harmonious order in which the elements of the World and the facts of life are put together in the "big picture" of the Universal Spirit, as well as the basic forces through which we are correlated to it.

Health : The force that teaches us how to appreciate and take care of the body (the form) in which the Universal Spirit has chosen us to exist, or even (to put it in a bolder way) has chosen for himself to co-exist with us.

Joy : The force that keeps us in tune with the cosmic powers and gives us the endless energy to go forward towards the perfect harmonization with the Universal Spirit.

The fourth characteristic of the Teaching that we are going to point out here is that the Brothers and Sisters deal and are engaged mostly with the essentials of human existence on earth. They look upon social, political, class, cultural, religious, linguistic, and ethnic, etc., problems and worries as nonexistent. "Problems" (just as is expressed in the teaching of Krishnamurti) actually do not exist. According to the Teaching of the Brotherhood, "problems" are created by the adepts of the Black Brotherhood who are delaying and hindering, in any way they can, the process of evolution and the harmonizing with the Universal Spirit.

This principle of taking care of the essentials of life only has been a powerful tool of resistance used by the Brothers and Sisters against the pressures of modernization, although they had hardly started showing at that point of the history of Eastern Europe. Yet even at that time (the early 1920s) it was obvious that humanity was entering a world that would restrict human individuality for the sake of the economic and social security that industrialization could offer. It was clear that modernization, although prolonging the lifespan of the individual, and increasing the availability of education and mass information, would narrow the behavioral space of man

and would degrade the acquiring of universal, harmonious knowledge and wisdom down to professional training and indoctrination. In the mind of a broad part of the intellectual elite of the society in which the Brotherhood was born, it was obvious that state structures would find a way to increase the "conductivity" of social mechanisms that direct group behavior; that they would pile up government power and upgrade the efficiency of bureaucratic terrorism against the individual, in order to make every man and woman replaceable in the machinery of mass production for the open world market. Influential leaders and thinkers, such as the former Tolsoyist, Vlaykov of the Radical Party, and Stamboliyski, of the Agrarian Union, sought ways for the nation to get hold of everything that Western science and technology could offer, without submitting itself to the ways of the West.

The White Brotherhood did not look for a way out in a new social order. For it the breaking away of the inner self from any group behavior that could be manipulated by the mechanisms of modernization (be that a religious, ideological, social, class, racial, or language one), and the learning of how to bear with the essentials of life was the only way to a harmonious existence without having to submit oneself to the demands of social group behavior.

And here we reach a stunning example of synchronicity! When the weight of Western "modernization" started pressing upon "individuality" in a world ridden by ideological intolerance and jammed by the mass media, the Anglo-Saxon world saw the rebirth of good old transcendentalism - the one knife, one pair of boots, one one-door cabin, long-hair philosophy which Emerson and Thoreau had put together at precisely the same threshold of Modernism in which the White Brotherhood had built the Dawn Camp in Eastern Europe, seventy years after Thoreau had built his cabin at Walden. The Angry Young Men and the Beatniks put into gear the sensitivity and the culture that gradually brought to existence the songs of longhaired peace-lovers that might have as well been written by the Teacher for the Paneurythmia; songs like Harrison's:

"Here comes the Sun... It's all right!"

and of course John Lennon's:

"All we need is love! "

Or is Harrison's song some sort of a distant translation of the Teacher's:

"The sun is rising... It is going to be all right! "

Probably not! Probably it is what the Teaching of the Brotherhood has been building upon all the time: That the basic positive forces in the universe are going to be there for us to use anytime we become wise enough to start seeking for a way to get into harmony with the Universal Spirit, and that the basic ones among them are The Sun (as the most illuminating form in which the Universal Spirit reveals itself to us), and Love (as the omnipotent power that brings us closer and closer to the real sense of our existence).

LITERATURE

There is a huge amount of literature shedding light on Bulgarian mysticism and its forms that shaped the White Brotherhood. We have in mind the literature on the Bulgarian Masons, the members of the Theosophical Society, and the Tolstoyists all of whom were fellow-travelers of the Duno-vists, while as some of them even joined the Brotherhood.

The literature on present-day Bulgarian mysticism is even more fascinating, and a great amount of it is available in Western languages.

Of great importance of course is the literature written by professional writers who have been White Brothers and Sisters: among them many authors of children's literature, poets, essayists, novelists and screen-writers.

Quite significant are the writings of professional authors who have not been members of the Brotherhood, yet treat topics and characters related to it.

Some of those have already been mentioned.

Here are a couple of titles directly addressing the Teaching of the Brotherhood, the Talks of the Teacher and the Teacher's personality. They have been published in the most common European languages, and the author came across them in his preliminary work on the White Brotherhood.

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