

500 years ago or as short a time as it takes for an archangel to get from the first mansion world to where he was when writing his narrative.)

Interpolating the information derived from the *NDoT* discovery into the bare-bones description given in the archangel's introduction, we arrive at the following implied scenario:

Not long since, a morontia instructor on the first mansion world of Satania taught a mota class using twenty-eight statements of human philosophy to parallel mota concepts. Most of these statements had been selected and adapted in consecutive order from the first 32 pages of a 1930s edition of a Urantian quote book called *The New Dictionary of Thoughts*, published in English but containing words of wisdom from a variety of cultures and periods, though mainly from the English-speaking world of the 19th and early 20th centuries. The first twenty-two statements were presented by theme, following the sequence of the English alphabet, as follows:

- Nos. 1 - 4: Ability.
- No. 5. Adversity (out of order).
- No. 6. Abstinence.
- No. 7a. Accident.
- Nos. 7b - 11: Action.
- Nos. 12 - 13: Adversity.
- No. 14. Advice.
- No. 15. Affectation.
- No. 16. Affliction.
- No. 17. Ambition.
- No. 18. Anger.
- No. 19. Anxiety.
- No. 20. Appreciation.
- No. 21. Art.
- No. 22. Aspiration.

From no. 23 on, the statements were presented in random order:

- No. 23: Death and the Afterlife (or Attainment, in which case the order above was followed).
- No. 24. Action.
- No. 25. Greatness.
- No. 26. Knowledge.
- No. 27. Individuality.
- No. 28. Argument.

At the end of Part One, pondering the questions sparked by this implied scenario, I invited readers to submit their own attempts to square it what we are told about the educational system of the mansion worlds, and about the ways thoughts and information are transmitted in the cosmos. No one did, but several people wrote in asking for the follow-up issue of *The Circular* in which, I'd promised, I would grapple with these problems.

Help was provided when a reader, who wishes to remain anonymous, located a 1934 edition of *NDoT* and showed that the correlate of statement no. 27 was included there. This proved that 1936 was *not* the first edition in which the statement appeared,

thereby removing the chronological block that stymied a literal reading of the archangel's introduction. The statement may have appeared in *NDoT* as early as the 1933 edition, but this edition has yet to surface. (No edition was published in 1932, and we have already seen that the 1931 does not contain no. 27.)

These little details about which edition was used are, of course, important to the question of how to reconcile the *NDoT* finding with a literal or near-literal interpretation of the archangel's account of the mota class. In confronting this problem, I base my speculations on a careful reading of Papers 47 ("The Seven Mansion Worlds"), 48, and certain sections in other papers in which pertinent information is discussed. Doing so avoids two extreme approaches which are equally unproductive. The first—an unwillingness to read or take the Urantia Book seriously at all—is epitomized by Martin Gardner in his 1995 book *Urantia: The Great Cult Mystery*. In commenting on the question before us, he writes:

Why, in the names of the Most Highs, would instructors on the first mansion world consult an undistinguished [*sic*] Urantian anthology of quotations, then rephrase 28 [*sic*] of the book's dullest [*sic*] aphorisms, all [*sic*] in the anthology's first 33 pages, to use in teaching ethics [*sic*] to newly arrived Urantian [*sic*] personalities? Which is more plausible? That an archangel of Nebadon faithfully reported what high beings on another planet are teaching former Urantians, or that Sadler or someone else owned an edition of *The [New] Dictionary of Thoughts* and rephrased 28 quotations which he or she particularly liked but got tired of copying after going through the anthology's first 33 pages? (339)

Gardner's preoccupation with what is "more plausible" precludes an openness to what is possible. And the fact that he himself failed to faithfully report the facts of the case, betrays his lack of seriousness.

The second approach proposes fantastic scenarios which, while theoretically possible, run counter to the UB's overall picture of reality. For instance, it is possible that exact replicas of our libraries exist on the mansion worlds and on other spheres. (If this were the case, though, there would be no need for the Thought Preservers, described on p. 503 as "the artisans dedicated to the preservation of the higher thought of the realms."²) Or, that English is *not* unique to Urantia but is actually a common universe language, and therefore the twenty-eight statements weren't necessarily derived from *NDoT*. Or, that the statements ostensibly derived from *NDoT* were actually drawn by the morontia instructor from a near-infinite stock of wise sayings, created by the Seven Master Spirits or the Universe Mother Spirit at or near the beginning of time, in every conceivable language, and transmitted via verbal inspiration by seraphim to such people as the authors of the *NDoT* entries. With scenarios like these, *anything*—from clairvoyance to cloned thoughts—is possible, and therefore no problem exists.

I believe that one scenario which (a) does justice to the findings, and (b) is in keeping with the teachings of the Urantia Book about angels and the mansion worlds, is this:

The mota class was made up exclusively of newly arrived English-speaking Urantians who were learning mota in English, their native or acquired tongue. Being first-mansion-worlders, they were not yet fluent enough in the language of Satania to receive instruction in that language.³ The morontia instructor⁴ let the class know that she was using entries from the most recent edition of *NDoT* ►

(the 1933 or 1934 edition), earlier editions of which some of the students may have owned before they “graduated.” Some may have even been acquainted with one or more of the authors, and—it’s not impossible—a few may have been quote-authors themselves. (Perhaps there’s a quota of quotes in every mota class!) This being the students’ first class in mota, the instructor drew from the first several pages of *NDoT*. As the lesson continued, she dipped into entries occurring later in the book. These entries were probably presented in the exact form in which they appear in *NDoT* (in which case the archangel revised the sayings to emphasize their moral and spiritual points so as to make them more suitable as stand-alone entries in the Urantia Book), or the morontia instructor revised them. The students’ familiarity with the quotes and their authors facilitated, in some significant way, their grasp of the corresponding mota concepts. At the same time this early-mota class was in session, hundreds of similar ones were taking place in hundreds of other native-world languages.

The remaining question is: How did a book (or its contents) published on Urantia in 1933 or 1934, make its way to the first mansion world by the end of 1934, the date in which Part II of the Urantia Book is said to have been written? Certainly not by visiting seraphim or Mansion World Teachers or others whose maximum velocity is only three times the speed of light. Perhaps a Solitary Messenger or a self-acting Adjuster or some other being who can travel instantaneously or nearly so, brought a copy (or its contents) along with him, though it’s hard to imagine such august personalities volunteering or being requisitioned to perform such a trivial task.

One possibility is via the archangels’ circuit. We’re told on p. 2024: “The circuit of the archangels then [soon after the resurrection of Jesus] operated for the first time from Urantia. Gabriel and the archangel hosts moved to the place of the spiritual polarity of the planet; and

when Gabriel gave the signal, there flashed to *the first of the system mansion worlds* the voice of Gabriel, saying: ‘By the mandate of Michael, let the dead of a Urantia dispensation rise!’” (Emphasis added.)

The circuit is mentioned on p. 1254 in connection with the planetary government of Urantia: “This rather loosely organized and somewhat

personally administered planetary government is more than expectedly effective because of the timesaving assistance of the archangels and their ever-ready circuit, which is so frequently utilized in planetary emergencies and administrative difficulties. Technically, the planet is still spiritually isolated in the Norlatiadek circuits, but in an emergency this handicap can now be circumvented through utilization of the archangels’ circuit.” And on p. 1191 we’re told: “In recent years the archangels’ circuit has functioned on Urantia, but that means of communication is largely limited to the transactions of the archangel corps itself.”

Again, it hardly seems fitting to utilize such an important circuit to convey a quote book or its contents, but the fact that an archangel played a role in the “Morontia Mota” narrative may be significant.

As this essay closes, I feel as if I’ve salvaged for myself the sense of the

possibility, if not the probability, of the scenario implied by my *NDoT* discovery. My sense of its plausibility would have been strengthened considerably if the archangel had intimated either that the human statements were derived from Urantian thinkers or that the students in the class were recent arrivals from Urantia. The absence of such statements, combined with the copious culling of an unacknowledged source text, serves only to undermine—at least for me—an unquestioning acceptance of this and similar narratives in the Urantia Book.

Only a brave person is willing honestly to admit, and fearlessly to face, what a sincere and logical mind discovers (1773). ■

“A great thought is a great boon, for which God is to be first thanked, then he who is the first to utter it, and then, in a lesser, but still in a considerable degree, the man [or angel?] who is the first to quote it to us.”

—*Christian Nestell Bovee (1820-1904), American author and editor.*

ENDNOTES

1. Part One is available on the Square Circles website (www.squarecircles.com).
2. The full paragraph about the thought preservers reads: “1. *Thought preservers*. These are the artisans dedicated to the preservation of the higher thought of the realms. On the morontia worlds they truly treasure the gems of mentation. Before first coming to Urantia, I saw records and heard broadcasts of the ideation of some of the great minds of this planet. Thought recorders preserve such noble ideas in the tongue of Uversa.” One scenario not quite as fantastic as the others, but certainly amusing, is that each *NDoT* correlate was transmitted, at the time of its occurrence and in the language in which it was first expressed, to the thought preservers, who translated it into the language of Uversa. Later, these Uversa-ized *NDoT* entries were translated (in most cases, translated *back*) into English, which accounts for the rewording of the original (English) expressions. This would mean, for instance, that statement no. 3, expressed originally by American author Margaretta W. Deland (1857-1945) as “A pint can’t hold a quart—if it holds a pint it is doing all that can be expected of it,” was translated into Uversa-ese and then back into English as “Inherent capacities cannot be exceeded; a pint can never hold a quart.” (At least, under this scenario, the words ‘pint’ and ‘quart’ didn’t get lost in the translation and retranslation, unlike in the translations of the Urantia Book which translate ‘pint’ and ‘quart’ as ‘half-liter’ and ‘liter!’)
3. From p. 546: “You will not acquire new languages automatically; you will learn a language over there much as you do down here, and these brilliant beings [the Morontia Companions] will be your language teachers. The first study on the mansion worlds will be the tongue of Satania and then the language of Nebadon. And while you are mastering these new tongues, the Morontia Companions will be your efficient interpreters and patient translators.”
4. Otherwise known as a morontia counselor, a member of an order of seraphim known as transition ministers. (See p. 554.)