

fallacy of Divine identity and the Knowability of reality

Here are some paras that directly speak to what PB calls "fallacy of Divine identity," on the basis of this view of Overself,

It is quite inevitable for the mystic, overwhelmed by this tremendous experience, to say "I am God!" But once he has entered philosophy and passed through semantic discipline and cross-examined his use of words in thinking and speech, he will know that this term "God" is too extravagant to use in such an unqualified way. For if he means by that the World-Mind, then he lacks Its powers and knowledge. 25.1.75

An illumined being would better describe his inner status by the phrase "God am I" than by "I am God," as his first thought is not "I" but "THAT." 25.1.161

It is humbly truer to admit, with Muhammed, "I am the servant of God, I am but a man like you," than arrogantly to assert with the Advaitin, "I am the infinite Brahman!" It is better to say modestly with Jesus, "The father is greater than I," than to announce with the Sufi Mansur: "I am God." 25.1.164

Philosophy rejects decisively all those Vedantic pantheistic notions and Western mystical naïveties which would deify man and identify him with God. It asserts that the phrases in which these beliefs are embodied, such as the Indian "That thou art," the Persian "I am God," and the medieval European "union with God," are exaggerations of the truth, which is that God is immanent in us, that through realization of our higher self we become more *like* God, but that God never ceases to be the Unattainable, the Incomprehensible. 25.1.150

If a man asks why he can find no trace of God's presence in himself, I answer that he is full of evidence, not merely traces. God is present in him as consciousness, the state of being aware; as thought, the capacity to think; as activity, the power to move; and as stillness, the condition of ego, emotion, intellect, and body which finally and clearly reveals what these other things simply point to. "Be still, and know that I am God" is a statement of being whose truth can be tested by experiment and whose value can be demonstrated by experience. 22.3.409

When Mind concentrates itself into the World-Mind, it establishes a focus. However vast, it goes out of its own unlimited condition, it passes from the true Infinite to the pseudo-Infinite. Consequently the World-Mind, being occupied with its cosmos, cannot be regarded as possessed of the absolute character of Pure Mind. For what is its work but a movement of imagination? And where in the ineffable absolute is there room for either work or imagination? The one would break its eternal stillness, the other would veil its unchangeable reality. This of course it can never do, for Being can never become Non-Being. But it can send forth an emanation from itself. Such an emanation is the World-Mind. Through its prolonged contemplation of the cosmos Mind thus becomes a fragment of itself, bereft of its own undifferentiated unbroken unity. Nevertheless the World-Mind, through its deputy the Overself, is still for humans the highest possible goal. 28.1.41

Knowability of Reality

We ask about the ‘knowability’ of Reality... how do we know? How does Sage know? How does the transmitter of the Bible know this?

To say that the ultimate Reality is utterly unknowable is quite correct from the standpoint of the actual human situation involving ordinary and familiar instruments of knowledge, namely, the body's senses and the mind's reasonings. But it is not quite correct from the standpoint of possible human attainment. What neither sense nor intellect can find, a third and higher faculty, now latent, may find. This is the faculty of insight. 28.2.85

Let us not deceive ourselves and dishonour the Supreme Being by thinking that we know anything at all about IT. We know nothing. The intellect may formulate conceptions, the intuition may give glimpses, but these are our human reactions to IT. Even the sage, who has attained a harmony with his Overself, has found only the godlike *within himself*. Yes, it is certainly the Light, but it is so *for him*, for the human being. He still stands as much outside the divine Mystery as everyone else. The difference is that whereas they stand in darkness he stands in this Light. 28.2.95

After the last sermon has been preached, the last book written, Mind remains the Mystery behind all mysteries. Thought cannot conceive It, imagination picture It, nor language express It. The greatest mystic's experience is only his own personal reaction to Its atmosphere, as from a distance. Even this blows him to pieces like a bomb, but the fact that he can collect them together again afterwards shows that it must have been present in some inexplicable supernormal way and was not lost, both to continue existence and to remember the event. 28.2.98

We must separate, in our human thought, Mind as passive reality (the void) from Mind as active being (World-Mind). All our understanding and interpretation of such words as are affixed to this state, be they Overself, Divine Being, Absolute, or Reality, is inevitably drawn from, and associated with, our experience in the world of time-space and relativity. It is what these words mean for *our* minds, not what they mean in themselves, that constitutes our use of them. We easily fall into self-deception about them, for the meaning given them is what we *imagine*, not what we know. 28.2.22

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38. SUPREME IDENTITY. CHASM QUOTE CONTINUES. SOUL AND ONE. {28:2.79}

AD: Now the only thing, can the soul directly know the One? Let's reverse that. Remember he speaks about the One as-- Plotinus speaks about the One as-- it is in no place but everywhere present. In that way the One or the Absolute can reveal itself to the soul. So that whether it's PB or whether it's Plotinus, when they speak about the incomprehensibility of God, try to understand that that's knowledge.

RW: Ok, now my dilemma with that part of the quote is different. It may be connected, but-- PB says that we'll know the One in our Overself. It's almost like knowing the unity of the Overself is knowing the One, the essence of the One. Plotinus doesn't say that. Plotinus says that you can have this direct identification, even if it's momentary, with the One in itself, the Absolute.

AD: Uh-hm.

RW: Not the Absolute in the Overself. Now, there's an additional problem-- and those are two big enough problems for you, the additional problem is that it appears from what Plotinus says, maybe not opposed to what PB says, that you can have this identification without necessarily hierarchically having the identification with the Absolute Soul. It's like you don't go from insight to the Absolute Soul to the One but almost like there is some nature of this principle of life itself that emanates from the One that is always accessible in addition to having it accessible through the Absolute Soul. I don't know if that's right or not, it just-- from what I've read in the quotes I've had that sense without any way to prove it.

AD: Yes, well basically what you're saying is that if psyche or life is derived ultimately from the One, [RW: Right.] then the psyche or the soul, by understanding its own nature, should be able to reach its origin, the origin, [RW: Yes.] without going outside of itself.

RW: Yes.

AD: That's one way of looking at it. The complementary way of looking at it would be to say that since the One is everywhere present-- present without being any place, alright, then that effort that the soul makes to reach the One can also be understood as the One attracting it to itself, [RW assents] goading it on to make that effort. [RW assents] So that ultimately, the reason why the Supreme Identity-- that there could be the Supreme Identity is because the One is revealing itself (through/to) the soul, [RW assents] not that the soul could reach to the One. Now I know Plotinus speaks about the soul making the arduous effort try and reach the Intellectual-Principle and nullify it and through the Grace of that Intellectual-Principle reach the One and achieve the Supreme Wisdom. Yes, I'm aware of that but you could also put it this other way, [RW assents] that the One being everywhere present, alright, is present to the soul and guides it in the efforts to, you know, achieve that union.