

FROM PB

Phases of deepening realization:

Thus reality may be conceived from four different standpoints, which are set along a path to be traveled by progressive stages. It may be first **worshipped religiously** (or explored scientifically) as apart and separate from one-self. It may next be **meditated on mystically** as being within oneself. It may thirdly be **studied philosophically** by dropping all false conceptions of it. It may finally be **realized consciously** as what it is *in itself* by ultra-mystical processes. --PB Hidden Teaching

A similar schema in the Notebooks:

Now comes the crux of the whole matter. So far as I can follow the teachings of the ancient sages, the path which stretches before mankind appears to have four gates set at intervals along its course. The first is open to the great majority of mankind and might be named "**religion, theology, and scholasticism.**" The second is open to a much smaller number of persons and could conveniently be named **Mysticism**. The third which is rarely opened (for it is heavy and hard to move) is "the **philosophy of truth,**" whilst the final gate has been entered only by the supermen of our species; it may be titled "**Realization.**" Few readers would care to wander with me into the wilderness whither it leads. I refuse to tarry in the limited phases of development and have gone forward in further quest of the sublime verity which is presented to us as life's goal by the sages... 12:5.176

Mysticism, Mentalism and Philosophy. stages on the path of world enquiry

In the first stage of progress we learn to stand aside from the world and to still our thoughts about it. This is the mystical stage. Next, we recognize the world as being but a series of ideas within the mind; this is the mentalist-metaphysical stage. Finally, we return to the world's activity without reacting mentally to its suggestions, working disinterestedly, and knowing always that all is One. This is the philosophical stage. (p. 257)

Two things have to be learned in this quest. The first is the art of mind-stilling, of emptying consciousness of every thought and form whatsoever. This is mysticism or Yoga. The disciple's ascent should not stop at the contemplation of anything that has shape or history, name or habitation, however powerfully helpful this may have formerly been to the ascent itself. Only in the mysterious void of Pure Spirit, in the undifferentiated Mind, lies his last goal as a mystic. The second is to grasp the essential nature of the ego and of the universe and to obtain direct perception that both are nothing but a series of ideas which unfold themselves within our minds. This is the metaphysics of Truth. The combination of these two activities brings about the realization of his true Being as the ever beautiful and eternally beneficent Overself. This is philosophy. 20.4.134

Yoga takes a person to a certain level, **philosophy** to another, whilst the ultimate **sahaja path** takes one to a more complete experience and the highest vantage point of all. (16:2.78)

There are three stages on the path of world enquiry. The first yields as its fruit that the world is but an idea, and this stage has been reached from the metaphysical end by thinkers such as Bishop Berkeley, and nearly reached from the scientific end by such a man as Eddington. The second stage involves the study of the three states, waking, dreaming, and deep sleep, and yields as its fruit the truth that ideas are transitory emanations out of their permanent cause, consciousness. The third stage is the most difficult, for it requires analysis of the nature of time, space, and causation, plus successful practice of yoga. It yields as its fruit the sense of Reality as something eternally abiding with one. (Cat. 19.0.0)

However essential this seeking of the spiritual self must obviously be, however splendid the attainment of such a peace-filled, desire-free state must and will always seem, it cannot in itself constitute an adequate goal. Two important elements are lacking in it. The first is knowledge and the second is compassion. The first would show precisely what is the place of such an attainment in the full pattern of human existence; the second would bring it into active relation with the rest of social existence. Whilst these are lacking, this state can only partially understand itself and only negatively affect others. It keeps its own peace by ignoring the world's suffering. (p. 203)

Although the aspirant has now awakened to his witness-self, found his "soul," and thus lifted himself far above the mass of mankind, he has not yet accomplished the full task set him by life. A further effort still awaits his hand. He has yet to realize that the witness-self is only a part of the All-self. So his next task is to discover that he is not merely the witness of the rest of existence but essentially of one stuff with it. He has, in short, by further meditations to realize his oneness with the entire universe in its real being. He must now meditate on his witness-self as being in its essence the infinite All. Thus **the ultramystic exercises are graded into two stages**, the second being more advanced than the first. The banishment of thoughts reveals the inner self whereas the reinstatement of thoughts without losing the newly gained consciousness reveals the All-inclusive universal self. The second feat is the harder. (23:6.88)

The understanding that everything is illusive is not the final one. It is an essential stage but only a stage. Ultimately you will understand that the form and separateness of a thing are illusory, but the thing-in-itself is not. That out of which these forms appear is not different from them, hence Reality is one and the same in all things. This is the paradox of life and a sharp mind is needed to perceive it. However, to bring beginners out of their earthly attachments, we have to teach first the illusoriness of the world, and then raise them to a higher level of understanding and show that the world is not apart from the Real. That Thou Art unifies everything in essence. But this final realization cannot be got by stilling the mind, only by awakening it into full vigour again after yogic peace has been attained and then letting its activity cease of its own accord when thought merges voluntarily into insight. When that is done, you know the limitations of both yoga and enquiry as successive stages. Whoever realizes this truth does not divorce from matter--as most yogis do--but realizes non-difference from it. Hence we call this highest path the ``yoga of nonduality." But to reach it one has to pass through the ``yoga of philosophical knowledge." 25.2.116

[note that the first below separates, and second combines, mysticism and philosophy above]

First stage: This is attained by those who study metaphysics alone or practise mysticism alone. It is the withdrawal from the senses and their objects. It is negative. It leads to a perception that the external world is unsatisfactory. It is the great turning away from things of sense. It is an ascetic stage; it is accompanied by thoughts; it is a recognition that matter is not ultimately real. It is marked by moral change. It is the discovery through a glimpse of his spiritual nature which is an ecstatic sense of union with a superior immaterial being. He feels on occasions that he is divine.

Second stage: It affirms the unique positive ultimate reality. It yields the vision of mystic light of the Logos; it is attained by mysticism alone. It is entry into the Void; it is the discovery of Spirit; it is trance. It is thought-free, delights in solitude. This realization of God in the *heart* marks the Witness-stage of ultramystic experience. The man feels utterly detached from his own or the world's activities, so much so that he is ascetically tempted to withdraw into a retreat from life. If, however, fate forces him to continue in the world he will feel all the time curiously like a spectator at a cinema show; but this cannot constitute an ultimate human goal.

Third stage: It is in the world, but not of it. It is the return to the external sense-world and the discovery that it too is God-born. It never loses sight of its unity with life, but insists on its connection with action. Instead of becoming a refuge for dreamers, talkers, and escapists, it becomes an inspiring dynamic. It is the realization of All in himself and himself in All. With this attainment he throws himself incessantly into the service of mankind. 1.5.337

There are three major and progressive goals open to the mystic. The first is to **become conscious of the fringe or aura of his divine soul**, the Overself. Most mystics, elated by the emotional thrill of its discovery, stop here.

The second is to penetrate to its serene centre and **pass during trance into the undifferentiated void of its non-sensed, non-thinged essence**. The more intelligent and superior mystics, who are naturally much fewer in number than the first kind, are not satisfied until they reach this attainment. It is upon this world-vanishing experience that most Indian yogic metaphysicians base their theory that the universe is an illusion. To the ordinary yogi, this is the summit of achievement and represents for him the goal of human existence. But the trance itself is only temporary. How can a mental self-abstraction, however prolonged, a merely temporary condition, be a final goal for mankind? This is the problem which indeed was stated in *The Hidden Teaching Beyond Yoga*. All such theories merely show that such mystics have their limitations, however admirable may be their capacity to enter into and sustain the trance state.

The third goal is to bring the true self, the essential emptiness and the universal manifestation, into a harmonious, unified experience during full normal wakefulness. **This last is philosophical mysticism**. Being a complex and complete attainment, it naturally calls for a complex and complete effort. Careful analytical and historical study of mystical practices and mystical biographies will show that it is these three different goals which have always been pursued or achieved, no matter to what external religion, country, or race individual mystics may themselves have belonged. Thus the ordinary mystic's account of the Overself is true but incomplete, his experience of it authentic but insufficient. He has yet to undergo the whole, the complete experience which mysticism can yield. But then, if he does so, if he refuses to remain satisfied with an incomplete and imperfect attainment, he will no longer remain a mystic. He will become a philosopher. 16.2.71

Lama Talk

A beautiful talk by a (now deceased Tibetan Lama, Kunu Rinpoche?) gives the following hints as to the subtlety of these inner shifts deeper into the Void:

What is the place of Madhyamika, Mahamudra, and Dzog Chen? All our suffering and all the suffering of beings has its root in mind. Our biggest stumbling block is due to the misconception of taking the body and mind as self-existence. Ego or body/mind is an aggregate, is not a thing, but has no origin or cessation. This is determined intellectually and later directly. To realize this nature is wisdom. This pursuit and the practice is the cultivation of wisdom--deeper insight wisdom into the nature of reality. Linked with this, but not the same as this, is the cultivation of samadhi, absorption, the settling into calm absorption. Third, is the practice of ethics and morality. These three higher trainings (wisdom, samadhi, ethics) are the fundamental vehicle underlying all the yanas (paths) of Buddhism.

Above and beyond that, one sees that not only is our individual self or ego lacking in self nature, but also that sunya pervades all of (external) reality. This realization is called madhyamika: that all things abide in the middle way.

Above and beyond that can be an understanding that not only are all phenomena--samsara and nirvana--essentially sunya, but that the root, the source from which they spring is Mind. This is Mahamudra. The reality of Mind as root of all those phenomena is slightly more profound than the view of Madhyamika. It examines the same thing, but from a different perspective.

The final step beyond this is to determine where this Mind comes from: the ground of being from which the child of mind arises from the Mother. That discovery of a self-arising state of primordial awareness (rig-pa) beyond ordinary rational thought is prior to the thoughts, is what the great perfection is concerned with. Dzog-Chen practice is based on the realization of that primordial awareness.

So in summary, first realize the source of suffering is taking mind and body to be a self-existent thing. Through practices, see that the ego lacks its own existence. Next, see that all phenomenal lack self-nature. This dissolves all deeper afflictive emotions. Next, is the realization of Mind as the ground of all, Mahamudra. Finally, Dzog-Chen finds the ground of being which mind arises, personified in Dzog-Chen as Kun-tu Bzang po (the All-Good).

[Compare *I Am That: ch 49*

When the 'I am myself' goes, the 'I am all' comes.

When the 'I am all' goes, 'I am' comes.

When even 'I am' goes, reality alone is and in it every 'I am' is preserved and glorified.

Diversity without separateness is the Ultimate that the mind can touch.

Beyond that all activity ceases, because in it all goals are reached and all purposes fulfilled.]