

phases, stages, of Mysticism, Mentalism and Philosophy.

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. (perspectives 20:27)

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

The highest contribution which mysticism can make is to afford its votaries glimpses of that grand substratum of the universe which we may call the Overself. These glimpses reveal It in the pure unmanifest non-physical essence that It ultimately is. They detach It from the things, creatures, and thoughts which make up this world of ours, and show It as It is in the beginning, before the world-dream made its appearance. Thus mysticism at its farthest stretch, which is **Nirvikalpa samadhi**, enables man to bring about the temporary disappearance of the world-dream and come into comprehension of the Mind within which, and from which, the dream emerges. The mystic in very truth conducts the funeral service of the physical world as he has hitherto known it, which includes his own ego. But this is as far as mysticism can take him. It is an illuminative and rare experience, but it is not the end.

For the next task which he must undertake if he is to advance is to **relate his experience of this world as real with his experience of the Overself as real**. And this he can do only by studying the world's own nature, laying bare its mentalistic character and thus bringing it within the same circle as its source, the Mind. (20:4.115)

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: Sometimes PB changes the order, putting investigation first:

We need to know the truth, the wisdom-knowledge, but it is not enough. We need to have the **living mystic experience**, the vital feeling of what I am, but it is not enough. For we need to **synthesize the two in a full actual intuitive realization**, conferred by the Overself. This is Grace. This is to emerge finally--born again! 25.2.51

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

A slightly different view: note that the first here separates, and second here 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

Four deepening approaches: Religion, Mysticism, Philosophy of Truth; Realization= Sahaja

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

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)

AS comments: Another way to look at the phases or stages is the "flowering of humanity." Or the ripening of the seed of Buddhahood. The earlier "phases" are the unfolding and ripening of the potentials, and all go into the full Human Being. Note that here, for example, "religious veneration" is integrated in the complete human being. Science brings rational thought. Religion brings faith and veneration. Meditation brings "be still." And Philosophy unites Philo and Sophia, or all the evolved qualities, into a whole, holy, human being. And then the spiral journey goes on, as he says in 26.4.256 on the Unit of Life. And there is:

The esoteric meaning of the star is "Philosophic Man," that is, one who has travelled the complete fivefold path and brought its results into proper balance. This path consists of **religious veneration, mystical meditation, rational reflection, moral re-education, and altruistic service.** The esoteric meaning of the circle, when situated within the very centre of the star, is the Divine Overself-atom within the human heart. 20.1.23

HH Dalai Lama: Om Mani Padme Hum

In Kindness Clarity and Insight, the Dalai Lama presents his analysis of a mantra as encapsulating a whole philosophy. Here is a summary of his idea.

The whole mantra means “through the combined functioning of Compassion and Wisdom, may our ordinary starting mind be transformed into HUM--which is wholeness, completeness, nonduality.”

OM = AUM is the starting point: the original body, speech and mind of the individual which is to be transformed. In Buddhism, the mind which we start with (which is not only the gross mind, but a very subtle mind which continues from life to life) can be transformed endlessly into enlightenment. Simply by the fact of being a human being, we have the potentiality of enlightenment within us.

MANI means jewel and refers to compassion, which like the jewel, has a diamond quality which can pierce through any egoistic attitudes.

PADME means lotus and refers to wisdom, which like the lotus grows up in the most seemingly unlooked for places.

HUM means wholeness, completeness, non-duality: the primordial nature.

We notice the striking parallel of compassion and wisdom to the term philosophy: the love of wisdom or union of love and wisdom. In this one short mantra is summarized the whole path of philosophy.

Lama Talk

A beautiful talk by a (now deceased Tibetan Lama, Kuntu 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 DC? 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 Dz-Ch as Kun-tu Bzang po (the All-Good).

Three stages of deepening awakesness or rememberings

There are three great things to be reminded of, we could say three vast stations, that Plotinus calls Soul, Nous and ONE. Three deepening ways to appreciate the miracle of existence; and the miracle of the fact we Are. The Upanisads speak of Vishnu taking three steps to the end of the universe. Plotinus says in 1.6.8 that the path is “not by walking”-- as does Buddha.

It means that Overselfing includes the (participation in and comprehension of the) three hypostases of Plotinus; soul, nous, one.

PB makes clear, although our apprehension of reality may have phases, reality itself does not. AD comments that these distinctions are for “beginners.” In reality there are no grades, but there may be this infinite complexity.

The Way of the Soul: Purification and Reason.

In the first phase you shift out of the ego: there is no more returning to the state of being a separate, finite, local person. You can attain soul, in essence you are soul = conscious, living, being. “Each separate life lives by soul entire.” That is, we have shifted out of the ego, or had glimpses of shifting, and know our nature as non-local living consciousness.

If your heart is big enough: “let every soul take to heart that universe is in soul, not soul in the universe.” This involves the practice and theory of mentalism, as well as the disentangling of consciousness from contents to experience yourself as consciousness. Plotinus starts many tractates with the assumption that we can “soul.” In the language of today we may call Soul conscious living being, and individual souls “units of life.” In Vedanta, this is called jiva, a unit of life, and not only a vehicle. In terms of the universe, you are not a thing, you are not in the universe, but the universe appears in you. For those who have gotten a glimpse, the path is contemplation, vision, dialectic and beauty.

This involves a deep inquiry into the nature of reality, distinguishing reality and appearance, and remembering to contemplate and deepen ones vision into reality.

The Way of Contemplation: vision, dialectic and beauty.

Having established in soul/life you can realize you are a particle of Nous. Particle is only a metaphor: it is a vaster level of infinity. You are a unique idea: “a unique form of Nous entire.” Nous: which we may call awareness seeing-in. Other related terms are darshana of Hiduism, jnana, prajna of Zen, Rigpa of DC, and Insight: as direct, immediate “experience” of reality. Noesis, Noeon and Nous are related words, which carry a sense of awareness, and more: comprehension as well as apprehension. To really get something, to know by identity, is to Noesis. In Vedanta language, you can “atma.”

This is the station of vast intelligence/power. It is Mahayana. Thus you are not only life, but one with the universe in its essential nature: the World-Mind. This is the “world knowing insight: to know the self by means of the self.” Here we have the full and proper

use of the term insight, or “intrinsic self-cognition” or “comprehension.” Not only the comprehension of what you are, but of what always “is.”

The Way of Presence: Into the ONE

By being established in Nous, contemplation, you can come to the ineffable ever presence of One. “it is always before us, but we don’t look that way.”

There is the Way beyond: expressed as “Cut away everything”, put aside non-being, or just be present..

This involves complete acceptance and surrender, the diving board up and in, total and immediate spontaneous presence.

In 6.7.38: this is the Grand Learning: to know about the ONE. We can later discuss in what sense you can Noesis the ONE.

If we follow stages of realization not from the subjective, awareness, side, but from the inquiry into the nature of the world, we get a slightly different perspective.

Corresponding to the first stage of “witness” in the inner path, there is instead the recognition first that the world is an “idea” or imputation by thought. One can practice recalling during the day that this world is like a thought, that all is “appearance” and not reality.

In the second stage, corresponding to the inner mystical phase of entry into the Void of pure awareness, one is interested in finding not only that world is like a thought, but in finding the source of thought. Through a study of the three states, one comes to the awareness beyond states, the source of ego and world. Anthony comments: study here does not mean intellectual study, but experiments in consciousness, staying awake during dream, etc.

In the third stage, which is roughly the stage of integration, one practices the ultramystic exercises, or the yoga of the uncontradictable, to integrate appearance with reality,