

CLASS at Wisdom's Goldenrod, Hector NY
with Anthony Damiani (AD)
July 13, 1983
PB PARAS; PHILOSOPHY; FALLACY OF DIVINE
IDENTITY

TOPIC: PB Paras

SUBJECT: Philosophy

SUBSUBJECTS: Fallacy of Divine Identity, Overself, Reproductive Soul, Mystical Death, Double Knower

CONTENTS:

PB PARAS ON THE FALLACY OF DIVINE IDENTITY

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE INDIVIDUAL TO MERGE INTO THE SUPREME?; EVEN IN ABSORPTION, SOMETHING OF THE INDIVIDUAL REMAINS

GIVING UP THE "I" THOUGHT; MYSTICAL DEATH

PHILOSOPHER AS DOUBLE KNOWER

BOOKS READ FROM OR REFERENCED:

- Paul Brunton, *Notebooks*. 16 vols; Vol. 1 entitled *Perspectives*.
- Ashtavakra, *Ashtavakra Samhita*

NOTES:

- **RETYPE PARTIAL TRANSCRIPT (V13.1).** From 1983 Pat Campbell transcript and AB class notes for 7/13/83. THERE ARE NO AUDIO CASSETTE TAPES EXTANT (though copies of the tapes did exist at WG in 1985 or 1986).
- This is a reformatting of the 1993 transcript that was used for *Living Wisdom*. Minor typos corrected, PB paras proofed and ID'd. Reformatted from V10 version by JRM & JF 2019-2020, with Subheads and Table of Contents added by JRM 2020.
- AD annotated the Pat Campbell 1983 transcript, as noted.
- In 2024, IT adds material from AB class notes to help round out the class, updates prefatory matter and footer, expands Subsubjects, alters some Subheads, completes Book List, fixes errors/typos, reformats to accord with new conventions.

1983 07/13 at Wisdom's Goldenrod PB Paras; Philosophy; Fallacy of Divine Identity

PB PARAS ON THE FALLACY OF DIVINE IDENTITY

[Note: The first seven paragraphs below are from AB class notes and not part of PC transcript.]

Unrevised Essays -- cleansing of the emotions -- the active agent in subjugating the ego and animal desires comes from a higher will (not the ego) emanating from the Overself.

PB: "When consciousness is successfully turned in on its own deepest state, which is serene, impersonal, and unchanging, it receives the experience of the divine Soul, not of the Godhead. It brings us nearer to the Godhead but does not transform us into it. We discover the divine ray within, we do not become the sun itself." (25.1.99)

Humans can only hope to experience the Overself, which is a ray or intermediary, and not the World-Mind in itself. I.e., the Overself cannot transcend its relation to the World-Mind.

PB: "If it is wiser and humbler to leave some mystery at the bottom of all our intellectual understanding of life than to indulge in self-deceiving finality about it, then it is no less wiser and humbler to acknowledge the ultimate mystery at the heart of all our immediate mystical experience of life. The mystic's claim to know God when he knows only the deepest part of his own self, is his particular kind of vanity. Whatever terminous and transcendental consciousness he may discover there, something ever remains beyond it lost in utter inscrutability. The World-Mind is impenetrable by human power. This agnostic conclusion does not, however, touch the validity of the mystic's more legitimate claim, that the human soul is knowable and that an unshakeable union with it is attainable." (25.1.59)

PB: "God is never identified with any man, nor incarnated in him. For God alone is uniquely the Unindividuated whereas all men are individualized creatures. Even the highest type of man, the sage-saviour, is a particular light, whereas God is the light itself." (25.1.170)

PB: "Our finite minds cannot lift more than the smallest corner of the smallest corner of the infinite veil behind which the Ultimate Mind eludes us." (25.1.134)

PB: "The human being cannot go farther in its pilgrimage than the discovery of his own origin, his Overself." (25.1.104)

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE INDIVIDUAL TO MERGE INTO THE SUPREME?; EVEN IN ABSORPTION, SOMETHING OF THE INDIVIDUAL REMAINS

[PC Transcript Begins]

PB: "There is no final absorption; the individual continues to exist somehow in the Supreme. The fact that he can pass away into it at will and yet return again, proves this." (25.2.202)

PB: "The difference between the individual and the universal self persists throughout the incarnations and no mystical emotionalism or metaphysical jugglery can end it. It will end indeed not by the individual transforming himself into the greater being but by merging himself into it, that is, by the disappearance of

his separate consciousness in the pure essence of all consciousness. But it need not so end unless he wants it.” (25.2.213)

[Add-in from AB class notes: The Sage can decide to no longer pursue earthly incarnations but the philosophic Sage will reincarnate.]

AD: The point that was made last week was that there could be such a thing as absorption (or annihilation*). (Q*: “or annihilation” handwritten by AD on copy of the PC transcript) The individual Soul can choose to be absorbed by the World-Mind. Then on the other hand we have the hidden statement over and over again that the Overself is an eternal emanant, an eternal individual Soul. Now, if it is an eternal individual Soul, then I don’t see how it could be absorbed without it retaining its individuality somehow in the Supreme, which here would be the World-Mind.

The discussion last week ended on that point, and I don’t remember the particular way Randy expressed something PB said to him, which I didn’t understand, which is that there is such a thing as absorption. And I’m just asking the question: If there is such a thing as absorption, that means that what is an authentic existent, the individual Overself, can be absorbed. And I would say in principle that can’t be, because it’s an eternal emanant. If it is absorbed somehow, something of its individuality remains in the Supreme. I don’t care how little it is, but something has to be there.

What do you mean, “You’re stationed in the Intellectual?” That has two meanings: You’re stationed in the Absolute Soul or you’re stationed in the Overself, which is a principle of intellectual authenticity. Now which one do you mean?

S: The latter one.

AD: That’s what I think. The Overself is absorbed and becomes part of the Absolute Soul. Because an eternally authentic existent always remains the pure principle of intellectuality that it is, that it enjoys being.

The ray which is sent forth from the Supreme which has been referred to as individual Soul, which is of an eternal nature, cannot lose that status.

They’re the same, aren’t they, the asmita and the Overself? I don’t know what’s absorbing what there. The individual Soul, the individual Overself, or the asmita principle are the same thing: Awareness; Consciousness; Mind.

S: The individual manifestation ceasing and just the higher part of the asmita remaining.

AD: I can understand that, and I can understand that it’s more in keeping with the general statements that have been made than the other one that says that this principle gets absorbed back into the Absolute Soul. Because it sounds like the Absolute Soul is an Indian giver!

That’s the way I interpreted it: That phase of Soul which engenders or is divisible among bodies is withdrawn and the person remains in that state of pure intellectuality, which is the same as being. But not that it becomes the World-Mind.

That’s the Vedantic position: It has no beginning, but it (the Soul) has an end. And I can’t follow that; I get stopped.

TS (student inferred from AD remark below): In the analysis of the sun and its ray, the ray is always separate but the ray as light is the same as the sun as light. So the ray can realize its identity with the sun. If it always has that realization, wouldn't that be the same as absorption?

AD: No, that would be insight.

I have difficulty trying to understand when being will desire to be non-being.

The discussion here is: Is the lower Soul, the individual Soul, distinct from other individual Souls? If it is distinct from other individual Souls, can it be aware of that distinction? Is it aware of that distinction? Is there a distinction? Or is the lower phase of the Soul, once it recognizes its own nature, identical with all the other Souls? No. They're not identical. The I AM principle at the root of my being, let's say, is not the same as your I AM principle. We can't use the word 'separate,' because that's meaningless, but the word 'distinct' we can use.

"The difference between the individual and the Universal Self": For speculation, would the individual here be the individual Overself, and the other be the World-Mind, the Absolute Soul?

The reproductive part--that which is divisible about bodies--is the individual consciousness, and what it merges itself into is the Universal Self.

All I'm saying is that there is a contradiction in what Tim just said, and in my example there definitely would be, because there would be this merger between the individual consciousness and the universal background of that individual consciousness. So can we go through with his analogy.

(Quote reread)

AD: What he's saying there is simply that the sage has the choice to merge his consciousness back into the World-Mind. Unless I accept his interpretation, which is that the individual consciousness--that is, the embodied consciousness--merges itself back into the I AM principle.

Is my I AM principle your I AM principle? Is my consciousness your consciousness? Now this is the point. For instance, Schrödinger says: Consciousness is singular.

S: If the consciousness aspect is the same and the content is different--

AD: Then the World-Mind is an Indian giver. When it gives the gift of being, it's only going to take it back.

Why is it a separative consciousness? Because the Logos which is being manifested by one consciousness is not the same Logos which is being manifested by another consciousness.

S: And it's the Logos that's manifested by the differentia, not the consciousness.

AD: Yes, that's the only way we can understand it, but that's not to say that they're all the same consciousnesses, because it would be meaningless to say that this consciousness is manifesting this Logos and that consciousness is manifesting another so it's all one consciousness.

He also has a quote, one of the very beginning quotes, where he distinguishes between individual Soul, or individual Overself, and Universal Overself. And that was a distinction that we talked about for a while. Universal Consciousness was Absolute Soul; individual consciousness was an emanant from it. I've always had this distinction; it's not a new one.

There can't be a time when it is not. Even if it is absorbed, there are still traces of the individuality still there. You can't say it's annihilated.

This keeps coming up. You remember, even with Ramakrishna, he says there's complete absorption, and then further on, in a little footnote, he says, well, it's not complete; something always remains. Even in complete absorption, something always remains. It has to, by principle. If you say this is an eternal emanant, how can it be dissolved?

GIVING UP THE "I" THOUGHT; MYSTICAL DEATH

PB: "We may now perceive a further reason why all great teachers have enjoined self-denial. For at this crucial point of perfected concentration, when the senses are still and the world without remote, the mystic must renounce his thoughts in favour of Thought. He can do this only by a final act of surrender whereby his whole sense of personality--all that makes up what he believed to be "I"--is let go as the last of his thoughts to vanish into a Void. He must make the abrupt leap into self-identification with the wide pure impersonal thought-less Thought. He must give up the last of all thoughts--which is the "I" thought--and accept in return whatever may come to him out of the great Unknown. A fear rises up and overcomes him for a time that with this leap he may so endanger his own existence as to plunge into utter annihilation. This naturally makes him cling all the more to his sense of personality. Shall we wonder then, that every student shrinks at this order?" (Perspectives p. 326 & 23.8.11)

AD: What is the I-thought that's given up? If we say that the Soul manifests the World-Mind's Idea, and that included in that Idea is the body that you're going to be associated with and identified with, then there's going to be a part of you that spreads its tentacles about that body, wraps that body about itself, and says, "I am this body." That's one way of putting it. You have here two different principles. You have that part--the sense of personality, given to you by the World-Mind--the body. You have the other part given by the soul, the reproductive part, that essence, that part of consciousness that we referred to as the reproductive Soul, divisible about bodies, conjoined with that body. These two factors together constitute this sense of "I," "mineness," personality. Now you can see that you're speaking about two different levels of reality. You're speaking about something being given by the World-Mind, and you're speaking about something being given by the Soul, a consciousness given to that body. These two are fused together. This is the I-thought. And this feeling of giving up the I-thought or the sense of personality means the withdrawal of that essence, that reproductive consciousness, that consciousness which always divides itself among bodies. It has to withdraw from that, and that's a death for it.

The whole psychosomatic organism, which is given to you by Nature, which is something the World-Idea has fabricated for you--or let's say it's included as part of the World-Idea. The simple analogy we could make is, let's say you go to a movie. And there's a picture being thrown on the screen. Now, that's the World-Idea. Now you're sitting at the theater looking at this picture, and you particularly admire this man, your hero. And your consciousness gets projected into that personality. The only amendment we have to make in this analogy is that your consciousness is going to interfere with the pictures that are going on. But basically, there's a mixture of this consciousness that's being projected from you onto that screen person. And the combination of these two is what we refer to as the spurious entity, the ego, the sense of personality. These two have to be together. Now on the withdrawal of this reproductive faculty of the Soul from its identification with any part of the World-Idea, means, or is the experience of death. Why do you think no one wants to be a celibate?

You withdraw that identification with the body; in other words, you withdraw that desire for earthly life, the embodiment.

What is there in you now that you could think of that's your most primitive urge--to conceive of yourself as an "I" and to persist forever? Now, what kind of being will you have under those conditions? You wouldn't get the Overself saying, "I want to be." The Overself IS; that's its definition. It's Isness. Some people object that I call it consciousness, as though I can make a distinction between Isness and consciousness.

S: You're talking about that part of awareness which is capable of being appropriated by whatever thoughts . . .

AD: Yes. You could put it the reverse way, which is even more nefarious. You could think of these vasanas or tropes, or, if you want, the samskaras of God which is the ultimate matter, you could think of them conjoined or organized into a body. You could think of these now as foisting themselves upon the reproductive awareness and saying, "You're mine." But the reproductive awareness saying, "No, you're mine!" And you've got these two together. You've got something going on for a long, long time. You can see the nefarious aspect when matter forces itself upon that consciousness and takes it to be its own. And on the reverse side you can take that consciousness as insisting on identifying with that and saying, "That's me." This is the ego. Now it isn't a question that you're giving up something as simple as a body. But the root desire for the body. That's the mystical death. So you can see you're never going to die.

The root desire is the reproductive faculty that is in the Soul, which insists upon being embodied. That's what has to be killed, and I don't mean with a shot gun. It is a complicated thing. When the ego says there is something about me which is always self-identical, I know it. That's the Vedantist position. He's referring to this principle which is given to it by the Soul. On the other hand, the Buddhist says, "I know there's nothing about me which is identical, because I'm changing from instant to instant." He's coming from the point of view of World-Mind. In so far as the vibratory activity of the Idea is constantly being instantiated from instant to instant, the Buddhist is correct in saying, "But how could you say that's me? Because I'm not there the second moment." Whereas a Vedantist could say, "But I am. I'm always there." And so the argument has been going on for 2,000 years. But if you get the two principles together and you see that's required in order to understand the complexity of the ego, then you've got something to go by. You could take the position of the Vedantist or you could take the position of the Buddhist, which means you could take the position of consciousness or you could take the position of the World-Idea. So they're both going to be around a long time, so this argument could go on and on and on.

But the point here to understand is that the fear and trembling that comes in, and the sickness unto death that he's speaking about is exactly the giving up of this root desire. Not the body, because ascetics and saints have been known to torture the body beyond the point of endurance. And that's when the Higher Will comes down. The Higher Will doesn't come down until after the moral conflict. So don't have any illusions about it, that you're going to wait around until the Higher Will comes down. It'll come down after your moral effort. This is what is the mystical death. The body ceasing to function, every animal goes through that, and we don't call him a great mystic.

The combination of these two principles now I think we can understand is what we've referred to as the ego or the sense of personality. That Higher Will doesn't come into action until after you've made the moral effort. In other words, you have to find out that you are impotent to change yourself. And you're not going to find out unless you try, and you really have to try because you can't kid the Soul. You'll never know what the limits are until you try. You have to exhaust whatever potentiality you have before you can say, "I give up." You can't say, "I give up," before you've started; that would be phony.

But you're actually going to have to reach the point of satiation with frustration. I think I must have called on that higher help a thousand and one times. It doesn't hear me. It says, "Try harder."

[Add-in from AB class notes: The moral conflict is that there are impulses coming from above and impulses coming from below. Unless there is a reflective consciousness, this conflict doesn't arise. This surrender or mystic death gets you to the first Sufi station. It comes to: if you really want the soul, you have to go through this (death and moral conflict).]

PHILOSOPHER AS DOUBLE KNOWER

PB: "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." (Perspectives p. 320 & 23.6.88) [Q: word 'now' in 6th sentence is in 23.6.88 but not in Perspectives]

AD: Now if you understand this, you're on the road to philosophy.

He is that consciousness--

S: --rather than any content it would have.

AD: He finds that he is this awareness. Now what in the world could go beyond that? Suppose I find that in principle, in essence, I am pure consciousness. Now within that pure consciousness there manifests the world. That means thoughts. Now what would be the next requirement in order for me to complete and to become a philosopher? You have the World-Idea being expressed, and that the substratum of that World-Idea is your consciousness. He said that the first achievement--not the harder one, but the easier one, according to this--is the recognition that in your essence you are consciousness. The more difficult achievement is the reconciliation that this pure essence is the substratum of the manifested universe, and that the two points of view are to be kept simultaneously along side each other. This will make you a philosopher.

The philosopher is both: the double knower. The philosopher includes that poise where you recognize your own essence or the essence to be pure consciousness and everything in manifestation of that, and that which is in manifestation still claims its validity as a manifestation. This makes a philosopher. Not one who takes either stance: that he is pure consciousness or that he is only the whatness of what is being manifest. In other words, for PB, the philosopher-sage is one who is poised in both positions, and includes both positions: that of recognizing his essence as pure consciousness, and the entirety of the manifestation of that pure consciousness, which maintains itself as a principle not separate but distinct from the consciousness.

You remember that quote we were reading-- The *Astavakra Samhita*-- and there was PB's note? He dissolves the world in his understanding. This means, said PB, that he understands, not that the world disappears. [PC Transcript Ends]