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with Anthony Damiani (AD)
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PB PARAS; PHILOSOPHY**

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BOOKS READ FROM OR REFERENCED:

- Paul Brunton, *Notebooks*. 16 vols; Vol. 1 entitled *Perspectives* [*Persp.*].
- Paul Brunton, *A Search in Secret India*
- Plato, *Parmenides*
- Plotinus, *The Enneads* (MacKenna translation, 4th ed.)

NOTES:

- Earlier transcript versions exist.

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1983 12/07 at Wisdom's Goldenrod
PB Paras; Philosophy
Readable Edited Transcript

LABELS (SUCH AS RELIGION) HAVE NO PLACE IN THE EXPERIENCE OF PURE SPIRIT; ON THE TERM 'PHILOSOPHY'

[Audio File 1983 1207a Begins]

(AD reads:)

PB: "People sometimes ask me to what religion I belong or to what school of yoga I adhere. If I answer them, which is not often, I tell them: "To none and to all!" If such a paradox annoys them, I try to soften their wrath by adding that I am a student of philosophy. During my journeys to the heavenly realm of infinite eternal and absolute existence, I did not once discover any labels marked Christian, Hindu, Catholic, Protestant, Zen, Shin, Platonist, Hegelian, and so on, any more than I discovered labels marked Englishman, American, or Hottentot. All such ascriptions would contradict the very nature of the ascriptionless existence. All sectarian differences are merely intellectual ones. They have no place in that level which is deeper than intellectual function. They divide men into hostile groups only because they are pseudo-spiritual. He who has tasted of the pure Spirit's own freedom will be unwilling to submit himself to the restrictions of cult and creed. Therefore I could not conscientiously affix a label to my own outlook or to the teaching about this existence which I have embraced. In my secret heart I separate myself from nobody, just as this teaching itself excludes no other in its perfect comprehension. Because I had to call it by some name as soon as I began to write about it, I called it philosophy because this is too wide and too general a name to become the property of any single sect. In doing so I merely returned to its ancient and noble meaning among the Greeks who, in the Eleusinian Mysteries, designated the spiritual truth learnt at initiation into them as "philosophy" and the initiate himself as "philosopher" or lover of wisdom." (beginning of Persp. pp. 248-249 and 20.1.18, continues below)

AD: (inaudible) commentary.

St: . . .

LD: Would you reread the one line where he says . . . journeys?

PB: ". . . During my journeys to the heavenly realm of infinite eternal and absolute existence, I did not once discover any labels marked Christian, Hindu, Catholic, Protestant, Zen, Shin, Platonist, Hegelian, and so on, any more than I discovered labels marked Englishman, American, or Hottentot. All such ascriptions would contradict the very nature of the ascriptionless existence. . . ." (excerpts, Persp. pp. 248-249 and 20.1.18)

AD: This is an allusion to the fact that if you have an experience of the pure Spirit, such positions as Buddhism, Hinduism vanish. It's such a relief. (pause)

St: Read it again. No? Too long?

AD: Read them once. I don't want no repetitions. You get into bad habits. She has her way. Mary and her little--ram. (laughter) No, I'm not trying to lord it over you. Please don't misunderstand.

(The rest of the para is now read by TS and AB.)

PB, cont.: “Now genuine wisdom, being in its highest phase the fruit of a transcendental insight, is sublimely dateless and unchangeable. Yet its mode of expression is necessarily dated and may therefore change. Perhaps this pioneering attempt to fill the term “philosophy” with a content which combines ancient tradition with modern innovation will help the few who are sick of intellectual intolerances that masquerade as spiritual insight. Perhaps it may free such broader souls from the need of adopting a separative standpoint with all the frictions, prejudices, egotisms, and hatreds, which go with it, and afford them an intellectual basis for practising a profound compassion for all alike. It is as natural for those reared on limited conceptions of life to limit their faith and loyalty to a particular group or a particular area of this planet as it is natural for those reared on philosophic truth to widen their vision and service into world-comprehension and world-fellowship. The philosopher’s larger and nobler vision refuses to establish a separate group consciousness for himself and for those who think as he does. Hence he refuses to establish a new cult, a new association, or a new label. To him the oneness of mankind is a fact and not a fable. He is always conscious of the fact that he is a citizen of the world-community. While acknowledging the place and need of lesser loyalties for unphilosophical persons, he cannot outrage truth by confining his own self solely to such loyalties.

“Why this eagerness to separate ourselves from the rest of mankind and collect into a sect, to wear a new label that proclaims difference and division? The more we believe in the oneness of life, the less we ought to herd ourselves behind barriers. To add a new cult to the existing list is to multiply the causes of human division and thence of human strife. Let those of us who can do so be done with this seeking of ever-new disunity, this fostering of ever-fresh prejudices, and let those who cannot do so keep it at least as an ideal--however remote and however far-off its attainment may seem--for after all it is ultimate direction and not immediate position that matters most. The democratic abolishment of class status and exclusive groups, which will be a distinctive feature of the coming age, should also show itself in the circles of mystical and philosophic students. If they have any superiority over others, let them display it by a superiority of conduct grounded in a diviner consciousness. Nevertheless, with all the best will in the world to refrain from starting a new group, the distinctive character of their conduct and the unique character of their outlook will, of themselves, mark out the followers of such teaching. Therefore whatever metaphysical unity with others may be perceived and whatever inward willingness to identify interests with them may be felt, some kind of practical indication of its goal and outward particularization of its path will necessarily and inescapably arise of their own accord. And I do not know of any better or broader name with which to mark those who pursue this quest than to say that they are students of philosophy.” (end of Persp. pp. 248-249 and 20.1.18)

St: Would you just reread one line . . . ?

PB: “. . . If they have any superiority over others, let them display it by a superiority of conduct grounded in a diviner consciousness. . . .”

AD: When we get real difficult ones, we will review them, but these are very general (paras). (AD reads:)

PB: “It may be asked why I insist on using the word “philosophy” as a self-sufficient name without prefixing it by some descriptive term or person’s name when it has held different meanings in different centuries, or been associated with different points of view ranging from the most materialistic to the most

spiritualist. The question is well asked, although the answer may not be quite satisfactory. I do so because I want to restore this word to its ancient dignity. I want it used for the highest kind of insight into the Truth of things, which means into the Truth of the unique Reality. I want the philosopher to be equated with the sage, the man who not only knows this Truth, has this insight, and experiences this Reality in meditation, but also, although in a modified form, in action amid the world's turmoil." (Persp. p. 250 and 20.1.127)

AD: Obviously, he's not going to call you a philosopher if you haven't experienced the higher states of consciousness. If you're a theoretician or metaphysician you're not a philosopher--if you haven't experienced that. That's the one distinction he's making, whereas you can go on and get a PhD in philosophy any place, and still be living in worldly consciousness.

(AD reads:)

PB: "The practice of philosophy is an essential part of it and consists not only in applying its principles and its wisdom to everyday active living, but also in realizing the divine presence deep, deep within the heart where it abides in tremendous stillness." (Persp. p. 250 and 20.1.17)

(TS reads:)

PB "The Advaitin who declares that as such he has no point of view, has already adopted one by calling himself an Advaitin and by rejecting every other point of view as being dualistic. A human philosophy is neither dualistic alone nor nondualistic alone. It perceives the connection between the dream and the dreamer, the Real and the unreal, the consciousness and the thought. It accepts Advaita, but refuses to stop with it; it accepts duality, but refuses to remain limited to it; therefore it alone is free from a dogmatic point of view. But in attempting to bring into harmony that which forever is and that which is bound by time and space, it becomes a truly human philosophy of truth." (Persp. p. 250 and 20.1.478)

(AD inaudible)

(AB reads:)

PB: "Viewed from the standpoint of the house in which we all have to live--that is, the body--Advaita Vedanta seems to deal only in ultimate abstractions--however admirable and lofty its outlook. The body is there and its actuality and factuality must be noted and, more, accepted. This is why I do not give any other label to the ideas put into my later books than the generic name philosophy. I do not call it Indian philosophy since there are ideas in the books which do not belong to India at all. I do not identify it with any particular land, race, religion, or teacher from the ancient past or the modern present. Philosophy cannot be limited only to abstract ideas. It includes those ideas but it also includes other things. Its original Greek meaning, "love of wisdom," concerns the whole of man, and not only his abstract thoughts, intellect, feelings, body, or relation to the world around him. It concerns his entire life: his contacts with other people, the morality which guides him in dealing with them, and finally his attitude towards himself. Philosophy must be universal in its scope; therefore, it may embrace ideas which originate not only in India or in America or in Europe, but in every other country and in every other period of civilization. Not all ideas are philosophical, but only those which are true, useful, in harmony

with the World-Idea, and able to survive the test of practice and applicability.” (Persp. p. 251 and 20.1.128)

AD: Maybe it’s that I’m sitting up so high (inaudible)-- I prefer you when you’re disagreeable.

COMBINING MYSTICISM AND METAPHYSICS TO BRING ABOUT PHILOSOPHIC REALIZATION OF THE OVERSELF

(AD reads:)

PB: “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.” (Persp. p. 250 and 20.4.134)

*(comment in above para) AD: In other words, nirvikalpa samadhi.

CS: Would you reread that?

AD: I just wanted to hold still, I’m not that bad. (rereads previous para)

AH: How is the goal of the first activity different from the direct perception meant in the second? Are they two separate GOALS insofar as two activities? (pause) I understood the necessity of a mystical practice as well as the rigorous kind of discrimination--that they have to work together--they’re certainly two separate activities, but I had never heard a suggestion that the GOAL of those activities might be different--this quote seems to imply that.

AD: I think in the first case he’s pointing out that the goal of the mystical practices is to bring you to a realization of nirvikalpa samadhi, of the ultimate substratum of the universe you live in. And that’s one thing. In other words, it brings you into identity with the Mind that you are. But that’s not the same and usually that’s where most of the schools stop in India; they consider that the ultimate achievement--nirvikalpa, in other words, consciousness without thoughts.

But after that is achieved or acquired, he said that the second thing is to try to get a direct perception into the nature of the ego and the World-Idea. These two are necessary in order to have a full understanding of philosophy: That would be something like saying that on the one hand you must achieve a state of thoughtless consciousness and on the other hand to understand the nature of the world and ego. It would be like stating--

You have to recognize that the Soul has these two aspects, that we refer to as the intrinsic self-knower, the higher knower; and then the lower knower that the Soul has the faculty of understanding, insofar that it understands the nature of the ego and the world that it lives in. That completeness of philosophy depends upon integrating these two realizations. One without the other would be detrimental to the completion that we’re speaking about.

I don't think that I really understand your question.

AH: I think the question is provoked by the phrase "second activity" would occur through direct perception of the mental nature of the ego and the world. It seems like it would be a way of speaking about the actual experience of the Overself. You know we've made the distinction in the past between an intellectual grasp of mentalism and the experience of it. We've held that distinction.

AD: The only way--(inaudible)-- The way that we understand that the world is a series of ideas or that it is mental is that you must primarily have the experience of nirvikalpa samadhi. In other words, that the World-Idea can disappear from your consciousness, even if it's temporary. Then when that World-Idea has returned to consciousness, you see that the World-Idea arises within consciousness and IS the result of consciousness. Now if these two are combined, a person has a feeling of philosophy's completeness.

But to have one--for instance, nirvikalpa, without understanding the nature of the World-Idea, is to have incomplete--one might say almost an incomplete experience. Because the tendency will be to desert the world, to regard the world as unreal, rather than the opposite which is not to desert the world but to confront the world and master it by understanding the nature of that world. And although he speaks about them as two (inaudible) things (inaudible), I don't see that they-- (inaudible).

I think in distinguishing these two aspects of the total truth, it becomes more available to us.

MB: Months ago-- (MB/AD aside)-- we spoke about the mystical experience or even nirvikalpa experience as the realization of the void doesn't necessarily imply that there is any understanding of how the manifestation comes about. . . .

AD: I don't know if you remember the quotation we used from Vivekananda's life, where he went to Ramakrishna and he told him he'd like to stay in samadhi--oh, thirty days at a stretch, and really get to enjoy it. Ramakrishna told him, "You're a fool. Don't you know there's something higher than that?"

I think what Ramakrishna was pointing out to him was that there's this state of natural fulfillment, that these two aspects which he's discussing here separately are really, when understood, complementary to each other and necessary in order for us to become philosophers.

Of course, in Plotinus there's an enormous treatment of the need to understand, for the Soul to understand that it has intrinsic self-cognition and that it also has the faculty of critically understanding its own activity, that is, understanding the world. For Plotinus, these two were required in order to call yourself a philosopher. You couldn't possibly separate them in his discourses.

MB: . . .

AD: The main point I think we have to make is number one, is that the ultimate, IN YOU, is Mind; and until this is experienced personally it would not be possible to reduce the universe to ideas. In other words, one must have the experience that everything is Mind, that his ultimate principle is Mind; given that experience then it is possible to say that anything that Mind manifests MUST OF NECESSITY be an idea. It cannot manifest or manufacture something which is out of Mind, outside of the realm of Mind.

So that, it would be easy to understand, for instance, in the example of a dream, if a person could awake while he's in the dream state and recognize that everything is of the nature of his mind, then anything that is occurring within the dream he knows would be of the nature of an idea. And he must bring to bear on manifested dream content his experience and his realization that everything is Mind. Now, if you don't have the experience in some form or shape, then it would be theoretical most of the

time, theoretical in the sense that the reasoning out of this understanding would be satisfactory to reason, and the intellectual grasp of these ideas would satisfy the intellect, but in order for the whole man to fully accept this, then there has to be the experience that the ultimate principle of ALL is Mind.

Once that is realized--and the realization means that the whole of the man is involved in this experience--then the second step would be comparatively easier; if he could accept that everything that he could experience must be of the nature of an idea. I don't know if that satisfies you?

AH: Yes, that satisfies my question perfectly. . . .

LR: What's the difference between the realization of the Overself and the realization of the ultimate Mind?

AD: There's no difference.

LR: Well, wasn't the first stage--?

AD: You must keep in mind the general tenets that PB indicates: and that is that your Overself is the substratum within which your experience could take place, and the experience of the Overself is the experience of Mind. In other words, you have to get into a thought-free state to experience the Overself.

LR: Perhaps I didn't hear it right. I thought the first stage you described there is the experience of the void mind and then he speaks about understanding the Nous, the ego and the universe. And then he says the combination is the realization of the Overself--doesn't he?

AD: "The combination of these two activities brings about the realization of his true Being as the ever beautiful and eternally beneficent Overself." You remember how we tried another way to show this? We took the Soul in Plotinus--that would be the Overself--and we referred to that as a One. And the radiation of the World-Idea which occurs in the Overself we referred to as Being or the Ideas. And a combination of these two were necessary in order to understand the Overself in its universality. Remember that? [Note: See WG Classes 1983 0902b, 0909b, 0916.]

LR: I think I do. "These two activities brings about the realization of his true Being."

AD: If you remember those two, Linda, then it would follow when he says "these two activities brings about the realization of his true Being." So your true being would be constituted of, on the one hand, unit Soul or individual Overself or individual Mind; and two, the World-Idea which is being manifested within that. Now at that level, of course, the World-Idea is unmanifest at the level of Being. But nonetheless, it is a combination of these two that constitutes your REAL Being.

And you have to remember, any time we have a discussion, you know, we speak about the unity of the Soul versus or, distinct from the (unity) of the World-Idea which is radiated upon--you have to remember that those are theoretical abstractions, that they NEVER actually take place. You can't have a unit Soul without the World-Idea radiating into you. That would be trying to separate two ends of the same stick. Linda, alright?

LR: Yes.

RS: I think PB keeps (pounding) again and again the differences between a mystic and a philosopher, that the mystic has attained only (the) first one, and the philosopher has both.

AD: Yes, I'd agree with that. That's why I brought up our tradition as Westerners, because that was certainly the view of Plato and Plotinus. You're not a philosopher until you've grasped these two.

Now of course a mystic, whether East or West, could easily be confused and think that once he's reached the Overself that's it, that's all. But the philosopher would insist that you must include the fact that the universality of his being includes the World-Idea which is emanated through it from Brahman or universal Mind. So we'll read it once more and I think you'll see that it's available to our understanding.

(AD reads the quote again:) "Two things have to be learned . . ." (Repeat)

ON THE TERM 'MIND'; THREE DEGREES OF PENETRATION INTO THE VOID; THE FALLACY OF DIVINE IDENTITY; DOUBLE KNOWER

AD: One other thing that you may find helpful here--at least, I've found it helpful as I've been going along--very often he uses the term 'Mind,' like when he says "in the undifferentiated Mind". Now, to (be/deep) philosophers--I'm referring to these people who have had experience of this--their higher Self, the Overself, is not distinguished or separated from or spoken of as different from what we refer to as the three primal Hypostases. They don't make that distinction, although I do, to help us in our understanding.

In other words, we take the three primal Hypostases; we say One, Intellectual Being, Soul. We say, now, they're going to call this the Absolute, they're going to call this the Void, they're going to call this Mind. And then they say that from the Absolute Soul there emanates an individual Soul. Now this individual Soul that is emanated we can call our Overself. Now that Overself and that mysterious Void, they're going to use the same word: Mind. That's how EXALTED that notion of the Soul is, the individual Overself.

Of course, that's also true in the sense--I mean, if we follow from what we understand, remember when both PB and Plotinus speak about it these two different ways. PB speaks about three initiations. Once a person has reached the Overself: there are three levels of inwardness or degrees of penetration. PB speaks about this as three different degrees in a psychological way. And I pointed out the correlation between those: when I pointed out what he's telling you: the first degree of penetration is at the level of Absolute Soul, then Intellectual-Principle, then the One. That's what he's talking about. And Plotinus also speaks about them, but he speaks about them as three primal Hypostases. Now, how would he ever know except through his own higher Self, the Overself, he knows of these three primal Hypostases.

Then again, they both speak of INSIGHT as having these three different degrees that one can penetrate and actually get to know about the mysterious Void--something about It besides that It is.

JnL: Do these also correspond to the three grades of mysticism: . . . the initiative, purgative, and unitive?

AD: I don't think so, I don't think that they correspond, because those mystical realms you're speaking of are all within the realm of individual Soul.

JnL: . . .

AD: No, I (inaudible)--

JnL: . . .

AD: I think this is what he's--a misreading of-- There is in mystical literature the explanation that these three levels which are taking place within mysticism can be correlated in some way or another with the

three primal Hypostases, but that is a misunderstanding of their own experiences. For that, we have to go back to the quotations where he (PB) speaks about the (fallacy of divine identity).

(inaudible AD/St)

St: Fallacy of divine identity.

AD: He's pointing out that when the mystic speaks about unity or divine identity or divine union, what they're speaking about--if they're not deluded, if they're not referring to a mental or conceptual level--is that what they're speaking about is something that is taking place in their own Soul, that they do not achieve and there could be no union with . . .

(Side 1 of original cassette tape digitized as 1983 1207a Ends; Side 2 Begins)

AD: . . . (Soul,) not within the One itself. (This is from the PC transcript only.)

AD: . . . highest, with the One itself.

JnL: The three states of the mystic would really be initiatory in terms of the first state for the philosopher.

AD: Well, initiatory would be, let's say, recognition that he has a Soul. The second would be, as he pointed out, the need to carry out an ascetic and purgative regime. Third would be unitive, where he achieves union with his own Soul. But to go beyond that is, I think, misleading.

JnL: For the mystic?

AD: (This is) an interpretation by many mystics.

JnL: But the philosopher does.

AD: No, the philosopher doesn't. The philosopher points out that this is all taking place within his own Soul, that the identity that he achieves IS with his own Soul and that that IS his God.

JnL: Is that what is PB speaking about then when he talks about the ultimate union, nirvikalpa?

AD: No, the ultimate union IS with your own Soul. And there IS NO ultimate union with the One.

JnL: Misnomer. But the realization of the function of the World-Idea in the Soul is for the philosopher a stage beyond mysticism--the understanding of it--the perception of it.

AD: Oh, yes, because now what has to be brought to bear--(inaudible)--living alone and achieving a samadhi--now what has to be brought to bear and which most mystics will find difficult. Because they'll find this difficult because all their intellectual and critical faculties have to be brought into play to understand what this is all about. I think a very good example, for instance, is the eight hypotheses of Plato; where he makes demands on the aspiring philosopher to understand in this physical way "what am I talking about?" He has this list of eight hypotheses. [Note: See Plato, *Parmenides*.] The aspiring philosopher, if he can't answer this, then evidently he hasn't had, one, neither the experience of nirvikalpa or, two, even assuming that he has, he hasn't brought about the development of his understanding, he isn't going to understand what this is all about. And the fact that many of the Vedantic writers--not all but

many of them--insist that this is the highest stage, that having reached nirvikalpa, shows that they stopped half way.

JnL: The reason why I asked the question is you made an allusion to Plotinus' realization of the Intellectual-Principle. Were you making the comparison of that with the philosopher's comprehension of the World-Mind's functioning in the Soul? Are they the same? (AD/JnL question clarification) After the nirvikalpa, there is a coming back, there is an attempt to understand and comprehend the function of the World-Idea within the Soul.

AD: To understand the world.

JnL: You were making that comparison with Plotinus' realization of the (Intellectual-Principle)?

AD: I was making the comparison of Plotinus' notion of the two knowers, the higher and the lower. The higher knower is the one with self-cognition and the lower is the one that has the faculty of understanding what its experience is all about.

JnL: But the lower is certainly not the Intellectual-Principle?

PD: Neither is the World-Idea in a sense the Intellectual-Principle.

JnL: I was trying to bring in why he was speaking of Plotinus in that sense--in terms of the Intellectual-Principle--

AD: Well, in the sense that you could make this correlation here, with the quote that we read: In the first case, the higher knower, the person who has intrinsic self-cognition--insight--as experienced in nirvikalpa samadhi. The second, is the fact that he is capable of critically reflecting on the meaning of this experience; that means he has developed and objectified his reason, and he can apply it to his experience and understand the nature of his experience. And then these two are brought together in order to bring about completeness. PB says the same thing here: First you have to achieve the state of nirvikalpa or self-cognition, and then second, you have to understand the nature of the World-Idea, which means you have to bring in your critical faculties. (Inaudible) correlation with this quotation.

DR: Could we re-read the last two lines of that quote, please?

(AD reads:)

PB: "... 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." (repeat, 20.4.134)

AD: We spoke about, David, the (unity/union) of the Soul. That's one thing. And we've spoken about the fact that the Idea, World-Idea is irradiating in it. That's another thing. These two are always being held together. When the mystic insists on just achieving the state of nirvikalpa and ignoring the World-Idea, that's just like taking only half of yourself. The other half is being ignored. Whereas the philosopher will insist that he must understand the nature of the World-Idea and the role that he has to play IN that World-Idea. It's a very natural outcome. Whereas--maybe because we're Westerners, but it seems kind of artificial to sit down and be rapt and absorbed forever contemplating intrinsic self-cognition.

ME: Are you equating the direct perception of the World-Idea with the development of intellectual and critical faculties?

AD: Yes. There'll be quite a few quotes where he'll point out that the development of the reason is God's way of guaranteeing your safe journey. To ignore reason is like--

JA: One thing I still don't understand the--what knower undertakes the three degrees of penetration . . . ?

AD: It would be better if you put it this way, that the inwardization and deepening of self-cognition reveals that there is an inwardness which can reveal the existence of the three primal Hypostases. Instead of saying which knower. Otherwise you'll cut off (inaudible)--

JA: The framework you were using, higher knower and lower knower, and you were speaking of higher knower as achieving nirvikalpa samadhi which is that thought-free state and it was just confusing . . .

AD: Again, we have to be careful because this is getting into semantics. When we speak about the double knower, the higher and the lower, we're not DIVIDING the knower. We're just speaking about two different aspects of one and the same thing. And the Soul is such an entity that it cannot be understood by ascribing to it simply self-cognition. That's not enough. You also have to point out the fact--and it would be obvious, too--that insofar that the World-Idea which is being irradiated upon, and IS part of its being--that without the development of the critical faculty of understanding, it would be quite meaningless to have a World-Idea there. So then, when we speak about the double knower, we're not speaking about two entities. We're speaking about one person, but we're speaking about a particular aspect of that one entity, one Soul.

JA: Maybe I haven't understood your answer but what is it that--the three degrees of penetration, is that something that would be included within nirvikalpa samadhi, or are they beyond--a deepening of nirvikalpa samadhi?

AD: That's it, exactly. Deepening, because there's no alteration in that kind of knowledge. (So I) speak about it as a deepening or an inwardization; that's the only way that it can be spoken of. There's no possibility of bringing in any kind of critical understanding in that knowledge.

The remark he made a week ago, he (PB) pointed out that what is our innermost is Its outermost. That's simply referring to the fact that our innermost--the Overself--is like the peak or the outermost of the three principles. It would be available to SOME of the philosophers. I don't know that ALL philosophers have had that experience, but the great ones certainly would, and repeat over and over again that there are these different levels of revelation that are given to sages. However, we're beyond our element. This is the kind of philosophy you never get in school.

THE ERRORS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE MYSTIC AND THE METAPHYSICIAN; THE SAGE'S REALIZATION IS CONTINUOUS, COMPLETE, AND UNINTERRUPTED

(TS reading:)

PB: "To view the inferior mystical experiences or the ratiocinative metaphysical findings otherwise than as passing phases, to set them up as finally representative of reality in the one case or of truth in the other, is to place them on a level to which they do not properly belong. Those who fall into the second error do

so because they ascribe excessive importance to the thinking faculty. The mystic is too attached to one faculty, as the metaphysician is to the other, and neither can conduct a human being beyond the bounds of his enchained ego to that region where Being alone reigns. It is not that the mystic does not enter into contact with the Overself. He does. But his experience of the Overself is limited to glimpses which are partial, because he finds the Overself only within himself, not in the world outside. It is temporary because he has to take it when it comes at its own sweet will or when he can find it in meditation. It is a glimpse because it tells him about his own "I" but not about the "Not-I." On the other hand, the sage finds reality in the world without as his own self, at all times and not at special occasions, and wholly rather than in glimpses. The mystic's light comes in glimpses, but the sage's is perennial. Whereas the first is like a flickering unsteady and uneven flame, the second is like a lamp that never goes out. Whereas the mystic comes into awareness of the Overself through feeling alone, the sage comes into it through knowledge plus feeling. Hence, the superiority of his realization." (first paragraph of: Persp. pp. 251-2 and 20.4.23)

AD: (inaudible)

DR: Because he said "this is philosophy," this coordination of these two activities, in this quote, it almost sounds like he is trying to call philosophy the viewing of that state of pure being--but then he makes the mystic actually able to grasp a glimpse of that realm. And so I get confused. I'm not quite sure that philosophy is the sage's purviewing of pure being continuously or if philosophy is a coordination of the side of the Overself--not only as the mystic sees it, but also in the understanding. I'm curious.

AH: I think I understand some of David's question. On the one hand the mystic experiences pure being in meditation, in glimpses, whereas the sage experiences something more than that--call it philosophy. The distinction for me in the quote was that the mystic only experiences it in regards to his own "I," the principle of his "I," and the pure being aspect is not applied to the "other," the object, and the world. . . .

BS: . . . The last quote seems to be qualitatively different than that double aspect of the quest. First being the complete stilling or emptying of contents of consciousness or stilling of the mind. I'm wondering is he also referring to that as an inferior state because if he would, why does he speak of the combination being necessary? Is that just a glimpse?

AD: I think before we discuss the two of them, we should first discuss this one.

BS: This last quote?

AD: Yes, understand this one, before you try to discuss the two of them together. Try to understand this quote first. Then when we understand this quote, then we can make a comparison with the last quote. But I don't even make those kinds of demands on myself, (to) try to work with two quotes at one time.

AH: Would it be appropriate to speak of the mystic's experience as not being inferior regarding pure being, but from the point of view of what's being defined in philosophy, it can be looked at as inferior? Or in other words, it lacks that quality the philosopher has. How do we qualify the notion of the mystics being inferior--it's only inferior from the point of view of PB's definition of what a philosopher is . . .

JfL: . . .

AD: We'll all try to work on this--I'll read one sentence at a time.

(AD reads:)

PB: "To view the inferior mystical experiences or the ratiocinative metaphysical findings otherwise than as passing phases, to set them up as finally representative of reality in the one case or of truth in the other, is to place them on a level to which they do not properly belong. . . ." (repeat)

RG: So neither thinking nor the experience of the Mind as Void is enough to give you reality permanently.

AD: Yes, permanently: that's the important thing. They're inferior because they're not an ultimate standpoint. It's not an ultimate standpoint. So the metaphysician may be able to enunciate and very clearly delineate the whole outline of the philosophy of truth, but first of all it's not permanent, in the sense that it's something that will pass. Later on you'll look back and say, "How was I able to go through all that dry rot?" And the mystic, who had the glimpse of the Overself, the glimpse of the Overself that the mystic has not only flickers, but it actually goes out; it goes off and on. To consider that as anything but a temporary phase is misleading. So these two cannot be applied to the philosophy of truth. They have no place there.

PB: ". . . Those who fall into the second error do so because they ascribe excessive importance to the thinking faculty. . . ." (repeat)

AD: The metaphysician. Guenon is an example.

PB: ". . . The mystic is too attached to the one faculty, as the metaphysician is to the other . . ." (repeat)

AD: The metaphysician is too attached to the faculty of thinking, and consequently thinks that his is an ultimate viewpoint. The mystic, who is preoccupied with the interiority of his states of feeling, and is attached to them, thinks that that's the ultimate, the feeling states. But he says either of these phases cannot be applied to the ultimate standpoint.

PB: ". . . and neither can conduct a human being beyond the bounds of his enchained ego . . ." (repeat)

AD: That's really crucial. Neither of these two things--neither mystical glimpses nor reflective metaphysical thinking can take you out of (the ego.)

ME: Permanently?

AD: Oh yes, I mean it doesn't count if it's just for a few minutes, because then you're back there and you're rotten for the rest of the (23) hours.

PB: ". . . It is not that the mystic does not enter into contact with the Overself. He does. But his experience of the Overself is limited to glimpses which are partial . . ." (repeat)

AD: He goes on and he says:

PB: ". . . It is temporary because he has to take it when it comes at its own sweet will or when he can find it in meditation. It is a glimpse because it tells him about his own "I" but not about the "Not-I." . . ." (repeat)

AD: It doesn't tell him anything about the world out there, the World-Idea.

PB: "... On the other hand, the sage finds reality in the world without as his own self . . ." (repeat)

AD: Now, what he's saying here is very important. He finds that the world without--the externally manifested idea of the world--IS HIS OWN INNER SELF. That's quite advanced. Because a mystic will never find that the outer world--maybe I could do it this way-- There are mystics who have the experience, a glimpse of their own higher Self, and they turn to being like recluses and hermits, and they run away; they don't (enter in/(inaudible)). But there's another kind of experience that mystics have where they feel the sacredness of everything around them. Now, he's becoming acquainted with the fact that the World-Idea is being manifested in him is also of the nature of the "I." But not all mystics have this. But I'm making this point because it can actually occur that you can come out of a trance state like that and actually feel--you bump into a chair and you say, "Excuse me"; you actually feel the sacredness of the whole world. This is not common for most mystics. At any rate, he is pointing out here that these are shortcomings that mystics have. First of all, it's not a continuous light; it flickers; even worse, it goes off and goes on again.

PB: "... On the other hand, the sage finds reality in the world without as his own self, at all times and not at special occasions, and wholly rather than in glimpses. The mystic's light comes in glimpses, . . . flickering unsteady and uneven flame, the second--"

AD: --that of the sage--

PB: "... is like a lamp that never goes out. . . ." (repeat)

AD: So that the insight that the philosopher operates with is continuous, uninterrupted, without any break. He doesn't see that consciousness underlies the reality of this object this minute, and the next doesn't see that. It's ALWAYS there for him, for the philosopher sage.

PB: "... Whereas the mystic comes into awareness of the Overself . . ." (repeat)

AD: His soul.

PB: "... through feeling alone, the sage comes into it through knowledge plus feeling. . . ." (repeat)
"Hence, the superiority of his realization." (repeat) (last sentence not read on tape here)

AD: Of course as soon as you bring in knowledge, now you have the fact that insofar that the sage recognizes what the substratum of the universal idea is which he is experiencing continuously and uninterruptedly, that knowledge never leaves him. That in combination with the feeling of his (inner/inward) Self This is permanent. (It never leaves him.)

(RG/AD question clarification)

RG: Does what the philosopher does in that case make the experience of the mystic a permanent--he establishes himself permanently in that experience--by the application of knowledge and reason? Or does that transform that experience into a qualitatively different experience?

AD: Could you talk more?

RG: If you say that the mystic does apprehend reality, it seems then you wouldn't say that it changes the quality of the experience but only establishes it permanently. But if there are different levels to that experience of the real then the application of knowledge and reason to make it permanent could also deepen the experience--which if you say is void to start with--it would be hard to understand levels in voidness, but if you could understand that then the prophet or the philosopher could also deepen that original experience.

AD: (What do you think?) (very hard to hear) (laughter)

AB: The mystic experiences this light but it sputters on and off.

AD (interjects) He doesn't experience this light--he IS this thing, he is this true spirit. (inaudible)

AB: He experiences himself as this light, but it's not a permanent experience, but going--

AD: Yes.

AB: --but going through a process of philosophic understanding stabilizes the experience of oneself as light. Now, does that also deepen the experience of that light so that it is more inward or somehow qualitatively better--more--than it was before?

AD: In a tentative way I'm going to try to answer. (inaudible) In one way it seems to alter the experience that the mystic has, because it introduces a greater element of serenity. In other words, the mystic, when he has this experience of himself as pure Spirit, is actually in a state of emotional bliss. There's no possibility of equanimity, (inaudible) tranquility; that's out. We're in a very exalted situation. Now, the sage eliminates that, gets rid of that, because emotions pertain to the body, and they are concerned with that, you know, being out of the body, for instance. In the case of the sage, they eliminate that emotional intensity, and what is substituted for it is the steady and abiding knowledge of this situation, the situation that (inaudible) knowledge. So it is experienced in a state of unruffled peace, serenity, (inaudible) tranquility, and in that sense it's much deeper--although someone would disagree and say, "Oh, no, it sounds like the other is deeper; that's more intense."

Now the other thing about the inwardization of the serenity is, like we become acquainted, or let's say, that the three Hypostases (inaudible), that's rare. In the annals of philosophic mysticism you'll find very few people that have this recognition of the three primal Hypostases.

RG: So that when you talk about Plotinus having that--

AD: When we speak about Plotinus having that and when PB speaks about it psychologically, if you're acquainted with the mystical literature of the world, you'll see that that's a very unusual person, in the sense that he's being granted much more than the ordinary mystic, more than the (inaudible).

PC: Wouldn't another major difference between the mystic's experience of himself as light and the philosopher be that the philosopher understands the "not-I" or the World-Idea?

AD: Yes. Definitely. Sure.

PC: So it is qualitatively different? . . .

AD: You know, you have some quote there which I (inaudible), (PB has a quote) in which he speaks about the fact that after the-- that the philosopher frees himself from the senses and lives in the pure Spirit, but then he goes back and LIVES in the world of the senses. Now he knows what's going on. [Note: See PB, *Notebooks*, 20.4.113 & *Persp.*, Ch. 20, #20.] That's the point of view that the philosopher has to work with.

It's almost like--if we used an analogy of the dream again, you would have a situation where a person wakes up out of the dream (inaudible) and says, "Now I must remember, and go back into the dream." (inaudible) So the kind of understanding that follows upon it when he keeps alert to the fact that he is dreaming will be different from that when the person who's identified with being the dream individual. It's going to be qualitatively quite different. I think we'll come across some of these quotes that (inaudible) that point.

LDm: Richard, were you asking whether it was the knowledge which makes the mystical experience permanent?

RG: No, the philosophic method--whatever it is--yes including the application of knowledge.

LDm: I have a quote here--if you wouldn't mind. The whole quote was underlined. He says:

PB: "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)

AD: I didn't want to read that 'til the end. (laughter)

LDm: . . .

AD: Anyway, would you read the (inaudible)?

(AB reading:)

PB: ". . . The average mystic is devoid of sufficient critical sense. He delights in preventing his intellect from being active in such a definite direction. He has yet to learn that philosophical discipline has a steadying influence on the vagaries of mystical emotion, opinion, fancy, and experience. He refuses to judge the goal he has set up as to whether it be indeed man's ultimate goal. Consequently he is unable to apply correct standards whereby his own achievements or his own aspirations may be measured. Having shut himself up in a little heaven of his own, he does not attempt to distinguish it from other heavens or to discover if it be heaven indeed. He clings as stubbornly to his self-righteousness as does the religionist whom he criticizes for clinging to his dogma. He does not comprehend that he has transferred to himself that narrowness of outlook that he condemns in the materialistic. His position would be preposterous were it not so perilous. . . ." (repeat, 20.4.23)

AD: I think we're beginning to grasp somewhat the position that the philosopher is coming from--how unlimited it is, and awesome. And we have to keep in mind that when he criticizes the mystic, for those who are NOT mystics, it would be quite an achievement to get to be mystics so that they could be criticized like that!

RG: Anthony, the criticism of the kind of mystic he is talking about is a particular type of mystic. Where would like a variety of different kinds of yoga practitioners fit into this?

AD: I think most of the yoga practitioners would fit in here.

RG: As mystics.

AD: Yes, as a matter of fact, somewhere in his writings PB points out somewhere in his writings that Patanjali was an elementary form of philosopher. He regards it as lower range.

DEFINITION OF A PHILOSOPHER; MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE INFLATES THE EGO

LR: But when he says philosopher, these quotes refer to the philosopher sage. His definition of philosophy seems to be the highest attainment of the sage. So, from that point of view . . .

AD: I think (inaudible) you could put it this way. His definition of a philosopher is a man who knows truth. Anything short of that, you're not a philosopher. And he doesn't care how many transits you've had. That's the important thing to keep in mind. That's why many of the traditional teachings that were carried on in different parts of the world--let's leave alone the big names, let's leave alone Ruysbroeck and Eckhart and St. John--but if you read most of the other mystics, you'll be amazed at how shortsighted they are. They haven't got any philosophic perspective. That's why many philosophers do not particularly care to get involved in discussing these issues: They consider them quite infantile.

AH: He describes the mystic's position as being perilous. He seems to see the greatest danger in mysticism is a rigidity of opinion. Why is that so? Why does the mystic find himself in a rigid opinion about reality?

PD: Could it be a one-sided practice? . . .

AH: Could it involve his own personal psychology? (= paraphrase)

PD: What I was thinking was that if they pursue the practice of just suppressing thought and not inquiring into the nature of thoughts, then a type of ideality that is the understanding mind won't change. They can get out of the thought state but when they come back to it they are stuck with the ideality that they have.

LDm: . . .

AS: He starts out with the position of having an ego. He then gets a mystical experience but he still has that ego. The ego was rigid to begin with and it is still rigid. The only thing that destroys it is when he speaks about the philosopher who's actually given up or destroyed or obliterated the ego. . . . It seems that's why he stresses so much that the philosopher has done away with that. It's the only thing that would get rid of that rigidity. . . .

AD: You remember that famous remark by Burckhardt: "Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely." Well, something like that could be applied to the ego. It is corrupt to begin with, but if it gets a mystical experience, now it's an exalted corruption! Basically I think what Avery says is to the point. The mystical experience so inflates the ego that it really is impossible to deal with him or her.

JnL: Does it freeze a person?

AD: I don't know if it freezes-- It simply shows what was there all the time. Instead of a standard size ego now it's a bigger one, magnified. So to have mystical experiences without some kind of preliminary understanding (inaudible) or not being metaphysically informed can be cumbersome.

JA: (inaudible) (This could be true of metaphysicians, too.)

AD: The intellect will be the same. The intellect will be just as proud, just as rigid, just as self-opinionated.

DB: It seems that much of what the practice and the study of philosophy has to do with the process of dismantling the ego.

AD: Well, not dismantling it--keeping it within bounds, hopefully more modest.

DB: . . . There is a subtle form of transformation that seems necessary to take place in order for that final insight to unite the two perspectives, to take place. In that transformation of the ego, in some sense limiting or making it possible to live in the world and yet at the same time be aware of this reality. And I guess my question is: How does that happen? It's not enough to be exposed to the idea . . . there's no change in the ego. There must be a particular way of apprehending those ideas--

[Audio File 1983 1207a Ends]

[Audio File 1983 1207b Begins]

AH: . . . (2 min.)

LDm: It seems that both philosophy and mysticism in some ways have to undermine the ego, . . . because if mysticism, the mystical states, did not do so at all, then what would be the validity and efficacy of experiencing these states . . . if they did not undermine and transform the ego? (= partial paraphrase)

AD: We're getting into theoretical questions, because the actual mystical state itself, of course, like he says, is Spirit, free Spirit. And there, you don't have the problem of the ego. He comes out of that state, and the problem of the ego is restored and continues on its way. Now, you say that in some way it undermines the ego. That probably is true, but in what way is the ego undermined? Then this is where the alternatives come. It may very well be that one undertakes to do it in order to repeat the experience, or it may very well be that he will NOT do it, in which case, then let's say, the world will do it to him, will crush him in some way or another. There's too many variables; we don't know which way it's going to take. It would depend on the individual case. So let's go on.

MB: . . .

(AD reads:)

MYSTICS SHOULD TRY TO BE RATIONAL; DISTINGUISHING THE SPIRITUAL AND THE PSYCHIC

PB: “. . . Mysticism must not rest so smugly satisfied with its own obscurity that it refuses even to make the effort to come out into the light of critical self-examination, clear self-determination, and rational self-

understanding. To complain helplessly that it cannot explain itself, to sit admiringly before its own self-proclaimed impalpability, or to stand aristocratically in the rarefied air of its own indefinability--as it usually does--is to fall into a kind of subtle quackery. Magnificent eulogy is no substitute for needed explanation.” (Persp. pp. 251-252 and 20.4.23)

EC: Anthony, isn't that basically why PB makes such a stress on practicing the short and long path where we stand, so that when these things do start to happen one would be more psychologically ready? Isn't that one of the safeguards? . . .

AD: Certainly I think that as far as the long path (inaudible) continues to be going on even when he's doing the short path; in other words, that there is need for improvement; he does remind us all the time. I would suspect that he's trying to point out to mystics that they should try to be rational, and try to understand the nature of what it is that is happening, and not remain content with the feeling and the emotional ecstasy that does take over. Because that's actually what happens: Emotional reactions take over and really prevent the person from exercising any of his critical faculties.

ME: In terms of explaining the lower mystical states though, could you really apply rational principles to explain them? I mean, in terms of, let's say, where if I have different lights or colors, that kind of stuff and certain--there probably are certain mystical states that are describable that--

AD: Those would be psychical. If you start seeing colors or hearing sounds, all kinds of sounds, that's psychical.

ME: But would you put under “mystic” there only the experience of nirvikalpa?

AD: No, not necessarily nirvikalpa, but it is a state of ego-less being. That his ego isn't there so it must be more than psychical.

ME: Would you say any of them, uh, sensory perceptions, be psychical?

AD: There is no sensory perception in that state. As a matter of fact, that's the simple price that everyone has to pay (in order to reach a mystical state:) to try to trick himself out of sensory perception, to achieve even for a momentary purpose, the mystical state. There again, it would be worthwhile for a person to be acquainted with these things so that he doesn't get lost, because the psychical realm is so vast, so varied. You can go on having lights and sounds and colors and pictures indefinitely; it can go on for years. And spiritually you haven't moved ahead one iota.

ME: (inaudible) definition of (inaudible) point (inaudible)

AD: Let's go on. (inaudible)

EM: There's really no evolution within that psychical state? In the different kinds of experience? Do you mean it? You're very stuck, I mean, no matter if you see the Golden Buddha or this or that?

AD: Yes, that's television. True, there are some of them that are enjoyable, but it's so easy to be deluded into thinking that they're something other than what they are.

(AD reads:)

PB: "Truth will not insult intelligence, although it soars beyond intellect. Let the religionist talk nonsense, as they do at times; but holiness is not incompatible with the use of brains, the acquisition of knowledge, and the rational faculties." (Persp. p. 251 and 20.4.61)

AD: I think you're beginning to get a picture of the way PB is working. If you've read descriptions--for instance, in *A Search in Secret India*, some of the people there--I mean, doesn't a question mark arise? Like for instance about the "perfect master"?

AH: Is it so that those psychical states or lower mystical states are so unlike our normal consciousness that unless we have some sort of framework to work in--

AD: No, they're not so unlike our normal consciousness. I mean, what's the difference when you look at color on television and you look at color in your mind? Even-- Let's put it this way: Let's imagine you're meditating, and you have this psychical experience of smelling the archetypal rose. And you open your eyes and you look around--there's no roses around, but you're absolutely inundated with the smell of rose. What does that have to do with spiritual development?

AH: I wonder why those experiences are frequently--

AD: Well, you get intoxicated.

RS: It has some advantages--

AD: No, Ram-- (laughter from class) I don't want them to look for those things.

It's like encouraging, you know that there is more--like sometimes you have photisms and streaks of light. It's encouraging. But don't stop there; don't make that the purpose of your meditation.

(inaudible) We got to remember who I'm talking to. (inaudible)

I got really torn down once: I was telling PB about this great experience and he turned around and looked at me with a real frown: "Psychical." (class laughter).

SILENCE; INSIGHT; SAGE VS. PHILOSOPHIC SAGE

(AB reading:)

PB: "There is a kind of understanding combined with feeling which is not a common one here in the West, indeed uncommon enough to seem more discoverable and less puzzling in the Asiatic regions. It is puzzling for four reasons. One is that it cannot be attributed to the intellect alone, nor to the emotional nature alone. Another is that it provides an experience so difficult to describe that it is preferable not to discuss it at all. A third is that although the most reverent it is not allied to religion. A fourth point is that it is outside any precise labelling as for instance a metaphysics or cult which could really belong to it. Yet it is neither anything new or old. It is nameless. But because there is only one way to deal with it honestly--the way of utter silence, speechless when in contact with other humans, perfectly still when in the secrecy of a closed room--we may renew the Pythagorean appellation of "philosophy" for it is truly the love of wisdom-knowledge." (Persp. p. 253 and 20.1.129) (para reread)

AD: What is that?

JnL?: The Overself.

AD: Yes, in the face of Silence. You know, like sometimes you try to grasp some, go sit outside and watch the sun, and I tell you, “reduce yourself to two-dimensional being, keep quiet, try to feel that stillness.” If you do, there’s nothing you can talk about; there’s nothing there that you can say anything about. But you begin to like it, little by little, more and more. Then after awhile people are going to call you a crank and an eccentric. Let’s read the next one.

(TS reading:)

PB: “Such a revolutionary acquisition as insight must necessarily prove to be in a man’s life can only be developed by overcoming all the tremendous force of habitual wrong thinking, by neutralizing all the tremendous weight of habitual wrong feeling, and by counteracting all the tremendous strength of habitual wrong-doing. In short, the familiar personal “I” must have the ground cut from under its feet. This is done by the threefold discipline. The combined threefold technique consists of metaphysical reflection, mystical meditation, and constant remembrance in the midst of disinterested active service. The full use and balanced exercise of every function is needful. Although these three elements have here been isolated one by one for the purpose of clearer intellectual study, it must be remembered that in actual life the student should not attempt to isolate them. Such a division is an artificial one. He who takes for his province this whole business of truth-seeking and gains this rounded all-comprehensive view will no longer be so one-sided as to set up a particular path as being the only way to salvation. On the contrary, he will see that salvation is an integral matter. It can no more be attained by mere meditation alone, for example, than by mere impersonal activity alone; it can no more be reached by evading the lessons of everyday external living than by evading the suppression of such externality which meditation requires. Whereas metaphysics seeks to lift us up to the superphysical idea by thinking, whereas meditation seeks to lift us up by intuition, whereas ethics seeks to raise us to it by practical goodness, art seeks to do the same by feeling and appreciating beauty. Philosophy in its wonderful breadth and balance embraces and synthesizes all four and finally adds their coping stone, insight.” (Persp. p. 253 and 20.4.178)

LR: What stone?

AD: Coping stone.

(St = approx. 2 minutes, with AH/AD/St question clarification)

PB: “. . . constant remembrance in the midst of disinterested active service.”

AH: What is meant by “disinterested active service”?

AD: “Constant remembrance”? “In the midst of disinterested activity”? So--

St: You don’t work for the results--

AD: It’s very much more. It’s very specific. While you’re doing some kind of selfless work--while you’re engaged in some kind of activity that’s basically altruistic--you have to also keep in mind the higher Self. But somebody comes over and, say, peppers me with a lot of questions, the first thing I think about is, “Help me, PB.” And then try to figure out what’s going on.

AH: This is a specific reference to altruistic service rather than our day-to-day lives?

AD: Well, that can be altruistic--everyday life. You have to keep in mind that you have to practice the remembrance exercise in the midst of your activities. This has to constantly go on.

AH: Altruistic or otherwise.

AD: In your case, it's altruistic, isn't it? But you can see what's developing here is like-- His definition of philosophy is, like he says somewhere else, is life made articulate. (inaudible)

NH: Anthony, can we talk about the difference between a sage and a philosopher sage? Could there be a sage in each of these three paths of development? . . .

AD: You cannot become a sage by developing mystically alone. Every aspect of your being has to be developed, and they all have to be developed to a very high level.

NH: Then there seems to be a further distinction, an integration of a philosopher-sage, that he is able to integrate that experience into a daily, a constant thing.

AD: Yes, then you understand. Those three things have to be integrated in order to be a philosophic sage.

NH?: (And if they're not you're a regular sage?)

AD: Keep in mind what he means by a philosophic sage: that is a person who has achieved the highest--that is, has the knowledge of the truth and can also communicate the truth because he has acquired the necessary means by which to do so. I think that was his definition of a philosophic sage. Whereas the sage who is not a philosophic sage--which he refers to in his writings about Ramana; he refers to him as a sage; he makes that point over and over again. But, as he points out, he's not a philosophic sage, because, first of all, he was not even interested in communicating too much, and you remember his favorite aphorism: People would come and ask him questions and he'd say, "Sit down and ask yourself who you are." His communication was very limited, and he didn't have the wherewithal at his disposal to deal competently with any kind of student that came to him. (Q: from 1993 transcriber LC, not to use this, as PB in his Notebooks *clearly and repeatedly retracted* his earlier opinion of Ramana and expressed *more than once* that he wanted his publishers to *delete* all such passages from his earlier books. --Deleted from working version for forthcoming *Living Wisdom* book—jf 1993)

So PB makes that distinction between the philosophic sage and the sage who has achieved that permanent view of what truth is because he IS that truth; it's not distinguishable from him. But is not particularly interested in telling others about it.

NH: But he's beyond the mystic who's caught up in the ego still.

AD: Well, yes, of course. A mystic is at a much lower level. You see that, for instance, when you study Plotinus or Plato. Here you have persons who are like the acme of the Hellenic culture. They have at their disposal the understanding of their whole culture, their whole civilization; they're at home in any part of it.

NH: So the sage has integrated this three-fold path and yet there's (something) not given. Here's a sage, totally integrated, and yet he's not able to--

AD: Not able to (what?) (inaudible) In reading these notes (inaudible)--

AB: The philosophic sage seems to be able to articulate vision and understanding in a way the sage can't. . . .

AD: Well, let's read this quotation which I think might in part answer what you're asking.

(AD reads:)

PB: "Philosophy must critically absorb the categories of metaphysics, mysticism, and practicality. For it understands that in the quest of truth the co-operation of all three will not only be helpful and profitable to each other but is also necessary to itself. For only after such absorption, only after it has travelled through them all can it attain what is beyond them all. The decisive point of this quest is reached after the co-operation between all three activities attains such a pitch that they become fused into a single all-comprehensive one which itself differs from them in character and qualities. For the whole truth which is then revealed is not merely a composite one. It not only absorbs them all but transcends them all. When water is born out of the union of oxygen and hydrogen, we may say neither that it is the same as the simple sum-total of both nor that it is entirely different from both. It* possesses properties which they in themselves** do not at all possess. We may only say that it includes and yet transcends them. When philosophic insight is born out of the union of intellectual reasoning, mystical feeling, and altruistic doing, we may say neither that it is only the totalization of these three things nor that it is utterly remote from them. It comprehends them all and yet itself extends far beyond them into a higher order of being. It is not only that the philosopher synthesizes these triple functions, that in one and the same instant his intellect understands the world, his heart feels a tender sympathy towards it, and his will is moved to action for the triumph of good, but also that he is continuously conscious of that infinite reality which, in its purity, no thinking, no emotion, and no action can ever touch." (Persp. p. 254 and 20.4.183)

(Added in by AD above: *is a fluid and therefore/ **as gases)

(pause)

ME: (inaudible) The philosophic sage would have to study philosophy, intellectual-type philosophy (inaudible) or metaphysics, rather than the (vasanas?) or art, that there's a very specific training, intellectual training he must undergo in order to explicate this doctrine to others.

(pause)

AD: (inaudible)

DB: . . .

LdS: I think what Michael is asking is whether there is some perennial . . . philosophy that has to be truly assimilated and understood, as opposed to just intellectual development per se. . . .

ME: Yes.

LdS: It seems to me that there is this perennial metaphysics of truth--although depending on the times and conditions--there could be variations like today science seems to be a great help in terms of verifying some of the ancient truths, yet there is this ancient doctrine that is very specific.

AD: Yes, it's a teaching that's primeval and laid down with the foundation of the world. But its expression would vary in various cultures. I think what Michael was asking, is there a very specific kind of training that one follows through in order to become a philosopher sage, or to become a sage or a prophet or a saint.

I think we have some of that, for instance, indicated for us, for instance, in the Buddhist doctrine. They speak about the path of the hero, the path of the lone rhinoceros--the Pratyeka Buddha, and the path of the Bodhisattva. These are two different paths. There, it seems that one submits to a different kind of training. And if you take the path of the Bodhisattva, then you're submitting to a path of development which, in comparison to the other, is much more demanding, much more fulfilling, but it also requires much more from you. So I would suspect that there IS a specific path that one follows in order to achieve the goal he wants.

But then again, the question I would have is, is that a conscious choice? Does a person consciously choose that, in the sense that has the decision already been made by what his past made him to be what he is, that he would choose it according to what the past made of him?

NH: . . . The philosopher has this knowledge, and imparts it to others--there is no reason for him to develop . . .

AS: It is for others but . . . there is something to be learned even for the sage; he keeps on reading, or investigating.

NH:

AS: He gets enlightenment and he still goes on investigating . . .

(BS/AS/AH/AS/AH/AB/NH/AS/LdS/= 4 min.)

THE DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF KNOWING WILLING AND FEELING GIVES BIRTH TO INSIGHT

AD: What kind of response do you get when you think of the thinking, willing, and feeling (inaudible) integrated, and the resultant would be what he calls insight? (inaudible)

AH: Everything would have to be somehow included in this insight. There couldn't be any meditation or any particular slant..

AD: That makes cognition self-intrinsic, self-knowing. But we have used the words, now I ask you further, can you conceive of what insight might be? Save yourself a lot of trouble--don't try!

(Five minutes of talk, no commentary.)

(Side 1 of original cassette tape digitized as 1983 1207b Ends; Side 2 Begins)

NH: They're almost interchangeable.

AD: Don't worry. For you and I they are. The question I'm asking here, I'm interested in, is what kind of response you have to the notion of willing, feeling, and knowing. I think David got off to a start, which is interesting because he did, because he is associating that with the World-Mind or the World-Idea. And we could start up at the higher premises, when we speak about the Intellectual-Principle and we refer to it as

Being, Life, and Intellect; that seems to be a corresponding higher level of the subjective wisdom function that's going on at that level. And I think it's quite appropriate what David said, that evidently it is the goal of the World-Idea to bring upon us or to force us in our development where these three faculties are brought to a perfection. I don't think we could do it under our own power. In one lifetime, or series of lifetimes, maybe you're forced into the development of the intellectual, or let's say that cognitive, the knowing aspect, (later) you will recognize the feeling aspect. But they all have to be brought up, and it seems that they can't all be brought up at the same time. So that there's phases in the evolutionary development of the individual where the faculty is being developed.

Now remember, we're speaking about people who have an extraordinary development and refinement of each one of these faculties. And then, when they have reached their ultimate perfection-- which seems to require that the World-Mind or the World-Idea has this in store for you--this development in store for you, and that only when it achieves such a pinnacle, can we start speaking about the three of them being combined or integrated to produce something which is different from them; not utterly different, but different qualitatively, or what he refers to as insight.

The whole doctrine of insight is really quite a revolutionary teaching. I think, in modern literature (inaudible)-- We're acquainted with it through our studies of Plotinus, where he keeps urging us to recognize that the Soul is a Self-knower. That familiarity may blind us to the fact that if you go out (into) contemporary literature, they won't know what the hell you're talking about.

AS: If you pushed your analogy one step further, then you would say that insight is to that Being/Life/Intellect of the Intellectual-Principle--no, Insight is to Knowing, Willing, and Feeling as the Unity or the One is to Being, Life, and Intellect. So it would be like conceptually trying to understand the transition from the Intellectual-Principle to the One, it would be analogous to trying to understand the transition from Knowing, Willing, and Feeling as functions to insight. Maybe this is incomprehensible.

AD: Yes, we try to understand that in an infantile way when we speak of the three trans-Saturnians as indicating something of that in our charts.

AS: We spoke of all the different aspects of the One, but now represented in the Intellectual-Principle or in Being. And we try to push each one of them back to its infinite Source, where they all merge. That seems to be analogous to what you were talking about.

AD: Yes, I would certainly agree with that. And there we lose sight of them, and come up with something qualitatively, utterly irreconcilable with what we started with.

AS: Also, that remark you just made about Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto--this is kind of obvious, but there isn't any symbol for that insight.

AD: Somewhere in one of his notes PB says that insight is the function of the whole psyche. [Note: See PB, *Notebooks*, 20.4.184 & *Persp.*, Ch. 20, #80.] I'm still grappling with that, trying to understand what he's saying, because I have to understand what he means by "psyche." So I have to go back to the notes on psyche.

(NH/AB/= 2 min.)

NH: If you talk about a person who has developed the intellect to such a degree that--

AD: No, not the intellect, KNOWING.

PC: Could a person develop the function of knowing completely without having studied metaphysically . . .

NH: . . .

PC: Could a person. . . could they arrive at the perfection of that knowing function without having studied metaphysical ideas?

AD: Yeah, I heard you-- What do you think (I am? A machine that you just) throw a coin in and the answer comes out? (laughter) As a matter of fact I'm going to end the class right now. These are very, very profound questions. What is Knowing? What is Feeling? What is Willing? They're very profound questions. As a matter of fact, the little work that we did in charts where the higher Knowing was operative, it was nothing that the person going through the experience understood. You've asked questions like I'm going to turn around and pull out a prearranged answer. I've got to sit and think like you do. As a matter of fact, I'm not going to sit around and think any more. Good Night. Thanks.

(inaudible) Because like these people write about philosophy, but (these things don't come out that way). But all they can do is make everything obscure. But what's clear before and can be understood, when you're finished reading them, now there's nothing but chaos, you don't know what they're speaking of. But we have to work out from these charts (inaudible)

Al-Ghazali was the greatest mystic and philosopher of Islam. (inaudible) He was there--came out screaming that it was mysterious--the most information we got! Stop and think about it. But the (inaudible) of the triple relationship that we're going to (inaudible)

(Above two paragraphs very hard to hear because of end-of-class background noises.)

[Audio File 1983 1207b Ends]