

**CLASS at Wisdom's Goldenrod, Hector, NY
with Anthony Damiani (AD)
July 11, 1984
PB PARAS; EGO**

TOPIC: PB Paras
SUBJECT: Ego

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BOOKS READ FROM OR REFERENCED:

- Paul Brunton, *Notebooks*. 16 vols; Vol. 1 entitled *Perspectives* [*Persp.*].
- Marc Edmund Jones, *The Astrology of Concepts*

SABIAN SYMBOLS: Virgo 17, Libra 6

NOTE: Earlier transcript versions exist.

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1984 07/11 at Wisdom's Goldenrod

PB Paras; Ego

Readable Edited Transcript

EGO AS A COLLECTION OF THOUGHTS CIRCULATING AROUND A FIXED AND EMPTY CENTER

[Audio File 1984 0711a Begins]

(almost 3½ minutes student discussion)

PB: "The true self of man is hidden in a central core of stillness, a central vacuum of silence. This core, this vacuum occupies only a pinpoint in dimension. All around it there is a ring of thoughts and desires constituting the imagined self, the ego. This ring is constantly fermenting with fresh thoughts, constantly changing with fresh desires, and alternately bubbling with joy or heaving with grief. Whereas the centre is forever at rest, the ring around it is never at rest; whereas the centre bestows peace, the ring destroys it." (8a.4 (12v/101/127) Persp. p. 103 & 8.1.32)

(5 minutes student discussion)

PB: "The ego is a collection of thoughts circulating around a fixed but empty centre. If the habits of many, many reincarnations had not given them such strength and persistence, they could be voided. The reality--MIND--could then reveal Itself." (8b-est.a (11g/50/9) 8.2.37)

(15 more minutes discussion, then "The true self . . ." reread, a few more minutes discussion.)

(Side 1 of original cassette tape digitized as 1984 0711a Ends; Side 2 Begins)

(5 more minutes discussion)

AS: Even if you say that the reality is in that central core, you would say that the reality of the soul or the Overself is present in that projecting ray. The Ahamkara, that I-maker, not I-thought, would be that light of the soul which, when it is reflected in that ego, gives the sense that there is some unity to that ego. Not that the thoughts give a sense of unity to the focus. But the sense of the unity in the center is from that ray, reflected in those thoughts. It's the ray reflected in those thoughts that gives the sense that there is some true center to the thoughts, even though the true unity is from that ray and not from the thoughts. So the only distinction the I-thought would be . . . almost like the first reflection of that ray, in those thoughts, in that conglomeration of thoughts, giving a sense that there was some I-ness to the thoughts. But that once the whirling thoughts are removed, there wouldn't be any place to reflect the ray. So you would just recognize the true center as . . .

AD: As fixed and empty.

AS: As that fixed and empty projection.

(10 minutes more student discussion on the two paras: JLt, AS, JL, AH, JA, AS, JA, AS, TS, LDm, TS, DR, RC, VM, LDm...)

AH: . . . I look for the source of the ego and I find a fixed and empty center.

HS: . . . Would you like to find a ray of light that's empty?

DB: I thought we were looking for the ego.

RC: . . . How about one more?

AD: It's very confusing. (Q: very hard to hear) Those word processors don't help at all. (laughter) . . . (inaudible) the same.

RG: Could we have an illuminating comment from you?

AD: I don't have that much breath.

RG: Are you having fun?

AD: I'm enjoying it. Let's try a few more quotes.

RC: To change the subject completely:

PB: "The whirling dervish (laughter from class) who revolves on his own axis while, at the same time, revolving in a larger circle with his fellow dervishes, is symbolic of the ego's own centricity side by side with its unconscious evolutionary movement." (8a-ind.g (11g/31/17) 8.1.146)

VM: I missed the first part because some people were laughing. (laughter, para reread)

(2 minutes discussion)

VM: I thought it was a nice way of describing this short quote, the one that Tim-- Tim's explanation seemed to make sense to me. . . . I think the whirling on his own axis is like the fixity of that tendency in the mind which generates some sense of individuality. The evolution that he speaks around when the dervish is dancing around with the other thoughts could be understood as the various contents which arise within that momentum which creates the mind, the mind with small 'm'. So I can see it as a different metaphor for that same kind of distinction: the momentum of the mind to generate a kind of individuality in the lower sense of the term.

AD: He's coming up with epi-cycles. We're in for it now. (laughter)

(3 minutes discussion on whirling dervish para, below)

(RC/VM/RC: . . .)

SD: The center which bestows peace would be the Overself, yet here he's bringing in the World-Idea.

(JL/AS: . . .)

SD: That revolving motion doesn't get him anywhere.

JB: . . .

JL: I don't think that's the center.

JB: I'm disagreeing that there's actually a center in any way to the evolutionary spiral. It's a spiral not a circle.

AD: I'll go back to smoking. (laughter from class)

THE PARADOXICAL NATURE OF EGO – CONSCIOUSNESS PERVADING A COLLECTION OF THOUGHTS

PB: "The root of all the trouble is not man's wickedness or animality or cunning greedy mind. It is his very I-ness, for all those other evils grow out of it. It is his own ego. Here is the extraordinary and baffling self-contradiction of the human situation. It is man's individual existence which brings him suffering and yet it is this very existence which he holds as dear as life to him!" (11b.4 (11g/25/109) Persp. p. 139 & 11.2.22)

AD: Just keep repeating it, Tim.

(para reread, 5 minutes discussion: LR, VM, JB, DB, RC)

AD: Tim, could you reread it? I forgot it already. Could you reread, a phrase at a time?

PB: "The root of all the trouble is not man's wickedness or animality or cunning greedy mind. . . ."

AD: Ok so far.

PB: ". . . It is his very I-ness . . ."

AD: "I-ness." But "I-ness" here is used in the sense of ego. Alright, continue.

TS: Do I have to?

AD: Yes.

TS: Alright.

AD: Because you know, for PB, the way you get to truth is by penetrating into the nature of a paradox. So let's try.

PB: ". . . It is his very I-ness . . ."

AD: "His very I-ness." Now that I-ness we're trying to understand--in the next sentence he says it is his ego?

PB: ". . . for all those other evils grow out of it. It is his own ego. . . ."

AD: Now, what would this ego be then? We know it's a collection of thoughts, right? But a collection of thoughts standing by themselves would be meaningless. I mean, it just doesn't make any sense to say a collection of thoughts is an ego. There has to be some consciousness permeating or pervading those thoughts in order to speak about an ego, an I-ness. But if you remove the consciousness or the mind which pervades those thoughts then you would have no ego. I mean, if I was able to subtract the consciousness that permeates you then all I would have there would be a ghost, a skeleton, collection of a lot of thoughts, alright? You've no ego. So this ego seems to be a mixture of two things: collection of thoughts on the one hand, and a fixed and empty center on the other. Although you may not like the idea that that reality is fixed and empty at the same time. Go ahead.

AS: On the other hand, if you remove the thoughts then you would be left. . .

AD: . . . with that reality.

AS: So that's the paradox that he's going to get at.

AD: So let's continue. Let's see if we see the nature of this paradox. You see, you're going to be a mixture of good and bad. (joking:) In your case more bad than good. (laughter) Go on. A little bit more, Tim.

PB: “. . . Here is the extraordinary and baffling self-contradiction of the human situation. . . .”

AD: Notice the terms he's using? 'Extraordinary,' 'baffling,'--impossible. (short pause) Yes, it's impossible. How could such a thing as a divine reality and this cluster of thoughts come together to make this ego? It's a paradox.

PB: “. . . It is man's individual existence . . .”

AD: Stop there. “It is man's individual existence . . .” (pause) In other words, you're saying that when the soul of a man identifies with some particle of the World-Idea. . .

AS: Then it takes on an individual. . .

AD: It takes on an individual existence. . .

AS: Or it seems to. . .

AD: Or it seems to. That's good enough, “it seems to.”

AS: Or “it takes on.”

AD: They're very close: it seems to take on this individual existence when, say, that this reality identifies with this cluster of thoughts, alright? So, on the one hand, you have the soul which can be in itself and on the other hand you have the soul as identified with this cluster of thoughts which is part of the World-Idea which is evolving.

TS: You're saying that. . .

AD: Maybe it's not evolving. I just want to carry on a rear guard. (Q: joking.) Go ahead.

TS: The cluster of thoughts is not the ego. The consciousness that pervades that. . .

AD: Those thoughts.

TS: . . . those thoughts is not . . .

AD: That wouldn't be the ego. That would be the divinity.

TS: But the pervasion of the thoughts by the consciousness. . .

AD: Yes, now you've got two things, like a mixture. On the one hand you have the soul, and on the other hand you have that which belongs to the World-Idea, a cluster of thoughts. And these two are mixed together. And you have an individual existence.

TS: The individuality of that existence is provided only by the thoughts.

AD: Is provided by the mixture. Once you have the mixture then you have the individuality. If the consciousness does not associate or permeate or identify with a cluster of thoughts you don't have an individual.

TS: In terms of that other quote?

AD: No, no, no, no. I can tell you now. I could associate, I could relate ANY quote you want. I could relate quotes endlessly. Let's work with one quote. If you don't believe me I can prove it to you someday when I feel better. All those. . .

LR: (joking:) We don't believe you. . . (laughter)

AD: . . . thoughts he has, I could relate all of them. That's why I don't do it. I don't say this thought follows that thought, and that thought follows. . . I don't do that, because I could do it with all the thoughts he has, with all those notes. So I don't try to do that.

But I would suggest if you people feel so energetic and intelligent that maybe one or two of you could take upon yourselves to have a presentation, or make an outline, of PB's system. And maybe a couple of others could take it upon themselves to give an explanation of what a category is, what it contains, what it includes, what it excludes. You'll never get to 5000 categories. You'll find that the 28 categories are plenty, and the subdivisions. But this is something you can undertake among yourselves. Like, you've read enough PB. I know some people here who read PB's notes twice. Now they should be able to present an outline of PB's system, no? Or are they just reading words?

CdA: How are we going to identify those people?

AD: I'm not going to speak out. But there are people who have read PB's notes extensively. Now can they come up with an outline of what PB has given them?

RC: I have a central question that would mean a lot to me whether or not I COULD make a outline of PB's system. . .

AD: It would mean a lot, wouldn't it?

RC: The question would be, in the way that you just discussed that polarity of consciousness and thoughts, is 'pervasion' really the right word to describe the relationship? Or is production of the thoughts by the consciousness within itself as its own activity?

AD: No, I don't buy that one. I know that's the one that it seems PB keeps pronouncing.

RC: Yes, PB seems to keep saying we have to think the World-Idea into being.

AD: Yes, but the whole nature of understanding the process of thought is something that he doesn't go into and that was something that I thought WE had to try to understand. In other words, the categories of thinking which precede the production of any manifested object, or any manifested world, has to be taken up quite seriously. And in his writing on mentalism that is never approached. He says it will be done, but I haven't found it in his writing.

RC: The quote seemed to be discussing the process of thinking, what's involved in the consciousness producing this ring of thoughts, rather than to have two unrelated terms. . .

AD: You know that they're not unrelated for me. You know that when I speak about consciousness I'm speaking about the whole cosmic circuit, and when I'm speaking about thought I'm speaking about the production of that cosmic circuit through the intermediary of aspects and etc., all that, which is a very organized and highly determined knowledge-wisdom. I assumed that automatically. I don't even discuss it anymore. I take it for absolute granted.

I know that I will only be inspired when there's certain aspects that are going to work in that direction. I'm not going to be inspired when I don't have decent aspects. I don't even find it necessary to discuss it, in my mind, this is what we mean when we're speaking about the manifestation of an idea. "Oh, I got a great idea!" Sure, we look up his aspects and we see why he had a great idea, didn't we? We've done that over and over again. We've got thirty charts there that show that happening, constantly. That's what I call the categories of thought.

I pushed Kant aside because I regarded that just as abstract thought. Whereas what we did in the Monday night class that many people regarded as, you know, a waste of time, was to me a solid empirical proof that this is the categories of thinking. And your discussion Friday'd be meaningless unless they understand this. Willing, knowing and feeling is utterly meaningless unless they can see it in their chart. Why bother reading books?

Same thing here: we're discussing something very very profound, right? You've got to understand what the nature of this individual existence is, because it is the cause of all our misery, and yet strangely enough, it is dearer to us than anything we can think of. So, evidently there must be a lot of value in our suffering. Hey, stupid. (Q: not sure who he's addressing, his ego?) (pause) So let's return to that section, Tim.

We said that in order for there to be an individual existence we had to think of this infinite light or this mind which is boundless--we can't speak about it, except in this sense of being authentic being--and only when this is associated with, or permeates--and I don't know if this is the best word--but only when this associates with or permeates a cluster of thought, alright, that you can speak about an individual existent. And then I went further and I gave the example: now I examine into my behavior, into my thinking, and every time I have a thought, I can see that that thought is a manifestation of the degrees I'm working with. I could see that. If you can't see that then what the hell is astrology doing for you?

If you can see that every time, like for instance, I keep pounding a thought, I get a solution to something, I'm not satisfied. I keep trying to understand it more deeply and I keep doing that. You can see that that's one of the tendencies in my chart, right? You look at my Mercury and you say there's the bug, going on. He's got to get to the bottom of something. [Note: Virgo 17, "A vast display of cosmic force is seen in the eruption of a volcano with dust clouds, flowing lava, earth rumblings."] Or I've got to see the practical value as well as the idealistic aspect of an object. You can see that's an aspect in my chart, that's the Saturn, right? [Note: Libra 6, "A pilgrim sits on a rustic bench and one by one his ideals in a sort of trance-vision take form before him."] You see that's a tendency. Well, is that tendency the core, the reality of my being? No. My being permeates all that, or let's say, has wrapped itself around that. But it takes these two mixed together that is going to produce the entity you know as Anthony.

TS: When you speak of the core of the being, is it just semantic to ask if you could speak of a difference between that being AS being and that being creating a center (Q: last word hard to hear) through its emanation of itself. . .

AD: That's verbal, Tim. That's verbal. When you reach up to the embodying soul the distinction between that and the real soul is practically nil.

LR: What would you mean by self-knowledge there?

AD: He's finding out it's the distinction between the Witness-I or the consciousness of consciousness, and pure consciousness. That to me is verbal right now.

LR: No, in what you said, about the soul wrapping itself around those tendencies.

AD: Well, I'm not poetic enough to understand or to find the word that would describe how you could relate something which is empty and fixed with thoughts, which have, you know, spatial connotations, and bring about time, and all that. How could you relate these two together?

LR: Which two?

AD: The soul and its contents.

LR: You're calling the empty and fixed the contents?

Students: No, the soul.

LR: Oh, you're calling it soul.

AS: The light of the soul. . .

AD: Don't you know that your soul or your mind is a fixed thing and that it's empty. The empty part you should be able to understand. (laughter)

RG: But it does seem to not be empty in one thing, and that's its act of identification with the thought.

AD: It's empty, it's empty.

RG: But how. . .

AD: Even in the very. . . that's why I think of the word 'permeation.' I don't think of the word 'identification' although 'identification' could be used. But when we think of this mind or soul as permeating, or we think of this light which is illuminating everything in a room, yet it has no relationship with any of the objects in the room. In a similar way, the mind, alright, is permeating all these thoughts that we call our ego-structure. But there's no real relationship. It isn't that you can relate A through B to C. Because this is not a thing. You can relate things. . . . (Q: tape turns while he speaks.)

[Audio File 1984 0711a Ends]

[Audio File 1984 0711b Begins]

RG: . . . for the thoughts to be the self?

AD: Well, that would depend on the level of the soul's evolution.

RG: Ok.

AD: A soul would identify with these thoughts immediately. Another soul would do so hesitantly. Another one would damn right oppose it.

RG: There are distinctions within the soul that allow for the varying degrees of identification. It doesn't all come from the side of the World-Idea.

AD: Yes. And again, here again, we could think of it as a mixture. We could think of it coming mutually. We could think of the thoughts, or the tendencies, which we spoke about, you know, as the thoughts which are a kind of matter that foists itself on the soul or the mind. But there has to be an inherent tendency in it to do so. Just like there would be an inherent tendency within the soul to identify with those tendencies. So again you'd have a mutual mixture of the soul identifying with a cluster of tendencies and the tendencies having a proclivity to claim consciousness for its own. So there you have this mixture which produces an individual. And this is the strange part: now it is this individual, this combination of two things, which is going to be the source of our suffering, the source of our learning, the source of our evolution. It's a paradox. It's the reality that you are, in-volved in those tendencies.

AH: From that perspective of having become an individual, of undergoing suffering, from that perspective, to look for a principle for that individuality, and to look for it AS soul, is a problem because...

AD: Well, you know, I was just amused here, listening to you people argue about fixed and empty. Where would you find fixed and empty? You know he says the center, the center of your being, or the empty, the fixed and the empty, so you probably have nailed some jelly to the wall and called that your fixed. . . Oh, no, let's finish it before I stop, before I get out of breath. What was the next one? The phrase.

TS: That's the end of it.

PB: "... It is man's individual existence which brings him suffering and yet it is this very existence which he holds as dear as life to him!"

AD: You feel that now? See, the theory here is quite different than, for instance, the Christian version. You know, that the creation of an entity, the soul and the body is, you know, a fiat, a fiat on the part of God. When he creates a soul the body comes with it and the two of them are conjoined and it's an eternal union. Nothing like this here is involved. This is a whole different concept. And it's really quite a paradox. That's why it's so beautiful. It remains a mystery, no matter how you try to get out of it. Even the sage suffers. You heard the story about the way Ramana used to groan at night? He was brought into, what do they call it, wakeful consciousness for that suffering. He never experienced wakeful consciousness until he got cancer. Alright, let's read another. I got to get some exercise. . .

AGREEMENT AT THE LEVEL OF I AM, DISAGREEMENT AT THE LEVEL OF PERSONALITY

PB: "The knowledge that no two human beings are alike refers to their bodies and minds. But this leaves out the part of their nature which is spiritual, which is found and experienced in deep meditation. In that,

the deepest part of their conscious being, the personal self vanishes; only consciousness-in-itself, thought-free, world-free, remains. This is the source of the “I” feeling, and it is exactly alike in the experience of all other human beings. This is the part which never dies, “where God and man may mingle.”” (22z-defc.a (11g/12/1) 22.3.380)

AD: Tim, would you read it again?

TS: Do you want me to read it a phrase at a time?

AD: Read it in French? No. (laughter). Yes, a phrase at a time.

PB: “The knowledge that no two human beings are alike refers to their bodies and minds. . . .”

AD: How about that? Would the chart prove that?

TS: Yes. I would think the basic meaning of the chart is that it is the mind-body complex or the . . . Yes, it is that complex of the two things and the ideas which constitute the mind and the body, the reason-principles which make up the mind-body for the person.

ME: When you’re using the word ‘mind’ here, you’re using it in what way? Would you equate it with the body-soul?

LR?: Psyche.

ME: That doesn’t help either. I want to know what you mean by ‘mind.’

TS: You don’t like the word ‘psyche’?

ME: No, that’s alright. I just wondered what you mean, in terms of. . . if you’re going to say that the individuality is coming from the side of mind-body complex, rather than from the side of soul. Because PB’s now going to say that it’s the same in everyone and yet we do have this concept of the variability of soul in a way, in other words you have developed souls, undeveloped souls, good souls, bad souls. . . That’s my question: how you’re going to use ‘mind’ in this quote.

VM: How about if you use mind using the astrological example as the collection and functioning and relationship of all those reason-principles which are delineated in the chart?

AD: Good. That would be good. That would be what we refer to as the ‘psyche.’

AH: How does the description of mind include the variations spoken of within the soul?

AD: How would that what? I didn’t hear that.

(AH repeats question.)

VM: I think the point of the quote is NOT to emphasize the variations within soul which we sometimes speak about, but more to talk about the more homogeneous aspect of soul, that it’s only at the level of soul that man can be unified with another man or seen as in essence at least similar. So I thought the emphasis in this quote was to head in that direction.

AH: But the other question persists.

VM: Oh, yes.

AD: Well, let's try answering it a piece at a time. Timothy?

(TS reads.)

PB: "The knowledge that no two human beings are alike refers to their bodies and minds. But this leaves out the part of their nature which is spiritual, which is found and experienced in deep meditation. . . ."

TS: The undivided mind?

AD: (gently) Yes, or the stillness, that quietness in you. That would be the spiritual part. Pure consciousness, if you want to call it that.

TS: Well, I wanted to ask: when he says "deep meditation" I take that to mean the third stage of meditation, or does he mean technically "meditation"?

AD: I would assume he means by that the silence that you get to (in meditation.) (Q: last words hard to hear.)

TS: The stillness. How would you relate that to the idea of the undivided mind, or the cosmic circuit?

AD: Well, that would be the next step, because the stillness in itself is not enough. It leads you to the spiritual part of yourself, or to the undivided mind.

RC: It seems there are two ways of interpreting that.

RG: To speak about what is different, say, from the chart, as the psyche, you could go to what is common in the chart to find what's common in all men, say the degrees. If you meditated deeply on the degrees you could come to what is common in the minds and bodies of all men, as their essence from the side of the World-Idea, or you could come to the stillness from the side of the soul and there too find what's common to all men.

AH: Doesn't that suggest that what is common cannot be at the level of mind and body?

RG: Yes, but there's a further stage, only of what's different in terms of mind and body. If you take the essences of the ideas as common or as the essential reasons of the World-Idea, independent of the minds and bodies that they're going to inhabit. I could see tracing it both objectively and subjectively.

LDm: Are you ever going to find two individuals with the same combination of planets and. . .

RG: Forget about the combination.

AD: I don't think I got your point yet, Richard. Would you speak up a little?

RG: Often when we talk, we talk about trying to find the knowledge of oneself, we say we contemplate the ideas that are in our chart, say. And that brings us to a certain kind of self-knowledge. And those degrees seem to be common to all men. The mixture, the combination of planets, may be different. But the essences themselves are not different. That if one man could find the essence of one degree, so could another. Or. . .

LR: All men contain. . .

RG: All 360. If you really deeply contemplated them, you would come to contact with that. It wouldn't be different for one man or another, particularly.

LR: He's (Q: not clear who 'He' is) asking could that be the spiritual nature? Is that it?

RG: That's one side. But the other side is coming to it from the soul side and saying that that's the stillness, and that's what's common to all men.

AD: That's the spiritual, the essence of the ideas which surround the earth's aura. Something that belongs to the earth, or the Lord of the earth. That's His soul-essence, not ours.

RG: So that's not self-knowledge.

AD: That's not self-knowledge, but through His soul-essence we do acquire, or we do become aware of ourselves. In other words, self-knowledge accrues through that process, alright, which is not something we can ignore. In other words, He's lending, or we're borrowing, these mnemonic deposits in the Lord's, you know, memory, or the development of our understanding and reasoning processes. Once we're done with that, we don't keep them. We evolve through them. And this would take place even on other planets. This is what I understand to be the development of the reason in the human being. That's why I pooh-pooh Guenon and all the Traditionalists who think that they know what reason's about. Because when we're speaking about reason, we're speaking about the development of the mentality of the human soul through the reason-principle of all the planets. And if they think that this is such a slight undertaking then let them have it their way. So, I wouldn't go to there, I would go to the soul as the essence that we all share in common. But even there I do so with reservations.

RG: The reservations being?

AD: The commonality of the soul among all, let's say, all of us. In the sense that if we speak of the soul of the sun as providing us with our selfhood, in that sense, I would speak about, you know, there being something common. But also I would keep to the individuality of the historical tendencies that have been built into that understanding.

RG: Which are on the side of the soul and not on the side of the World-Idea.

AD: It's a little complicated, to me.

PB: "In that, the deepest part of their conscious being, the personal self vanishes; only consciousness-in-itself, thought-free, world-free, remains. . . ."

AD: You see, and in that state I cannot claim that I enjoy this with others or it's my own. I cannot make any such claim. It would be utterly ridiculous. In that state, thought-free, being free of the world thought, I cannot make claims that this is a state I enjoy in common with others or that it is singular. All such qualifications are meaningless.

RG: Because there's nobody there to make the qualifications.

AD: Yes. There's no personal I. You know that fellow we were talking about, who has to see the practical and the theoretical together, who has to burrow down, who has to complain about this. That person isn't there, so he can't make any of these statements that we want to make. Go ahead.

PB: "The knowledge . . . remains. This is the source of the "I" feeling, and it is exactly alike in the experience of all other human beings. This is the part which never dies, "where God and man may mingle."'" (Q: entire para, not just last sentence, was read.)

TS: I wanted to ask, where he says "this source of the "I" is alike in the EXPERIENCE of all human beings" if that word 'experience' is important, that he's saying that it may not be alike in essence?

AD: I don't understand your point.

TS: When he says that the individual comes to their own spiritual nature and their own still mind, that that experience of the still mind is similar, it is alike, in the quality or character of that experience, but that still mind is not alike in essence, in its being. He doesn't say "this source is exactly alike for all human beings," he says it's "alike in the experience of all human beings."

AD: The way I interpret that, Tim, my experience of the principle of being, your experience of the principle of being: we can only compare analogically, we cannot compare actually. I cannot transmit to you my experience of being and you cannot do it either. So we can only speak about us having the experience of being, and this experience is. . . you know, the word is being transposed, it is analogically being transposed beyond the proper usage. But it's enough to give us an indication, I think of what he's saying here. In the experience of being, in the experience of pure consciousness the person comes to his I AM principle. And if he comes to his I AM principle, and the other person comes to his I AM principle, they can only speak about it in the sense that, uh, they can communicate it. I can't give you the taste of it. In other words this is kind of solipsism at a much higher level and I can't get out of it. I've had the experience of the I AM, you've had the experience of the I AM, we know what we're talking about when we communicate with each other but we can't give each other. . . the experience I had of my I AM, I can't give it to you, and you can't give me the one you had. So we can only speak about it as experience, in that sense.

AH: Was your question, Tim, about the essential truth of that experience being the same or different?

TS: Not the essential truth but the essential being. Is that one I AM, when he says that spiritual nature, is that spiritual nature part of the uniqueness of the individual? The summit of the uniqueness of the individual? Or is that spiritual nature that he speaks of here. . .

A SUGGESTION FOR PB CLASS FORMAT; MAKING AN OUTLINE OF PB'S WORK

AD: Basically what he's saying. . . this is where we'll all agree. There would be unanimity about the experiencing. But we won't agree about the way we understand the World-Idea. Each one will come up with a slightly different interpretation. Because he has to operate through the uniqueness of his personality. But in that realm, we'll agree. So we're brothers in Christ, but cross swords down here.

Listen, I think maybe now it might be an interesting experiment if you're willing to try. But it might be worthwhile to try something like this, as an experiment. You don't have to go through with it. A

couple people, like one person takes one of those notes, reads it, and explains it to the class according to what he thinks. And go around doing that, you know.

CdA: Each person. . .

AD: A person, you know.

AS: You're talking about the general format of the class.

AD: Yes, for a while, and those people who don't like to talk it'd be hard for them, but they should talk a little bit. And try to distribute the weight, you know? A lot of people are free-riders, free-loaders, what do they call them?

DD?: Strap-hangers.

AD: Yes, strap-hangers. It's just a suggestion.

TS: And could I ask you about your other suggestion, could we use Monday night to bring out some of the outline?

AD: Yes, but that may be. . . you know you ought to make like the last of the thing, because to make an outline of PB's work is going to be quite an undertaking. I mean, you have to be satisfied with imperfections in the beginning and gradually. . . It can be done. I think he's very explicit about a lot of things. Much more so than others are. Much clearer certainly. But it certainly would be a benefit for all of us to be able to put it out, in front of us, where we could see "Well, this is basically the outline that he's working with."

TS: Could we take a category, like the quest or mentalism, and say, if you were going to try to explain PB's meaning of mentalism, what quotes and what ideas would you gather together to explain this?

AD: Yes. So wouldn't you do that first before like you tried to do the outline?

TS: Yes. Do each one separately.

AD: So that would be the way. You get an idea what he means by this category, that category, then after a while when you try to make out an outline for him, you know, you have all that behind you or at least you're familiar enough with it to pull it, to reinforce what you think the outline should be like.

TS: So we would be using the quotes or the paras to illustrate the ideas, rather than trying to get the ideas out of the paras, which we're doing in this class.

AD: And this way, I think also, if we follow something like this, and it doesn't have to be forever, you know? Everything could be experimental. You could try it for awhile. It will benefit most of us to be able to talk a little bit and expound our ideas and bring them out into the open. Because I could say that part of the benefit, you know, I mean fringe benefits? Get the books out and understand what he's saying.

LD: You think that everybody going around and reading a quote, it should be on one topic?

AD: No, I think they should be free in the beginning. Later on you could kind of corner them and say "Oh, got to zero in on this topic" but in the beginning to help them loosen up, you know some people

don't like to talk. Like if you ask Sera, for instance, "Pick something" she won't come next week. (laughter) So allow them to do it their way. Anyway, think about it.

TS: Having thought about it, next week bring your quotes. (laughter)

AD: Well, no. Next week then you'll have to decide. If you think it's a good idea, then pick a few people. . .

LR: We think it's a good idea.

AD: Oh, you're so quick. Because I'd like to see this conversation about the ego go on. It's very important.

CdA: Maybe people can pick out ego quotes.

AD: Like the quote we just read. It's so paradoxical but it's reality. It's what we have to live with. I often used to think about these people who'd be kneeling at the cross on the one hand, getting into all kinds of sin and suffering, and on the other hand refusing to give it up. I used to wonder, why are we like that? I had to wait until I read that quote. Thank you.

VM: Let me get this clear. Next week we're all going to. . .

AD: Next week some more ego quotes.

VM: Pick a few favorite quotes on the ego, and. . .

AD: And make selections as to who's going to read some quotes, that they'll explain how they understand it.

LD: So this week we read two quotes. (laughter)

AD: It's not quantity. As long as you understand. Sometimes one quote tells me everything about you.

LD?: . . . He's(?) all for staying on one quote.

AD: I am. Don't worry about the time. It's the best use of time you could make. I've been finding out how crazy the world is since I've been sick. You're making very good use of your time. (joking:) Only the doctor over there is not making good use of it. Ok. Good night.

Students: Good night.

[Audio File 1984 0711b Ends]

(Q: Without hearing the tape, just reading, does the tremendous joy of this class come across?)