

# TRI-KAYA

## THE NATURE OF PRIMORDIAL REALITY

by

John Morgan Newbern

an

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# TRI-KAYA

## The Nature of Primordial Reality

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# Foreword

After almost thirty years of reflection upon a subject that was a prime focus of study during my time as a student of the Tibetan teacher, Lama Tarthang Tulku Rimpoche, I have completed the following pages. These pages contain, in as clear and concise language as I am capable, an analysis of that subject.

I am not able to deliver to the reader an exact word by word description of Rimpoche's teaching as it was imparted to me, due to the confidentiality that is the tradition of the Nyingma oral teachings. However, I can deliver to the reader my own description and analysis, in my own words, of the essence and magnitude of that subject.

I should, perhaps, apologize to Rimpoche, as well as to others, who may have hoped that I would have completed this writing long ago. I have been reluctant to attempt this effort, as I have felt that I might appear to be improperly projecting myself into the realm of some of my most respected friends and teachers who are successful writers. I might also add that it took some time for me to feel that I had fully absorbed what I had learned, and then to be able to present it in such a way that it is generally comprehensible.

My Buddhist name, as given by Rimpoche to me at the completion of my initiation, is Pema Dorje. I am not a Lama. I am just an ordinary person who was fortunate enough to have been exposed to extraordinary spiritual elements early in life. As a child I was raised into a culture whose concept of reality is on a totally different course, by about 180 degrees, from the culture of old Tibet. Perhaps if it were not for the wisdom of my late father, J.Morgan Newbern Sr., who shared with me his interest in other cultures of history, I would never have even begun this line of research. It is also important to state here that had I not known Rimpoche, and thereby not been able to relate my experience to him, I would never have been secure enough in the knowledge of the experience to be able to discuss it here.

There is an old saying that asks that we not confuse the pointing finger with the moon. While the pointing finger may be important, for those seeking a view of that magnificent orb, it is more important that we notice that to which the finger points. In the same way, the agenda of this book is not so much to tell the reader about Buddhism as it is to help the reader become more aware of certain truths and thus allow the reader to use whatever terms that they may feel comfortable in using when identifying those

truths.

It is my sincere hope that those who read these pages will be able to at least comprehend, if not experience, to the fullest, this ancient concept. It is my sincere prayer that this experience will in some way help us find true peace on earth.

## Acknowledgments

First of all I would like to thank my spiritual teachers: a Jewish mystic, an Anglican Zen master, and a Tibetan lama. I should also thank those who set me off on this journey, the people and ancient culture of the Maya.

It was the Maya who's ancient mysteries first penetrated my curiosity, setting my search for the root of the truth in motion. Obeisance, Yum Hunab K'u!

It was the late Earl Simon, a Sefardic Jewish mystic living with his wife in Tampa, Florida, who was the first to recognize my search. This Jew spoke of the Tao, and of Buddhist teachings, letting me know that "It" has many names, and that I should not let the mis-understandings of others keep me from my quest. Thank you, Earl Simon.

It was Alan Watts who, before his passing, showed us all that, yes, the Buddha can appear as a stodgy Englishman with a "jazzy" sense of humor. Thank you so much, Alan. It was Alan who played the most evolved version of the game of "Tag". To quote him directly, "You're It!"

My endless thanks to my Buddhist teacher, Tarthang Tulku, Rimpoche, who appeared as a mirror before me, showing me my own foolish doubt, and giving me a spiritual "place-to-hang-my-hat". But most of all thank you, Rimpoche, for bringing the Nyingma teachings to the west. I would also like to thank Eric Brandebury (Vajra Bakti)

for keeping the prayer wheels turning.

And thank you Stan McDaniel, for a number of things: an introduction to Alan Watts; all of that driving that you did during those days; your belief in what I was up to; your musical assistance; teaching me how to use this computer in order to facilitate this writing; your contributions to my library; and your assistance in putting the finishing touches on this book. I'm sure I missed something. Thank you Stan.

Last but certainly not least, I must add, if it was not for the diamond-like support of my beloved Kiyochan, this book may have been an impossibility. Domo arigato gozaimasu, Kiyochan.

J.M.N.

[Introduction](#)

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# Introduction

by

**Stanley V. McDaniel**

After more than thirty years of practicing, studying, and teaching the esoteric traditions of east and west, I have come to the conclusion that of all systems of spiritual development the most profound and direct is the *Vajrayana*, or "Diamond Way" of Tibetan Buddhism. The Vajrayana tradition is also closely related to some of the most powerful and significant contributions of western thought. Since it has been my lifelong endeavor to show how the esoteric systems of the east relate to certain elements of western philosophy, it is with particular pleasure that I now encounter the present volume.<sup>(1)</sup>

Authored by my long-time friend John Newbern, *TRI-KAYA, The Nature of Primordial Reality* is a concise and highly readable unfolding of the analogies and possible connections that exist between the Vajrayana doctrine of the "Three Bodies" and the major philosophical and religious perspectives of western thought. "TRI-KAYA", however, is more than a treatise on Tibetan metaphysics and Western science, religion, and philosophy. The special thing about this volume is those bright moments of clarity, when we are given the author's personal insight into an admittedly difficult subject. At these times, when Mr. Newbern illustrates some particular abstract concept with a down-to-earth, practical example, it is like a flash of light illuminating what might otherwise be an obscure landscape: We catch a glimpse of how deeply the author himself has understood and put into practice the teaching which he now so eloquently transmits to his readers.

In six short chapters, ending with a vivid depiction of the experience of Buddhist meditation, "TRI-KAYA" takes us on a tour of ancient belief systems, past the sweep of philosophic thought from the early Greeks to Kant, and on to the cutting edge of modern atomic theory. Our guide on this tour is the Tibetan Buddhist doctrine of the Tri-Kaya, or "three bodies of reality," which Mr. Newbern has chosen as his lens, bringing into focus a universal perspective on those vast panoramas of human understanding.

And yet "TRI-KAYA" is a deeply personal document, speaking as it does directly from one seeker of truth to another. Many of the things said here have been said before, but it is the personal touch, and the unfolding of the concept of the Tri-Kaya in a cross-cultural perspective, that lends this volume its particular flavor, and its value. For those who may have never encountered this topic before, it may seem as a primer; and for those who have a narrower, doctrinal understanding of the subject, it may open new modes of comprehension.



## **Triplicity, "Primordial Reality" and Symbol**

The central theme of this book is *triplicity* -- the significance of "threeness" as it occurs in the science and spirituality of the world. It may be useful to the reader, then, to discuss briefly the general symbolic nature of "threeness" in relation to human self-realization. What I will say here is, of course, from my own perspective. In a book as rich with ideas and connections as is "TRI-KAYA", the readers may find other thoughts and interpretations. Yet a general view of the many triads found in esoteric doctrine may be a useful guide.

"TRI-KAYA" speaks to the question of "The Nature of Primordial Reality." The author contends, in keeping with Buddhist teaching, that a "realization" of this "Primordial Reality" is at the same time *self-realization*, which means the fulfillment of the ultimate goal of each individual human existence.

Now speaking of a "Primordial Reality" sounds either physical (Primordial Reality = ancient cosmic matter) or metaphysical (Primordial Reality = the underlying basis of all time and space). Surely this seems a tough path to follow -- to have to grasp all the history of the physical universe, or to encompass in one's limited understanding the cause of all existence, as a precondition for self-fulfillment! If we fancy that such an accomplishment is actually within our capacity, we would seem to be engaging in a megalomaniacal form of ego-inflation; yet if we have such a dim view of our individual potential as to restrict forever its relation to the universe as a whole, we may be guilty of quite the opposite error, that is to say failing to give our potential the full credit it is due.

The answer to this seeming dilemma, I would propose, lies in understanding the nature of *Symbol* in its relation to personal self-fulfillment. When I say "Symbol" here (with the capital "S"), I refer not to arbitrary icons where one kind of mark simply substitutes for some idea or other (the way a picture of a cigarette in a circle with a slash through it means "No Smoking") but rather to certain types of universal images which, if they are properly perceived, can function as the triggering catalyst for psychological, psychic, and spiritual growth.

From my particular perspective, the triplicities discussed in "TRI-KAYA" are best understood not primarily as representations of a physical or metaphysical "Primordial Reality," but rather as differing forms taken by a universal Symbol, whose capacity to trigger self-realization under the right circumstances is well established. On that view, sincerely dwelling upon, reading about, and practicing yoga based on that universal Symbol has the inevitable result of expanding our sense of who and what we are, toward the goal of ultimate personal fulfillment. If the Tri-Kaya is such a Symbol, or a central element in a system of such Symbols, then "realization" of the Tri-Kaya means coming to fulfillment through the Tri-Kaya symbol as a means. What this Symbol may represent in relation to physical or metaphysical reality remains an open question.

## **Threefold Patterns in Esoteric Systems**

There are of course many images, intellectual, visual, and auditory, that have been known to serve in this "triggering" capacity over the course of history. For the most part, these belong to the spiritual traditions known as esoteric (sometimes called the "secret traditions"), since in many ways the non-esoteric religions seek more to provide a palliative for the woes of the world rather than to present believers with the more strenuous demands of inner change. In these latter systems, the show of "belief" in some doctrine takes the place of a truly transforming yoga, with the result that a kind of pervasive hypocrisy or self-deception prevails. It is to prevent this negative result that the great Symbol systems of esoteric practice have been employed throughout history -- including the Tri-Kaya of Vajrayana Buddhism.

The Symbols of esoteric spiritual practice are closely interrelated, but one of the most commonly encountered is that of triplicity, in a multitude of forms and under a multitude of names. A simple way of dividing up a whole process is to distinguish three elements. In order of time, beginning/middle/end. In order of hierarchy, bottom, middle, top. Again, given any two points, objects, or events, the relation between them may be identified as a "third thing." Threefold patterns like these are found almost universally among esoteric systems in particular. To list just a few, taken from a variety of sources (Fig 1):

1	2	3
<b>Matter</b>	<b>Mind</b>	<b>Life</b>
<b>Body</b>	<b>Mind</b>	<b>Heart</b>
<b>Body</b>	<b>Spirit</b>	<b>Soul</b>
<b>Earth</b>	<b>Heaven</b>	<b>Humanity</b>
<b>Earth</b>	<b>Heaven</b>	<b>"Interspace of Air"</b>
<b>Matter</b>	<b>Spirit</b>	<b>Energy</b>
<b>Tamas (Inertia)</b>	<b>Sattva (Intellect)</b>	<b>Rajas (Activity)</b>
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Mental</b>	<b>Astral</b>
<b>Physical</b>	<b>Mental</b>	<b>Emotional</b>

**Figure 1. A Variety of Triplicities**

Although a simple division into beginning, middle and end may seem to have no particular significance as Symbol, some of the triplicities listed in the table above have their places in esoteric systems of

considerable efficacy. The division "Earth, Heaven, Interspace of Air" appears in the ancient Rig-Veda; "Tamas, Sattva, Rajas" in a key image in the Upanishad and Bhagavad-Gita; and "Body, Spirit, Soul" is accorded a place in Rosicrucian texts. In Norse mythology, too, we find a dynamic depiction of the three fold division into "Earth, Heaven, Humanity" as we read of the great ash tree Yggdrasil: In the Earth at its roots lies the cosmic serpent, symbol of materiality; at its peak rests the World Eagle, symbol of the Heavens and the Sun; while in the mid-region, among the branches, roam "four stags" indicative of the four directions of the Earth's surface upon which humans dwell.<sup>(2)</sup>

What is it about triplicity, which is the central theme of Newbern's book "TRI-KAYA", that has particular power as symbol? The action of Symbol is less on an intellectual plane than on that of intuition, yet something may be said about the Symbol of triplicity that may be helpful.

### **Dualism and the Healing Power of Symbol**

To answer this question we begin by identifying, as the greatest impediment to self-realization, a way of experiencing the world that is generally called *dualism*. Dualism is the conviction, at such a deep level that it cannot be thrown off by casual effort, that fundamentally the world is in fragments, torn apart, with mind on one side and matter on the other; with "spirit" here and "flesh" there; with "self" close by and with "other" at so great a distance that nothing can bridge the gulf.

One of the most common and devastating manifestations of this dualism is the inflexible belief that one's own essential being is in the final analysis utterly unrelated to anything else, either to the "external world" or to other human beings. According to this view, all apparent relationships are actually the result of a kind of self-delusion merely for the purpose of getting along in the world: When it comes down to the final analysis, we are essentially and fundamentally alone. Not only that, but even our intellect, emotion, and intuition are unrelated and often at war with one another.

Another name for this phenomenon is "extreme subjectivism," according to which we exist solely within our own private universe into which others not only never intrude, but never *can* intrude. Nor can we intrude upon others. Compassion, empathy, and love become impossibilities. This perspective puts one in an impregnable safe, but ultimately lonely, place. This kind of metaphysical isolation of the individual is at the basis of the philosophical viewpoint called Existentialism, popular in the 1960's and the source of numerous plays and novels. It is the basis for the Existentialist claim that in the final analysis life and consciousness are "absurd."

In such a world, a religion that offers "grace" or salvation coming from outside, as a reward for good behavior, may seem the only way out. Self-realization, inner growth, and the kind of effort required for such growth, are seen as irrelevant. What takes their place is adherence to an externally imposed rigid moral law, in exchange for which one may be "saved" -- that is, taken up into the Kingdom of Heaven by supernatural means, where we are at last united with others and may enjoy a universal harmony denied in the present world.

In my view dualism, as a way of experiencing the world and one's personal relation to it, is in fact a *pathological condition* -- a sickness, if you will, that has its roots not in some bacterial or hereditary malfunction but rather in the nature of evolution of consciousness itself, a kind of "necessary evil."<sup>(3)</sup> On that view, dualism constitutes a stage in the process of evolutionary development, which can only be overcome by further evolution, or growth in the direction of full human potential. Emotional expressions of "belief" in the power of an external God who will save us from ourselves, however heartfelt, can never take the place of true inner development.

Thus a Symbol such as the Tri-Kaya is a healing force. One of the significant things about any truly effective Symbol is that often those imbued with the dualistic perspective find Symbol abhorrent. They may, for example, associate various elements of Symbol with the Devil. In some depictions the Devil even carries a three-pronged spear, the Trident. This "fear of Symbol" stems, I believe, from a deep-seated refusal to take responsibility for one's personal self development, and therefore to avoid any cultural phenomenon that threatens the false security inherent in the dualistic framework. In sharp contrast we find in Mouni Sadhu's volume on Hermetic Magic a "prescription" for constructing a three-pronged spear with which to "fight off" demons -- a symbolic representation of the threefold symbol as a power of healing.<sup>(4)</sup>

Indeed, the force of the Tri-Kaya (or equivalent manifestations of Symbol) is primarily at an intuitive level, leading to an intuitive aversion on the part of those influenced by dualism, and demanding on the other hand an opening of spiritual intuition on the part of the seeker. Intellectual understanding is a valuable tool in the healing process, but only if the Symbol is also encountered through intuitive experience, that is to say, through some form of yoga or concentrated practice. This is why Newbern's book ends with an account of such practice.

It is, in other words, both *knowledge* of the Symbol and *experience* of the Symbol that work together to heal the wound of dualism. One must be open to the Symbol in both ways to achieve the desired result. In the case of esoteric "triads," *knowing* the Symbol means understanding its many layers of meaning; *experiencing* the Symbol means activation, and recognition, of that meaning in meditation as well as in the activity of ordinary living.

So what is that meaning, and what is that experience? To put it in a word, the meaning of triplicities (as esoteric Symbol) is that they are representations of the process of *synthesis*. And the experience of that Symbol is activation of the process of synthesis within oneself. What, in turn, is synthesis? Synthesis is the creative process, along the line of evolutionary development. Speaking analytically, synthesis consists in the *bringing together* of those very opposites whose relationship is refused by the dualistic view.

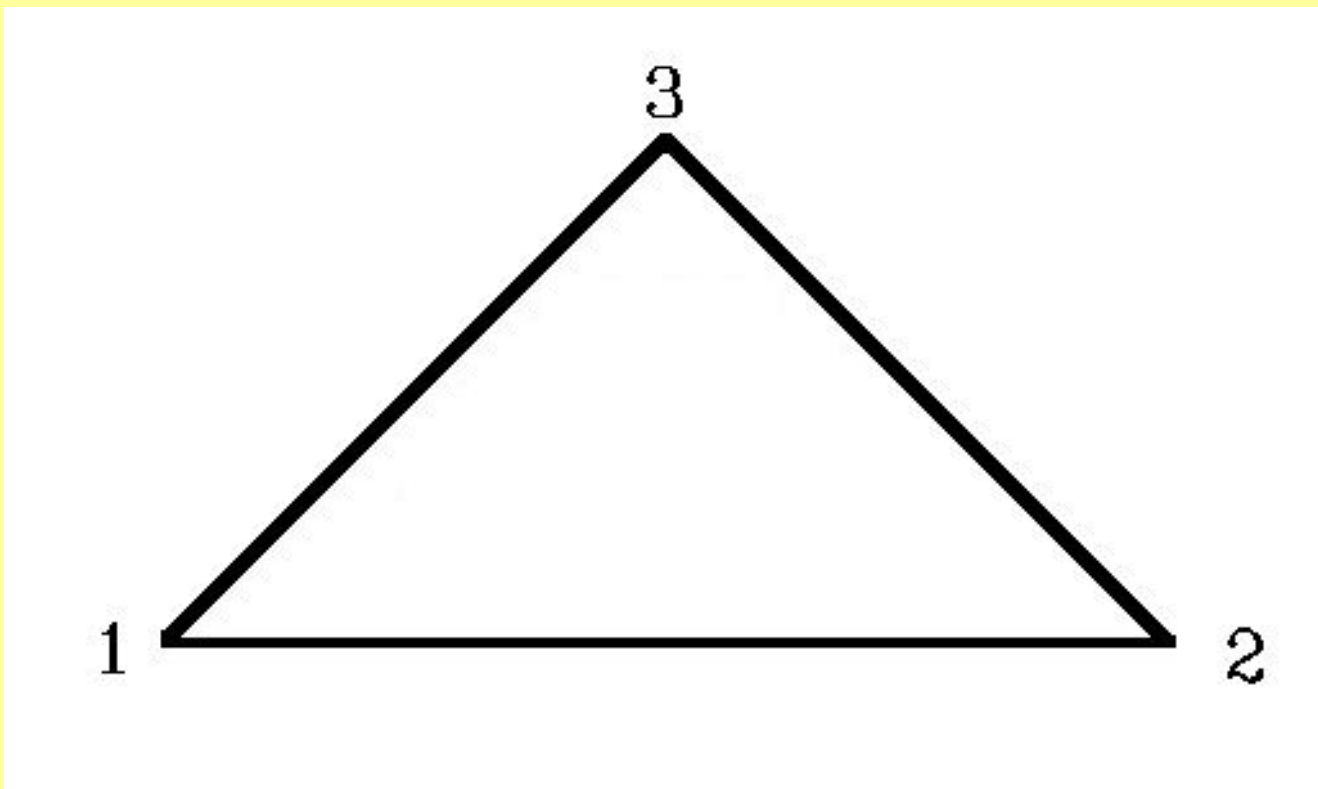
### **The Esoteric Meaning of the Triangle**

The esoteric, or Symbolic, meaning of the triad is naturally present in the form of the appropriate visual

symbol, which is usually (but not always) a triangle. In Mouni Sadhu's treatise on the Hermetic Philosophy of the Tarot, mentioned above, we find the following explanation, accompanied by illustrations of triangles.

"In all fields of knowledge we find binaries, or combinations of two opposite poles or planes ... In most of these cases there is a possibility of what, in Hermetism, is termed a neutralizing of the binaries, which simply means the birth of a third or intermediary element ... the TWO merging together, with the help of the THIRD to form a UNIT."[\(5\)](#)

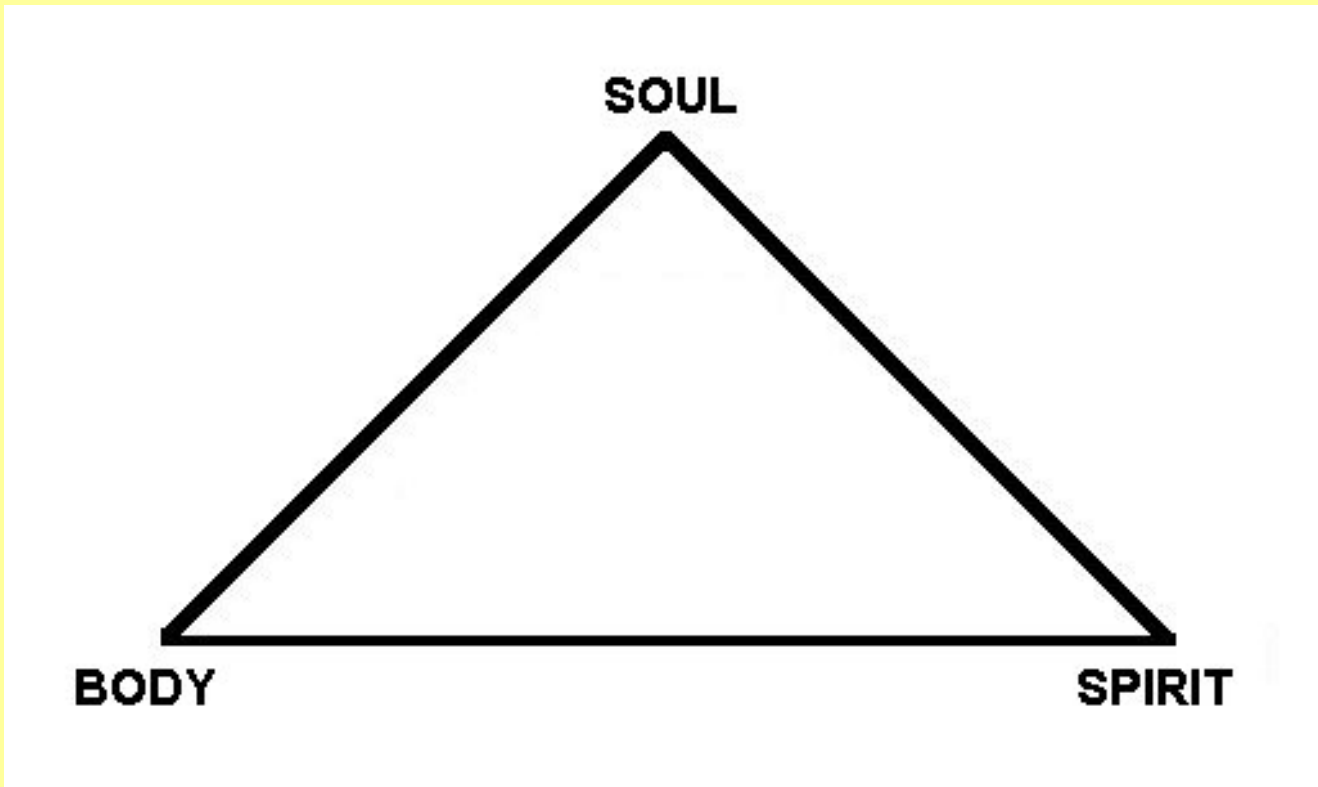
Sadhu goes on to explain that while there are minor binaries (such as light and shadow, that may be neutralized in half-shadow) certain other binaries, particularly Spirit and Matter, Life and Death, Good and Evil, etc. are major or "basic" binaries. The resolution of these binaries constitutes the "Great Mysteries" that are the central concern of all genuine spiritual practices of initiation, ritual, and self-realization.



**Figure 2. The Triangle of Synthesis**

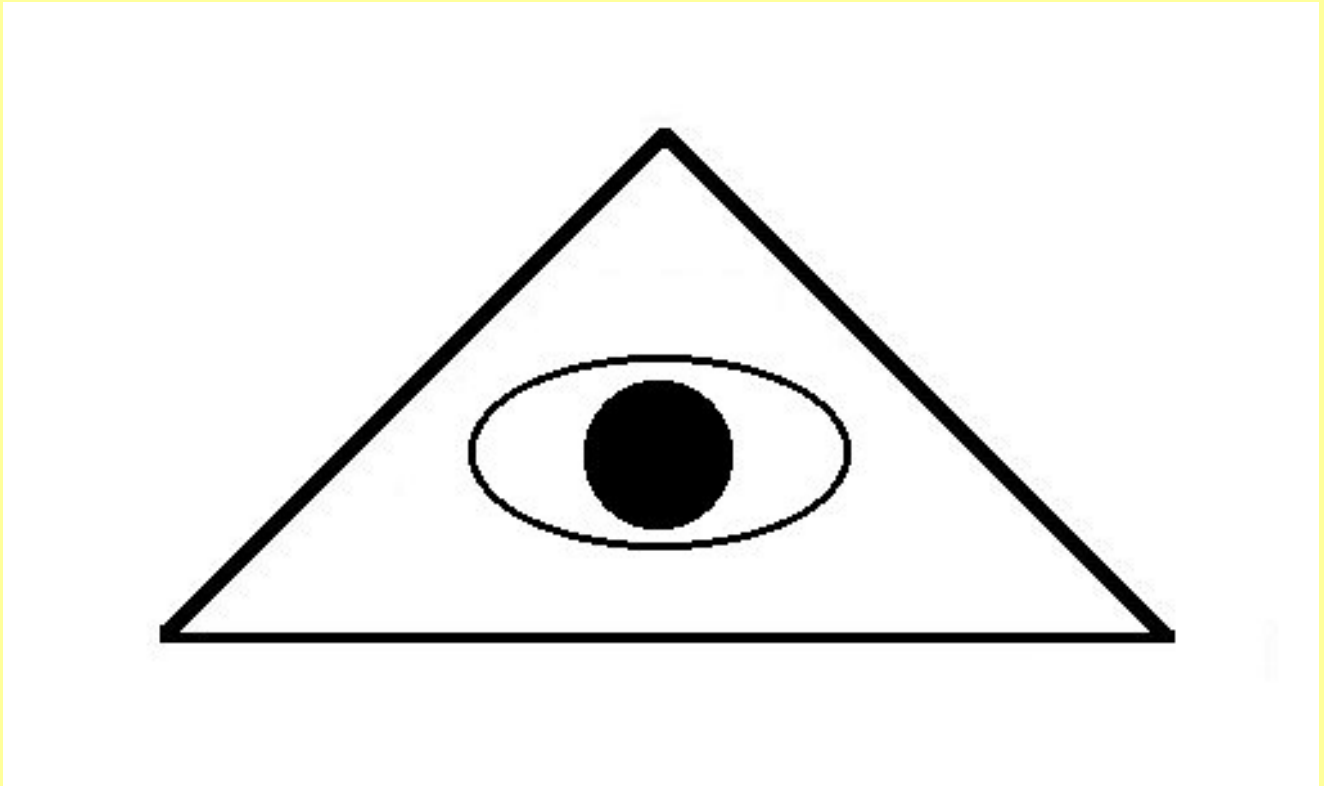
As a visual image, the points of the triangle are generally identified as the two poles of the binary, with the reconciling factor or "third thing" positioned between them. The simplest form identifies the two poles by the numbers 1 and 2, with 3 for the reconciling factor (fig. 2). Using the symbolic association of

the numbers 1, 2, 3, we recall Fig. 1, where the elements in various esoteric triplicities were in fact arranged in the appropriate manner. Thus we might label the elements of the triangle of synthesis as shown in Fig. 3 (to give but one example).



**Figure 3. Synthesis Applied to the Binary Body/Spirit**

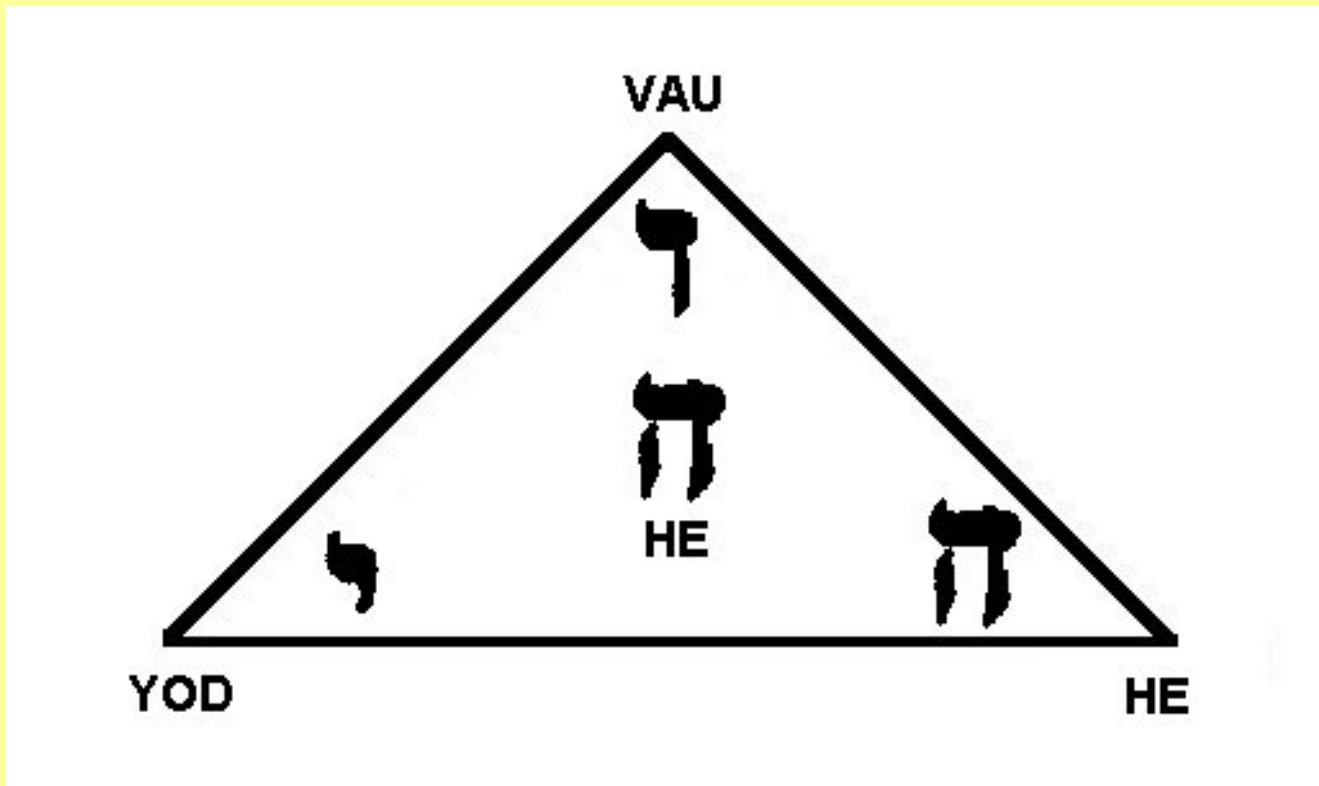
But the triangle as a Symbol is not a static image. It represents rather a dynamic process, through which reconciliation of opposites takes place. The reason this process is called "synthesis" is because upon reconciliation something new appears. In Sadhu's commentary above the result of the action of the "third thing" is a fourth factor, which he refers to as "Unity." What emerges from the triangle and goes beyond it toward a higher experience is this fourth thing. There are several ways of representing the "fourth thing" in a visual symbol. Generally it is placed at the center of the triangle. Because it represents an opening, or increase, in consciousness, a common representation is an *eye* at the center of the triangle (Fig. 4)



**Figure 4. The Eye of Intuitive Creation**

The triangle in the Hermetic-Kabbalistic tradition places the letters of the "Name of God" **YAHWEH** (Jehovah) at the key points. The letters are **Yod-He-Vau-He** or "**YHVH**". The first two represent the polarity **Yod-He**, while the third letter **Vau** is the reconciliation or "neutralizing" factor. Generally the **Yod** is thought of as the initiating or "male" element of the polarity and the first **He** as the responding matrix or "female" element. Their marriage occurs by the action of the **Vau**, while resulting unity will be the second **He**, placed at the center of the triangle (Fig. 5).[\(6\)](#)





**Figure 5. Synthesis of Yod-He by Vau.**

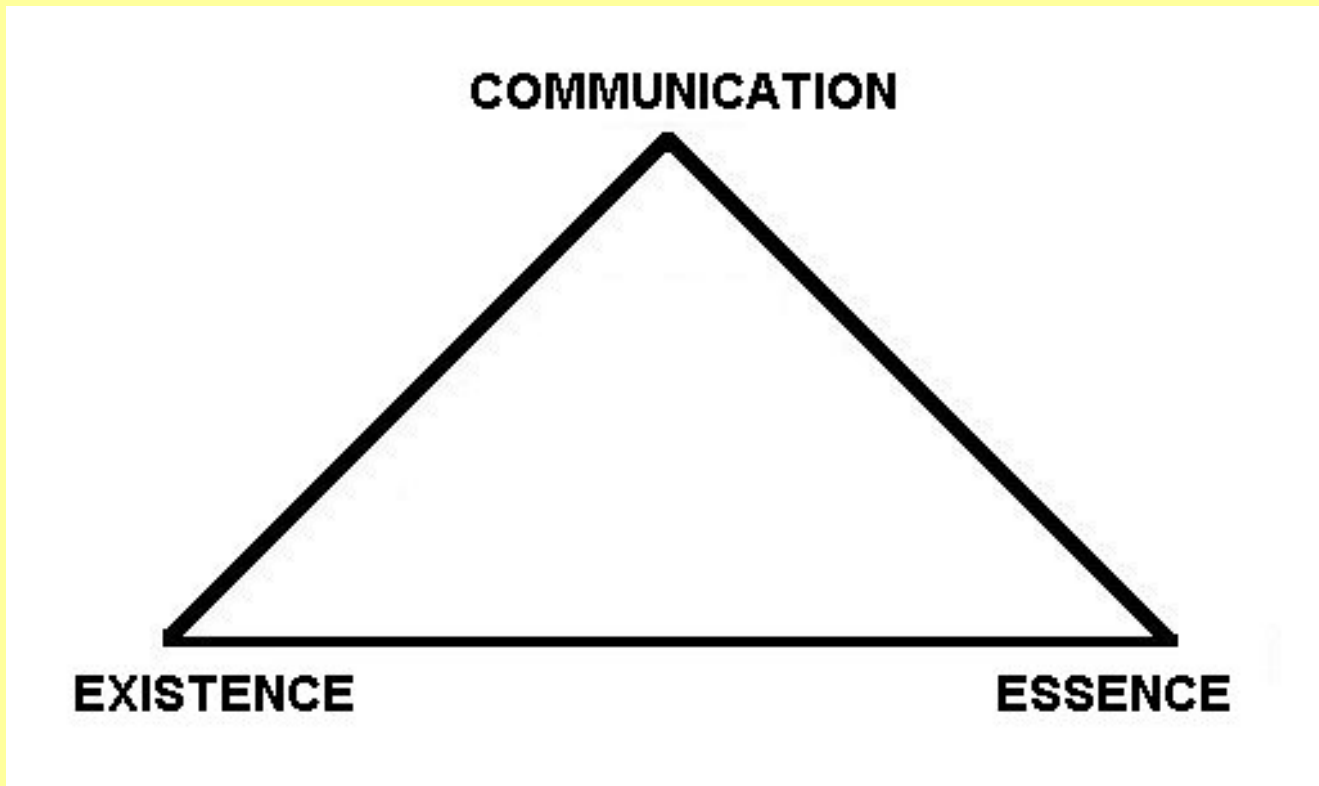
The triangle of synthesis, however, appears in a multitude of ways -- not all of them as an explicit triangular image. In the Sadhu book, the trident, with which we are to "ward off evil influences," has on its two outermost prongs, Yod and He. The middle or mediating prong is engraved with Vau; and on the far opposite end of the handle is the second He.

Another common guise in which the triangle of synthesis appears is in the body of a text, with no accompanying visual image. In a text by the western philosopher John Dewey, whose views are closely similar to Vajrayana thought, we find the following passage:

"There is a natural bridge that joins the gap between existence and essence; namely communication, language, and discourse. Failure to acknowledge the presence and operation of natural interaction in the form of communication creates a gulf between existence and essence."[\(7\)](#)

In this case, the binary existence/essence is reconciled through "natural interaction" or relationship in and through the activity of communication. Underlying such passages is the image of the triangle of synthesis (Fig. 6).[\(8\)](#)





**Figure 6. Synthesis of Existence and Essence by Communication.**

### **The Doctrine of the Tri-Kaya as a Symbolic Triad**

How can we relate these symbolic ideas to the doctrine of the Tri-Kaya, as reported by Newbern? The three elements, or "bodies" (also called "principles") of the Tri-Kaya are *Nirmanakaya*, *Sambhogakaya*, *Dharmakaya*, translated roughly as follows: Nirmanakaya is the "realm of action, individuality, materialization or embodiment," Sambhogakaya is the "realm of pure form or pure mental perception," while Dharmakaya represents the "primordial law and cause of all things."<sup>(9)</sup>

In striving to put these very abstract symbolic notions, drawn from esoteric Tibetan Buddhism, into a framework more understandable to the western reader, Newbern refers to the three principals as the "Each-Thing," the "All-Thing" and the "No-Thing." This terminology, like any attempt to translate expressions that are fundamentally indigenous to a particular complex system of thought, has its advantages as well as its disadvantages.

The disadvantage is that it may conduce to oversimplification. The advantage, that it gives a reasonable "hook" upon which the western reader may hang his or her progressive understanding of the subject,

would appear to outweigh the disadvantage. After all, this book is not intended as a comprehensive detailed account of Tibetan Buddhism, but rather as an introduction for the westerner to a certain set of universal ideas. By comparing and contrasting the doctrine of the Tri-Kaya with a long history of ideas in both east and west, that modest aim is rewardingly fulfilled.

If we are to apply the notions discussed above regarding the triangle of synthesis to the Tri-Kaya as represented by Newbern, the three elements fall into place rather well. In various esoteric traditions the two poles of what Sadhu calls the "Great Mystery" are represented as the unity of complete consciousness on the one hand, and the multiplicity of material existence on the other -- that is to say, the poles of unity and diversity. Clearly the appropriate analogue in the Tri-Kaya is the polarity of the Sambhogakaya and the Nirmanakaya, or as Newbern calls it, the "All-Thing" and the "Each-Thing."

This analysis leaves the "No-Thing" as the third or reconciling factor. A descriptive phrase such as "the primordial law and cause of all things" serves only to give one aspect of what is actually a very subtle concept. Newbern identifies the "No-Thing" with the Buddhist concept of *sunyata*, or "The Void." One may well ask, particularly if thinking of "The Void" as the void of empty physical space, how such a "void" can have the role of reconciliation? After all, characterization of the Dharmakaya as "the primordial law and cause of all things" does not suggest any immediate connection between the Dharmakaya and Voidness. Indeed, if nothing can come from nothing (as seems reasonably logical), how can "all things" or "each thing" come from "no thing"?

The answer to this question lies in the subtlety of the concept of "The Void" and its role in the process of creation and self-realization. We read in Govinda, discussing *sunyata*, the following.

"The fact that each experience points beyond itself and can therefore not be defined or limited as something that exists in itself, but only in relationship to other experiences ... is circumscribed in the concept of *sunyata*, the emptiness of all determinations, the non-absoluteness, the infinite relationship of all experience."[\(10\)](#)

And here, as in the passage from John Dewey quoted earlier, the reconciling factor of *sunyata* is associated with the dynamics of relationship.

*Sunyata*, we are given to understand, represents the Buddhist doctrine of the insubstantiality of all experience, which is not to say that the things of experience are unreal, but rather to say that nothing in the universe of experience is "bolted down" as it were to any single interpretation of reality, but is always to be understood in terms of dynamic relations and potential relations.[\(11\)](#) This is the "void" - or one might say *openness* - which provides room for change and growth through the reconciliation of opposites: a "void" whose existence is denied by the dualistic framework.

Consider, for example, the triangle of synthesis seen as a representation of quite common, but inherently

miraculous, events of daily life. I refer to the process of *learning*, of gaining new capacities and expanding one's relation to others and to the world through the achievement of skills and knowledge by means of effort, concentration, and above all by letting go of one's old restrictions and perspectives in favor of new skills and new knowledge.<sup>(12)</sup> *Learning*, moving beyond one's initial state to a wider one, takes place every day among the commonest of individuals. Yet it is the miracle of synthesis, whenever and wherever it occurs. It is easy to conceive of the metaphysical reality that accommodates and facilitates this miracle as the "void" -- the source and matrix of all freedom of movement.

In his definitive book on Vajrayana concepts for the western reader, "*Time, Space and Knowledge*", Lama Tarthang Tulku uses the term "Great Space" as a name for sunyata. The Lama describes a hierarchy of increasingly accommodating "spaces" culminating in "Great Space" which "accommodates" all differences. In his discussion, the Lama specifically attributes to "Great Space" the role of reconciliation. In "Great Space," he states, "Dichotomies like 'existence' and 'nonexistence,' 'object' and 'space,' become resolved."<sup>(13)</sup>

Reflecting this idea of Great Space as "accommodating" by allowing the possibility of relationship, Newbern also gives the "No-Thing" the role of reconciliation in Chapter One of "TRI-KAYA."

"Just as a flock of birds is many birds but one flock, the All-Thing is like the many birds as a flock. The Each-Thing is like the birds as many different birds. But it is the shining heavens above (the No-Thing) that give support and definition to both the flock and each individual bird."

### **Physics, Metaphysics, or Psychology?**

In "*The Phenomenon of Man*," paleontologist and Jesuit philosopher Pierre Teilhard makes the following assertion regarding the material universe:

"The cosmos in which man finds himself caught up constitutes, by reason of the unimpeachable wholeness of its whole, a system, a totem, and a quantum: a system by its plurality, a totem by its unity, a quantum by its energy; all three within a boundless contour."<sup>(14)</sup>

We are immediately struck by the clear analogy between Teilhard's triangle of synthesis (plurality, unity, energy) and the Tri-Kaya: Each-Thing, All-Thing, No-Thing. Does Teilhard's conception of the aspects of material reality indicate that the triad of the Tri-Kaya is something more than "Symbol?" Viewing the Tri-Kaya in its role as active Symbol for the process of self-realization gives rise naturally to the question "Are we speaking entirely of a psychological reality, or also of the ground for all physical and even metaphysical reality?"

Or again, is the relation between psychological "space" and physical "space" such that the very phrasing of this question is repeating an error, an illusion that the two are somehow mutually exclusive? Is Symbol *merely* psychological or does its meaning impinge on the fundamental nature of reality? If we read more carefully in Teilhard, we find that his point, in the passage cited above, is that without an understanding of the threefold aspect of the material universe, "the history of consciousness and its place in the world remain incomprehensible." Thus in his view consciousness and the threefold nature of physical reality are inseparably locked together.

On this question of the physical reality of the Tri-Kaya, Newbern states early on that Identifying the No-Thing with physical space is "perhaps mistaken," but he says "perhaps," and in Chapter Three considers what relation there may be between the notion of a perfect vacuum in physical space, and the accommodating void of the No-Thing.

Put another way, this question asks whether the idea of a "primordial reality" does in fact refer to some originative (and therefore "primordial") element of all creation, or only to a psychological factor whose causality applies only to the mind. If we couple this question with the idea of synthesis, it would appear that the triangle of synthesis expresses not only the reconciliation of opposites through a "third thing" -- that being *sunyata* as energy, as relationship, and as accommodation -- but also the *generation* of these seeming-opposites out of the void itself: synthesis in reverse. From that point of view, the No-Thing is the *generative source of all creation*.

In "*Time, Space and Knowledge*" Lama Tarthang Tulku clearly implies that Great Space, while of fundamentally psychological consequence, is also the final term in a hierarchy of increasingly accommodating "spaces" of which our commonly accepted physical space is a member. He makes the provocative comment: "We can see ... the possibility that our familiar reality is an expression or variation of another, more unified reality, but has unfolded in such a way as to give great significance to dualistic categories."[\(15\)](#)

In his penetrating and insightful introduction to the "*Tibetan Book of the Dead*," Carl Jung posits a unification of both psychological, physical, and metaphysical perspectives. Jung says "It is the [psyche] which, by the divine creative power inherent in it, makes the metaphysical assertion; it posits the distinction between metaphysical entities. Not only is it the condition of all metaphysical reality, it is that reality."[\(16\)](#)

This view, that in the final analysis and at the highest levels of realization mind and the physical universe are a single reality (and perhaps this is what the expression "primordial reality" really means), is a natural and inevitable final term in any philosophy that is unswervingly non-dualistic. Thus while Great Space is not "space," at the same time, in a subtle way, it must also *be* space. Lama Tarthang Tulku is led by such considerations into making the following remarkable assertion, which he considers worthy of being placed in all capital letters:[\(17\)](#)

## SPACE IS PROJECTING SPACE INTO SPACE!

As a literal assertion, and outside of its context, this of course would seem to be some sort of nonsense. But aside from its suggestive character in the context of a non-dualistic viewpoint, the idea that voidness, understood as "pure vacuum," may be a primordial originative source "projecting" energy and form into physical reality is not entirely inconsistent with certain theories of modern physics. In his book *Choosing Reality, B*, Alan Wallace speaks of certain consequences of quantum theory in physics:

"It is now thought that the vacuum contains a residual energy that persists even when all matter and thermal radiation have been experimentally eliminated from a volume of space."[\(18\)](#)

Is this "zero-point energy," as it is called, *projecting space into space*? Wallace poses that very question: "Might this ground-state energy of space be fundamental, unified source of all physical and cognitive phenomena?" The various theories surrounding this issue, Wallace says, argue that the perfect vacuum contains either zero energy, or infinite energy. But either way science may go, it is evident that in some manner science spills over into the metaphysics of both consciousness and of fundamental creation as it approaches the nature of voidness.

In his Chapter Three, Newbern also takes up this question and argues that the indeterminacy of science with respect to the nature of a perfect vacuum is tantalizingly close to the theory of the Tri-Kaya seen as an account of "primordial reality." It is fitting, then, to close these introductory comments with what is perhaps Newbern's most striking query:

"There is one big event, there are an infinite number of small events, and yet there is no event at all. Considering the absolute lack of proof, how could we conclude anything more?"[\(19\)](#)

Santa Rosa, California

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1. See *Transtantric Metaphilosophy: A New Direction on East-West Synthesis* by Stanley V. McDaniel; Vajramani Press, 1994, 1998. (1055 W. College Ave. #273, Santa Rosa, CA 95401.)[\(Back\)](#)
2. *Primitive Mythology* by Joseph Campbell; Viking Press, 1964; p. 120.[\(Back\)](#)
3. This view of the pathological nature of dualism is a theme articulated by Nietzsche in various works, including his penetrating and insightful book, *Will to Power*. For a summary see my monograph *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, Monarch Press, 1965, pp. 80-82 on "Prejudices of Philosophers."[\(Back\)](#)
4. *The Tarot* by Mouni Sadhu, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1962, 1968; p. 60.[\(Back\)](#)
5. Sadhu, op. cit., pp.34 - 35 (Sadhu's capitalization).[\(Back\)](#)
6. There are, however, complications associated with the placement of the second He, based on the fact that as a "new thing" this becomes a new yod, and begins a further cycle. In Sadhu's text this point is somewhat obscured by the author's habit of couching his presentation in an exaggerated oblique manner of speaking, intending to "protect" the "secrets." See Sadhu, op. cit., page 82.[\(Back\)](#)
7. *Experience and Nature* by John Dewey, Dover Books, 1958, p. 167[\(Back\)](#)
8. This way of deriving the triangle from text is further discussed in my booklet *Transtantric Metaphilosophy: A New Direction in East-West Synthesis* (1998), available from [info@stanmcdaniel.com](mailto:info@stanmcdaniel.com).[\(Back\)](#)
9. *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* by Anagarika Govinda; pub. by Samuel Weiser, N.Y., 1974, pages 213 - 214[\(Back\)](#)
10. *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, Op. Cit., p.200.[\(Back\)](#)
11. The philosophical or metaphysical notion of "substance" is that of an irreducible and unchanging element of reality, complete in itself and needing nothing else for its existence.[\(Back\)](#)
12. *Yogasayings* by Stanley V. McDaniel; Chapter Four; Vajramani Press, 1991, available from [info@stanmcdaniel.com](mailto:info@stanmcdaniel.com).[\(Back\)](#)
13. *Time, Space and Knowledge* by Tarthang Tulku; Dharma Publishing, 1977, pp.13 - 14.[\(Back\)](#)
14. *The Phenomenon of Man*, by Pierre Teilhard (de Chardin), Harper Torchbooks, 1965, P. 43.[\(Back\)](#)



15. *Time, Space and Knowledge*, Op. Cit., p.9.[\(Back\)](#)

16. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, ed. by W.Y. Evans-Wentz, trans. by Lama Kazi Dawa Sumdup; Oxford University Press, 1960, p. xxxviii. In accordance with the footnote on the reference page, I have substituted "psyche" in the quotation for the translator's term "soul" because of the confusion between the meaning of the English work "soul" and the German expression "seele" used by Jung.[\(Back\)](#)

17. *Time, Space and Knowledge*, Op. Cit., p.10.[\(Back\)](#)

18. *Choosing Reality: A Contemporary View of Physics and the Mind*, Alan B. Wallace; Shambala Books, 1989, p. 10.[\(Back\)](#)

19. This is at the end of Chapter Three.[\(Back\)](#)

[1. The Three...](#)

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# Chapter One

## The Three...

At a very early age in life, I was about 10 years old at the time, questions came into my mind regarding the nature of self. Who am I? Why is the "me" inside of this body different from the "me" in any other body? What is this "me" anyway? And what is the world that surrounds this "me"? What is this that everyone calls "God"? What is the true nature of all of these things?

In the years that followed I began to understand that what I was seeking was perhaps better defined as the realization of the nature of primordial reality, or what is more commonly referred to as "self-realization". Self-realization is the simultaneous realization of three things: A complete unified presence, which, for lack of a better term I shall call "All-Thing"; a multiply infinite individual presence, which I shall call "Each Thing"; and finally, a mysterious and infinitely vast unknown, unseen non-presence, which I shall call "No-Thing". All three are simultaneously and eternally bound in a three sided continuum which is the fabric and nature of all realities, without and within.

It is not always easy to see how all things within our universe are interconnected. We watch life here on Earth and wonder, "How could events here be effected by events deep in outer space? Certainly the most distant heavenly sphere is unaffected by what exists here on Earth."

Do we not ask the same question regarding our environment? How could the existence of a tiny parasite effect a regions ecology? And yet it has been proven that this is so. If your finger were to receive a minor injury, would your toe be directly effected? And yet if you neglected to properly attend to the injury, you might find yourself in a state where even the life of your toe would be in question. Is it not possible to feel pain in one part of your body and pleasure in another? And yet it is still all the same body.

Likewise, no matter what occurs here or what occurs there, no matter how one occurrence may or may not effect the other occurrence, it is still all one universe.

We, as human inhabitants of the universe, as well as all others and all else there is, are certainly and ultimately "all in this together." And that includes every species of being



as well as every kind of thing. Every bit of it. Hot, cold, high, low, good, bad, left, right, hard, soft, liquid, solid, concept, manifestation, the heavens, the planets and stars, all that exists, be it thought, breath, pulse, or flesh, or be it pure energy or nonliving matter, it all exists as one universe. Whether we can perceive that unity or not has no effect on this fact of reality. Whether this is a reality in disagreement with itself, or a reality in harmony with itself has no effect on the fact that it is still one reality. Thus we have that thing which is All; that All-Thing.

And considering that the All-Thing is all things, it would be both limitless and have limits. As far as man will ever probe into outer space, and as deep into the inner space of the mind as man will ever penetrate, there will only be more of this All-Thing. And considering again that the All-Thing is all things, it would be logical to assume that this All-Thing has both the conscious and the unconscious, both the light and the dark. And further considering that the All-Thing is all things, it would have both order and disorder, clarity and confusion, unity and separation. It would include all opposing concepts and forces as well as all harmonic concepts and forces. All that can be imagined or even thought of, all that was, all that is, and all that ever shall be, existing as one. That is the All-Thing.

Vast and all encompassing, this All-Thing is all of all realities. Normally it is unperceived by it's inhabitants who are so much a part of it's being. Much like an ant living in a skyscraper, we are usually only given a view which is limited. As humanity is exposed to concepts and facts regarding the universe, it's galaxies, it's black holes, it's vastness, the possibility that the seed of life has been sewn throughout, our imagination is stretched. We are shown more and more of all there is. The idea of an All-Thing begins, more and more, to reveal itself. The veil of mystery lifts and mankind learns more of that of which we are all an integral part, that which is truly one, the All-Thing.

Now let us look at the multiply infinite individual presence: the Each Thing. Quite in contradiction to the All-Thing, the reader may have noticed that everything is not the same. You are not me. You are one person and I am quite someone else. You are not a tree. A tree is not a waterfall. The water is not the moon. The moon is not a planet and so on. Anyone can see that there is a difference in these things and that their individual existences are just that: individual existence.

Eachness is a fact of reality. How else could there be this world as it appears to us. It is the most clear and apparent fact of reality and exists simultaneously with, and in direct contradiction to the All-Thing. Indeed, this is the Each-Thing. It is the clear, ever present, and ever obvious manifestation of this three sided reality. Each individual concept, every thought, every thing, every creature and so on, is a brief manifestation of this ever present, ever obvious Each-Thing. It is, and we are all Each-Thing. It is, and we are each, all, everything and everyone, therefore, components of this three sided reality.

We stress eachness or individualness in society. And while we tend to "do what the other guy does" because it is safe, we always seem to put our own little twist on what ever it is that we are doing, all because we both consciously and unconsciously perceive our own eachness. We measure our eachness against the eachness of others in order to maintain perspective, both socially and mentally. We often do this to the point where we become competitive with the people around us. Perhaps at that point we are just celebrating our own eachness.

Indeed, we are constantly reminded of our own separateness from the world around us. When one of us is hungry, only that person feels the hunger pains. The rest of us may hear the hungry persons stomach growl, or we may even hear the hungry person state that they are hungry, or we may have even experienced hunger in the past, but if we are not that hungry person we will not know or feel that persons exact experience of hunger. Imagine the difference that would exist today on this planet if we truly felt each others hunger. I am sure humanity would find a way to fix the problem very quickly.

Not only do we feel things independent of others, but we see things differently from others. Even when several people observe the same event, each persons description of that event is different. Whether it is the difference in minor details of that event or a difference in the overall interpretation of that event, there will be a difference in the actual observation by each person.

I am sure everyone remembers, when they were children, playing a game where someone whispers something into the ear of a playmate, who in turn whispers what ever they thought they heard into the ear of the next playmate, who in turn whispers what ever they thought they heard into the ear of the next playmate and so on. Eventually the last person would get to tell everyone else what they thought was originally whispered. Of course this usually led to many laughs, and the more kids that played the funnier the result turned out to be.

As adults we often tend to play a more serious version of the same game, which as adults we call gossip, and often the results are not very funny. Again proof of our eachness, for if we actually knew what the other person knew and actually felt what the other person felt, if it were not for our eachness, we would not, in fact could not play this game.

If it were not for our eachness, how could we distinguish ourselves from our surroundings, or distinguish one thing or event from the other thing or event, or for that matter, distinguish events from things, or things from events. If it were not for our eachness we would be without identity or definition.

This identity and definition goes on as far into space and time as their own limits and beyond; each moment, each space, each experience. Like the contradictory All-Thing, this eachness is as pervasive as is existence itself. The more we study the heavens, the more we penetrate space and time, the more we will know of this Each-Thing. The further we look into our own minds the more we will see of this Each-Thing.

Unlike the All-Thing, whose definition could be stated within the text of a few written pages, to write a definition of the Each-Thing that is complete and concise in every aspect would consume endless volumes of written text. Indeed such a work, even if started at the beginning of time, could never be finished due to the constant change of the cycle of creation, preservation, and destruction. Every event, every person, place or thing, every particle, every force, every idea or concept, every aspect, every characteristic would have to have been, and continue to be, recorded beyond measured time to give a clear and concise definition of the Each-Thing. Indeed, to write a definition of the Each-Thing that is complete, clear and precise would be beyond human capabilities.

This Each-Thing is, in its true nature, the same as the All-Thing. Much like the many trees that make up a forest, perhaps even more like the fact that both the forest and all of the trees are, in essence, wood or vegetable matter, both the All-Thing and the Each-Thing are, in their true essence and nature, the No-Thing.

Unlike the All-Thing and unlike the Each-Thing, the No-Thing is the most difficult to discuss. Difficult to discuss due to its very nature, which has been called "The Void" or "Great Space" by many writers, or, perhaps mistakenly, "space" by others. I call it No-Thing because it is beyond what we can perceive, therefore it appears to us as nothing, but we cannot say it is nothing because we cannot speak of that which we do not know. We cannot even define its features and characteristics, nor its surroundings, nor its opposites. There is no way for us to define any part or aspect of that which we cannot perceive. But like the All-Thing and the Each-Thing, this No-Thing is vast and all pervasive. No matter how far into the universe and beyond that we may look, or how far into our minds we may penetrate, we will never find evidence of this No-Thing, for this No-Thing emits nothing that is knowable. Pure, untainted, undefined, unseen, unformed, this voidness becomes the non-presence that is essence all of reality.

Difficult to perceive, in fact unperceivable. When the human mind seeks this most illusive of subjects, it must settle for a mere reflection. When man looks out towards space from a high isolated mountain top, he sees the stars but does not register anything from the blackness of outer space. The only way he knows there is outer space is from the observation of the stars and the distance (blackness) between each star. Yet still we speak of outer space as if it were something that we all knew was really there. But in fact, no one has ever actually "seen" space. We have observed here and we have

observed there and we have even measured how far one must travel through outer space to get from point "A" to point "B"; We have noted the meteorites, asteroids, the various types of gasses, rays, and such that plummet through the universe. But these are only more stuff filling this space, which remains unseen.

And so it is with any attempt to "see" the No-Thing. We can examine every corner of reality from the highest of pedestals. We may see every aspect of the Each-Thing that is in our immediate surroundings. We may even deeply in our hearts feel the all encompassing unity of the All-Thing. But no human has ever or will ever "see" or experience in any way the No-Thing. The No-Thing cannot be known, due to both the limitations of our perceptive facilities and to the non-physical nature of the No-Thing. We cannot even say that the No-Thing is nothing. How could we know? We can only say that the No-Thing is unknowable. It is unformed, undefined, colorless, odorless, shapeless, invisible, yet unlimited, all pervasive. It contains nothing and nothing comes from it or returns to it. Its true nature and pure essence are unknowable except by our being aware of the identity of the All-Thing and the Each-Thing, and the fact that their true nature and essence is the No-Thing.

Like a thread that is twisted from three strands, this three sided reality winds it's way throughout all of the fabric of the cosmos. Each strand fills the other two. Nothing exists that is not filled with and fully a part of this fabric. All form and being, conscious or nonconscious, with or without life, is or is not because of this relationship with the fabric woven from the three strands that are the All-Thing, the Each-Thing, and the No-Thing. The All-Thing is the omni-present all inclusive unified existence, unifying all of reality as one unit with the unifying factor being the concept and fact that all there is, is all there and therefore it is unified and one. The No-Thing is the all pervasive non-presence which lies at the source of all there is. And it is the Each-Thing which is the manifestation of all truths, all realities.

Just as a flock of birds is many birds but one flock, the All-Thing is like the many birds as a flock. The Each-Thing is like the birds as many different birds. But it is the shining heavens above (The No-Thing) that give support and definition to both the flock and to each individual bird.

However, if you could pour this three-in-one reality into a cup, the All-Thing would take up one hundred percent of the cups capacity; the Each-Thing would take up one hundred percent of the cups capacity; likewise the No-Thing would take up one hundred percent of the cups capacity. And yet the cup would not overflow. In this way these three bodies fill the cosmos.

Before there was even a "beginning" there were these three things, which are one thing, and after the end of that which was created in that "beginning" there will continue to be

these three things as one thing. This is the primordial reality.

The reader might question, "I feel like I might have known this all along, but I've never considered it as anything special. Why is this so important? What is the relevance?"

You may have known of these things all along, but most everything you have learned since birth has encouraged you to put it aside, both as a priority and as a memory. Is it important to know the source of your being? To know who you are? Can you not deal more clearly with the ups and downs of life if you know what constitutes the essence of those ups and downs, as well as what constitutes the essence of that life? Certainly the more one knows of ones own existence, both internal and external, and of ones own surroundings, the more one will be able to adapt to the rigors of both.

Or, the reader might say, "I can imagine the concept of 'oneness', and 'eachness' is obvious, but I just cannot accept the idea of the 'No-Thing' until I can understand it better. It's difficult to grasp."

Give it up. There is nothing to grasp. To our minds, all that we cannot know appears as voidness. All that we do not know appears as voidness. Mentally, we "draw a blank"; we "come up empty". Can you grasp what is in an empty container? Yet you know what someone means when they refer to a container as being empty. Can you understand that of which you know nothing at all about? And yet you can understand that there is that of which you know nothing.

Consider this. Animal experts tell us that cats do not see colors, but that they see in shades of gray. As humans, we see in a myriad of colors. As humans we are also able to see in shades of gray using our technological tools and therefore are able to comprehend what exactly it means to see in shades of gray.

To a cat this is all much like the No-Thing. Colors? What is that? The cat has no way or means to recreate the concept and thereby get some idea as to what exactly "colors" is. And yet there is such a thing, whether the cat can see colors or not.

Our mind works the same way, except that we have the ability to expand our understanding of the world around us through our ability to create into material being our most advanced concepts. To us colors are more of the Each-Thing. If cats could understand the words that we speak, and some seem to, we could still not explain to them all that they cannot comprehend.

As humans, like the cat, we to cannot know that which cannot be known. All we can do is retain the experience of the realization of that emptiness, once that realization has



been achieved. Then we can comprehend it's relationship with absolute unity and with infinite eachness.

If we could conceive of, or picture in our minds, or comprehend at all that which is the No-Thing, perhaps then we could comprehend the resolution of all conflict. Since we cannot know what we cannot know, perhaps just knowing the fact that there is a resolution that is beyond our comprehension will ease the tension created by these conflicts.

But there is no comprehension of that which is beyond comprehension. We can only place in our minds the knowledge of the identity and true nature of the All-Thing and the Each-Thing and thereby experience the non-identity of this No-Thing itself. Like seeing the moon and the stars and planets and thereby identifying outer space. It is not what we see but what we don't see. It is not what we comprehend but that which is incomprehensible that we seek for resolution.

Or the reader might comment, " It's the three-in-one concept that I cannot follow. How can these three concepts exist simultaneously when they are so contradictory?"

Again refer to the forest full of trees. Is there a contradiction between the one forest and the many trees? Are not the forest and the trees both of the same essence? In the same way there is no contradiction between the All-Thing and the Each-Thing. And since the unknown is unknown, how can we know if there is a contradiction between the All-Thing and the No-Thing, or that which is known and that which is unknown.

Here is another way to look at this three-in-one phenomena. If "Primordial Reality" were the name of a game, and there have been those in history who viewed it as such, then there would be only three rules.

Rule 1. All is one.

Rule 2. Eachness is infinite.

Rule 3. The Unknowable is valid.

Anything else is fair within the game. Since there is nothing that is outside the rules, and since the rules seem to cover everything, the player can expect an infinite number of situations. All of these are fair within the rules, however the player should keep in mind Rule 3 in order to prevent getting caught up in the potential confusion. Because of Rule 3, the player may choose to expect nothing in order to keep his or her mind clear, and thus be ready for the inevitable unexpected. The player may go anywhere and/or do anything except as limited by Rule 3.

Every move the player makes is unique to that player, as determined by Rule 2, and yet, because of Rule 1, all players moves are as if the game itself was making those moves, all of which may positively or negatively effect anyone or everyone playing the game as well as any or all situations within the game.

The object of the game is simply to play the game. There are no winners or losers except in momentary situations that the player may experience from time to time, but these moments are fleeting and to the experienced player they are insignificant. The experienced player knows that he is not playing to win or to loose, but that he is playing simply to be apart of the game.

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# Chapter Two

## Faiths of the Ancients

"You tell us that there are three gods and yet one," the puzzled Irish said when St. Patrick was preaching the gospel to them in the 5th century A.D. "How can that be?" The saint bent down and plucked a shamrock. "Do you not see," he said, "how in this wildflower three leaves are united on one stalk, and will you not then believe that there are indeed three persons and yet one God?" [\(1\)](#)

So the story goes regarding the conversion of Ireland to the Christian faith. But could it be that these Irish Celts had already known of such a three-in-one deity? In ages past, many religious preceptors from different corners of the world and from many different faiths have envisioned a presence which has the characteristics of the three-in-one entity described in the previous chapter. And though I be neither Irish nor Catholic, the story of the pronouncement by St. Patrick of the shamrock as a symbol of the Holy Three-In-One is, to me, one of the most beautiful teachings regarding the Christian Holy Trinity to present itself anywhere, as it symbolizes the saint's ability to perceive the Holy Trinity within nature. The concept of the Holy Trinity is central to the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Orthodox and the Russian Orthodox Churches, and to many Protestant churches. Though considered to be a mystery that cannot be fully comprehended by the human mind, it is also considered to be a truth of revelation in that only a divine revelation from God could provide anyone with this vision. In Buddhism there are several triads, each very important to the practice of this religion of logic. The Buddhist triad that we are concerned with here is called the Three Bodies or in Sanskrit, *Tri-Kaya*. They are individually named the *Dharma-Kaya*, the *Sambhoga-Kaya*, and the *Nirmana-Kaya*. The Dharma-Kaya is the No-Thing, personified as the *Adi Buddha* (or Primordial Buddha) *Samanta Bhadra*. He may be envisioned as being unclothed and his skin color approximately the same shade of blue that is the daytime sky when viewed through the thin atmosphere from a high mountain altitude, representing the all pervasive, immutable, eternal essence that is the unqualified, unformed, unseen, unpredictable naked reality.

The Sambhoga-Kaya is the All-Thing, being likewise personified as *Avalokiteshvara*. This Buddha of Compassion, may be envisioned in his four armed form as white in color, representing his immaculate all-encompassing nature and his devotion to an all-embracing compassionate mercy. His Holiness The Dalai Lama of Tibet is said to have been the earthly incarnation of Avalokiteshvara for the past fourteen incarnations.

Both the historic Gautama Buddha and the Buddhist teacher *Padma Sambhava* are seen as personifying the Nirmana-Kaya, which is the Each-Thing. The Gautama Buddha is said to have brought the exoteric



teachings, while Padma Sambhava is said to have delivered the esoteric teachings. This historic teacher, also known as Guru Rimpoche, is considered to be the reincarnation of Gautama Buddha, and was responsible for the conversion of Tibet from the animalistic *Bon* faith to Buddhism. Guru Rimpoche is also the founder of the Nyingma Buddhist sect as well as the author of the *Bardo Thodol*, more widely known as *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, and other sacred text.

The Dharma-Kaya is the vast and mysterious, pure and unseen "Mind of the Buddha", the Sambhoga Kaya is the all pervasive unifying presence that fills all of reality, and the Nirmana-Kaya is the earthly manifestation that is the Buddha himself. It is the realization of the Tri-Kaya that one strives for when traversing the six worlds of existence. Such a realization is said to bring relief from unnecessary death and rebirth, or in more common terms, gives one an overview that allows one to avoid, if they choose, making the same mistakes over and over again. In fact it is the constant realization of the Tri-Kaya that is the difference between the Buddhas and the non-Buddhas. It is said that all the Buddha sees, he sees as Tri-Kaya. The rest of us are working on attaining that level of realization through the repetition of Buddhist practice and study.

Could it be that this Tri-Kaya and the Holy Trinity as seen in the esoteric tradition of the Christian mystic are essentially the same? The One God, also called the Heavenly Father, is the all pervasive unifying presence that fills the universe, while Christ is said to be Him manifest in the flesh. There are eighty nine references to the Holy Ghost, and one reference to the Holy Spirit in the King James Version of the Holy Bible. In the Revised Standard Version there are ninety references to the Holy Spirit and none to the Holy Ghost. This indicates that there is a third body of God that is unseen, unknown, yet as all pervasive as is the Heavenly Father, and that this third body is so illusive that experts cannot agree upon whether to translate the name of this third body as "Holy Ghost" or "Holy Spirit".

Raimundo Panikkar, Christian author and theology teacher at the University of California at Santa Barbara, states the following view:

"The Trinity . . . may be considered as a junction where the authentic spiritual dimensions of all religions meet. The Trinity is God's self-revelation in the fullness of time, the consummation both of all that God has already "said" of himself to man and of all that man has been able to attain and know of God in his thought and mystical experience. In the Trinity a true encounter of religions takes place, which results, not in a vague fusion or mutual dilution, but in an authentic enhancement of all the religious and even cultural elements that are contained in each." [\(2\)](#)

In an article entitled *God of Life, Idols of Death*, Panikkar, when asked to speak about the God of other religions, responded appropriately:

"This question contains a double error of approach - clearly without any ill-will on the part of whoever posed the question. But it betrays the intellectual habit in the dominant culture: the belief that one can solve questions with inappropriate categories. It is a double error, one of form and of substance.

"*In form*. The question implies, "Speak to us of the *Paquirri* of other cultures" - freely supposing that every culture has its *Paquirri*.

"*In substance*. It is assumed that the object which you wish spoken of is in fact known.

"What should I speak about? What do you wish me to speak about? What is the purpose of this question? What is this about God?"

Pannikkar continues, "...one cannot presuppose that all cultures have the same terms of reference. God is the central point and ultimate reference for all of the Abrahamic traditions but not for the other religious traditions. To begin asking about God in Buddhism, for example, would be a wrong approach. The fact that something is very important to me does not make it so for the rest of the world. Secondly, we also forget that the question of God is *sui generis*, since that about which we ask is particular to itself. Fundamentally we do not know what we ask ourselves. If a Zen master, for example, were to answer your question about God with an inarticulate cry of *MU!*, many of you would feel that he was talking nonsense in reply to a serious question. Apart from the irony that *MU* means nothing, your reaction would imply that you already knew, to a certain degree, what it was that you were inquiring about since you were not satisfied with what you consider to be a non-answer. The question itself sets the boundaries within which we look for an answer. Therefore we do not ask from where we do not know but from something that already belongs to our hermeneutic circle. This God we ask about is no longer the apophatic mystery."

Pannikkar then states, "There is no valid human discourse about God. Only God can speak about Himself."  
[\(3\)](#)

Does the Zen master know this, and know it so well that his only response is *MU*?

I am reminded of the story of a Zen priest who sat on a rock overlooking the ocean for three days when a fisherman shouted up to him.

"Sensei!" he asked, "What are you looking for?"

"Nothing!" the priest replied, "Nothing at all!"

Getting back to the Bible, in the Old Testament there is text that some scholars feel indicate that God, while "One", is also diverse and multifaceted. Some even feel that the use of the word "One" indicates that there are more than one facet of God. For example; Exodus 33:020 is literally translated as follows:

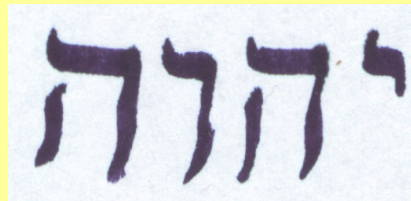
"And He said, not You are able to see My face, because no can see Me man and live."

King James' translators put it this way: "And He said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live." Other scholars have translated this text slightly differently, but the point is, there seems to be indicated a part, or face, of God that no mortal can behold, and that this is indicated in the second

Book of Moses known as Exodus. And the idea that this face of God is beyond the reach of mortal man's vision, yet is as all pervasive and omni-present as God Himself is not contrary to the idea of the relationship between the Buddhist Sambhoga-Kaya and Dharma-Kaya, and it also seems to support the New Testament's concept of God the Father and the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit.

To look into the Old Testament further we must look into the Jewish tradition which is the direct offspring of the Bible. The Hebrew faith is deeply rooted in a mystical interpretation of the Torah, which are the Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

When investigating the nature of God as described within these Books we find that much importance is placed upon the name or names of God by Jewish scholars and that it is often felt that the true nature of God is defined within the esoteric teachings regarding the letters from the Ancient Hebrew alphabet and their combinations that are used to spell out the names of God. This method of interpretation is known as Kabbalah. In this case we would want to know the name of God as was given to Moses at the time of his vision on Mt. Sinai, so that we might have some idea as to the nature of each part of God. Below we see the name spelled out in Ancient Hebrew, reading from right to left, as *Yod Hey Vau Hey*, or in Roman, YHWH (sometimes, IHVH).



Joseph ben Abraham Gikatilla, an influential 14th century Spanish scholar and student of Jewish mysticism through his teacher Abraham Abulafia, explains this four letter combination.

"Know that all His names, praised be He, are borne by and included in the proper name, the name of YHWH, may He be praised. Some are related to it by analogy to the roots, some to the branches, some to the top of the tree, while the proper name, may He be praised, stands at the center and is called the middle column. The other names are included in it from both sides, like the top of the tree, it's roots and it's branches. How are we to understand this? "The first letter of the name of YHWH stands for two names. The tip of the letter *yod* pointing upward symbolizes the great primordial existence in it's full essence, and this is designated by the name *eheyeh* [literally, "I shall be", usually translated "I am"], which is called the Infinite. It is called *ayin*, *Nothing*, because it stands for His concealment to heavenly and earthly beings,

as no one can understand anything concerning Him."

Gikatilla goes on to explain; "This is the mystery conveyed by the tip of the letter *yod*, the upper tip, which stands for the supreme crown (the first *sefirah*), called Nothing, that transcends all conception. No one can know anything concerning Him, except for the belief in His existence, but He alone knows the nature of this existence. It is for this reason that He is called *ehyeh*, which designates *existence* as such, but He alone knows the nature of this existence." (4)

Joseph ben Abraham Gikatilla's description of the symbology of the tip letter *yod* is very close to attributes ascribed to the Adi Buddha, who personifies the Dharma Kaya. One could just as well state that no one knows anything concerning the Adi Buddha except for the belief in the Adi Buddha, but the Adi Buddha alone knows the nature of the Adi Buddha. Though it would be unknowable if these two concepts are the of same origin, we must admit the similarities. Therefore, let us look further.

Now let us again refer to Exodus, this time chapter 33, verse 23, we see the literal translation as:

"And I will remove My palm and you will see My back, but My face not can be seen."

The King James version states it thus:

"And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."

From all this we can see that the idea of a three-in-one God has deep roots in the Old Testament and is carried on through out the New Testament as in the First Book of John, chapter 5, verse 7, which literally translates as:

"Because three there are testifying:"

In the King James version we see it read as:

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: these three are one."

Many Christian scholars believe that this passage refers to "the Father" and "the Word" as being "my back parts", while "the Holy Ghost" (or "Holy Spirit") refers to "my face", thereby tracing the trinitarian concept to the Book of Exodus.

Now, to further investigate the true nature of the Biblical Divinity, the God of Abraham and of Moses and of the New Testament, our research would not be complete if we did not look at the verses of the Koran. After all, the Moslem faith is the tradition of the descendants of Abraham through Ishmael, Abraham's offspring by Hagar, just as the Hebrew faith is the tradition of the descendants of Abraham through Isaac,

Abraham's offspring through Sarah, and the God of Abraham is the God of Abraham and of all of his descendants, both Hebrew and Moslem. [\(5\)](#)

There are two references to the Trinity in the Koran. According to the translation of T. B. Irving (Al-Haji Ta'Lim 'Ali), the first is in Chapter 4, The Chapter of Women, verse 171, which states as follows:

"Believe in God [Alone] and his messengers, and do not say: 'Three!' Stopping [it] will be better for you. God is only One God; glory be to Him, beyond His having any son! He owns what ever is in Heaven and whatever is on Earth; God suffices as Trustee."

The second reference from the Koran is in Chapter 5, The Chapter of the Table, verse 73.

"Those who say: 'God is the third of three', have disbelieved! There is no deity except God Alone. If they do not stop saying what they say, painful torment will afflict those among them who disbelieve."

Clearly, the Koran does not agree with the concept of a Three-In-One Deity. And yet the God of Mohammed is the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Moses, and the God of Christ Jesus. That is confirmed through out the Koran.

This contradictory opinion is not exclusive to Islam. Many Hebrew scholars do not feel that the Kabbalahistic interpretations are the correct interpretations, and state that Kabbalah did not appear until the 13th century. (My personal exposure to Kabbalahistic study indicated to me that while Jewish scholars may not have noticed the encoding of the Torah until that time, such interpretations are the true and intended interpretations. Otherwise, such repetition of alphabetical, numerological, and astrological coincidence would be extremely unlikely. More recently, the odds in favor of the Torah containing a code have been calculated to be something in the neighborhood of sixty-two-thousand five hundred to one [\(6\)](#), which also indicates that "a higher intelligence", at the very least, authored these five books.) There are also Protestant Christian churches that dispute the concept of the Trinity, the Unitarian Church being the foremost.

Why this contradiction? It is common, that within the body of a religion there are varied and contradictory beliefs regarding the nature of the deities and the meanings given to the messages given by them to humanity. The body of religion that worships the God of Abraham consist of the Hebrew, Moslem, and Christian faiths, as well as a number of lesser known belief systems. This is because of disagreements on various ideas regarding everything from the very nature of God to the interpretation of various laws as written in the scriptures.

Assuming that the nature of the deity is fact, not superstition, could it be that the religion reflects the deity? Like Gikatilla's Kabbalahistic analogy of the tree, are some faiths "...the roots, some the branches and some the top of the tree,..."? Could it be that the unknowable, (or in the case of the God of Abraham, the face of God) is the resolution to this conflict of beliefs? Could Judaism, Islam, and Christianity be mirror images of parts of the same God, whose apparent conflicting existences are resolved by His



unknowable face at the highest level of consciousness and understanding?

Now let us look back at the beginning of this chapter where I mention St. Patrick's shamrock. It has been suggested that Ireland was easily converted to Catholicism due to the prior Celtic belief in a three-in-one deity. There does, however, seem to be some dispute as to whether the Celtic Trinity even existed before the arrival of St. Patrick and the Catholic teachings.

In Robert Graves' *White Goddess*, he relates how the mother deity of the Celtic faith is not only white, but also red, and black. He states that in her manifestation as a moon trinity, her new moon is the white goddess of birth and growth (creation); her full moon is the red goddess of love and battle (preservation); her old moon is the black goddess of death and divination (destruction). However, Graves leaves it to speculation as to whether the Celtic Trinity is the same, in all but name, as the Catholic Trinity, implying that the mystery of the Holy Trinity must be resolved before a true conclusion can be made.

To add to the speculation, or perhaps to clarify such, I will refer to Walter Y. Evans-Wentz, one of the greatest scholars of comparative religion of the 20th century. In his work *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries* (7) he refers to the *Barddas* (8) which is a collection of writings regarding theology, wisdom and application of the Bardo-Druidic beliefs of the Isle of Britain. These teachings were handed down orally from a time when the writing down of such doctrines was forbidden. There is, therefore, no evidential proof of the date of their original oral transmission, but there is no question that these writings are Celtic.

"Let us begin with purely philosophical conceptions, going first to the Welsh *Barddas*, where it is said 'There are three circles of existence: the circle of Ceugant (the circle of Infinity), where there is neither animate nor inanimate save God, and God only can traverse it; the circle of Abred (the circle of Re-birth), where the dead is stronger than the living, and where every principal existence is derived from the dead, and man has traversed it; and the circle of Gwynvyd (the circle of the white, i. e. the circle of Perfection), where the living is stronger than the dead, and where every principal existence is derived from the living and life, that is, from God, and man shall traverse it; nor will man attain to perfect knowledge, until he shall have fully traversed the circle of Gwynvyd, for no absolute knowledge can be obtained but by the experience of the senses, from having borne and suffered every condition and incident'. ...'The three stabilities of knowledge: to have traversed every state of life; to remember every state and its incidents; and to be able to traverse every state, as one would wish, for the sake of experience and judgment; and this will be obtained in the circle of Gwynvyd.'"

Dr. Evans-Wentz further explains; "The Bardic doctrine as otherwise stated is 'that the soul commenced its course in the lowest water animalcule, and passed at death to other bodies of a superior order, successively, and with regular gradation, until it entered that of man. Humanity is a state of liberty, where man can attach himself to either good or evil, as he pleases'. Once in the human kingdom the soul begins a second period of growth altogether different from that preceding - a period of growth toward divinity; and with this, in our study, we are chiefly concerned. It seems clear that the circle of Gwynvyd finds parallel in the Nirvana of Buddhism, being, like it, a state of absolute knowledge and felicity in which man becomes a divine being, a veritable god." The term "Nirvana" is translated by modern Sanskrit

scholars as being "self-realization". In Buddhism, self-realization is the realization of the true nature of self, which is the realization of the three-fold reality, which is the realization of the Dharma Kaya. It is apparent from Dr. Evans-Wentz that the Celtic self-realization is the realization of the Circle of Gwynvyd, therefore the realization of the circle of Ceugant and of the circle of Abred. It is also apparent that the description of three circles of the Welsh *Barddas* can be very closely applied to the three bodies of Buddhism as well as to the mystical or esoteric interpretation of the Christian Trinity.

It should also be clear, at this point, that if the perception of the Celtic Trinity was influenced by any, that perception may have been influenced by several or, more likely, as Panikkar suggests, the perception of a three-in-one reality by those who seek such truths is inevitable. It then becomes a question of how is it perceived, given the various cultural inputs and influences, and then how this perception is to be recorded and communicated to those who have not had that experience, but wish to hear or read about that it. If the latter is the case, then we should expect to find a myriad of descriptions of this Trinity, each one true to the nature of the Trinity itself. That in itself is certainly a tribute to the magnificence of this three-in-one reality.

For further and even more ancient references to a three-in-one reality let us now refer to the Hindu Upanishads. When comparing a Buddhist concept with a concept of Hindu origin, one should keep in mind the chronology of the events of the life of Gautama Buddha and of the writing of the Upanishads.

Gautama Buddha is said to have lived around 500 B.C., and the Upanishads are said to have appeared before 600 B.C. It is generally believed that Buddhism is an outgrowth of Hinduism, much in the same way that Protestant Christianity is an outgrowth of Catholicism. However, there seems to be evidence that Buddhism may have been around, if not as a separate faith, then as a chain of concepts or a school of thought (practice?) within the body of Hinduism long before either the appearance of the Upanishads or the birth of Gautama Buddha; perhaps since the formation of two Sanskrit words: *buddhi* which translates as 'intellect', and *buddhindriya* which translates as 'organ of perception'.<sup>(9)</sup>

Commenting of a passage the Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad,<sup>(10)</sup> the translator, Robert Ernest Hume states, "This is out and out Buddhist doctrine". And from this evidence, one can see that it should not be unexpected to find parallels between the two faiths throughout Hindu and Buddhist scriptures and teachings.

Before we look further into Robert E. Hume's rendering of the Upanishads, I should mention that in *A Sourcebook In Indian Philosophy*, edited by Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles A. Moore, the editors, before using the text of Hume's work in their own analysis of the Upanishads, make the following statement regarding the errors within that translation itself:

"Attention is called to the questionable and misleading translation of certain basic terms in the text used. To avoid confusion and possible misinterpretation the ultimate reality should be designated generally as *Brahman* [the primal essence], not *Brahma* [the god of creation], and as It, or That, not He. Also, the word "*Atman*" or "*atman*" (the former referring to the ultimate principle, the latter to the individual

principle in man) should, for clarity, be translated as "Self" or "self", not "Soul" or "soul", respectively."  
[\(11\)](#) [\(12\)](#)

Now, the Supreme, or as Dr. Radhakrishnan mentioned, the ultimate reality (as seen objectively) is named *Brahman*. It should be noted that all of the gods of Hinduism are the various aspects of Brahman. Therefore, all of the names of the gods of Hinduism are the names of the various aspects of Brahman. It has been said that Brahman is *sat-cit-ananda*. *sat* is Divine Being in its perfected state. *cit* is human consciousness in its perfected state. *ananda* is perfect freedom, or Cosmic Bliss in its perfected state.

It has also been said that *Atman*, the Cosmic Self, or Cosmic Consciousness, is the same in its true nature as is Brahman in its true nature. *Atman* is also said to be the ultimate as discovered introspectively. *atman* is the individual consciousness or individual self. In its natural, or perfected state, *atman* is the same as *Atman*.

In other words, the true nature of *atman* is the same as the true nature of *Atman*. The true nature of *atman* and of *Atman* is Brahman. The true nature of Brahman is *sat-cit-ananda*.

In the Svetasvatara Upanishad, the first Adhyaya, we see what appears to be a reference to Brahman as a three-in-one deity.

"7. This has been sung as the supreme Brahma.

In it there is a triad. It is the firm support, the Imperishable.

By knowing what is therein, Brahma-knowers

Become merged in Brahma, intent thereon, liberated from the womb.

8. That which is joined together as perishable and imperishable,

As manifest and unmanifest - the Lord (*isa*, Potentate) supports it all.

Now, without the Lord the soul (*atman*) is bound, because of being the enjoyer;

By knowing God (*deva*) one is released from all fetters.

9. There are two unborn ones: the knowing [Lord]

and the unknowing [individual soul]

the Omnipotent and the impotent.



She [i.e. Nature, Prakriti], too, is unborn, who is connected with the enjoyer and objects of enjoyment.

Now, the soul (*atman*) is infinite, universal, inactive.

When one finds out this triad, that is Brahma." [\(13\)](#)

Again, keeping in mind Dr. Radhakrishnan's suggested corrections, we see *Brahman* referred to as a trilateral permanent foundation for all else. However, this triad that is being referred to is generally considered to be *sat-cit-ananda*, or Divine Being, human consciousness, and Cosmic Bliss. That is not exactly the triad that we are hoping to compare to the Tri-Kaya, whereas the triad of *Brahman*, *Atman* and *atman*, which is a triad of the pure ultimate reality as seen objectively, the pure ultimate reality as seen introspectively, and the individual self, closely fits the concept of a three-in-one reality as described by many other faiths. However these two triads are clearly interwoven and interdependent.

The Mandaka Upanishad, Second Mandaka, called the Doctrine of Brahman, First Khanda, states:

"4. Fire is His head; His eyes, the moon and sun;

The regions of space, His ears; His voice, the revealed Vedas;

Wind, His breath (*prana*); His heart, the whole world. Out of His feet,

The earth. Truly, He is the Inner Soul (*Atman*) of all." [\(14\)](#)

Remembering that *Brahma* should be *Brahman*, and He (Him, His, etc.) should be That or It (Its, etc.) as a reference to *Brahman*, and that Soul should be Self, we can see that *Brahman* is indeed the *Atman*.

In the Second Khanda of the Doctrine of Brahman there is confirmation of this.

"5. He on whom the sky, the earth, and the atmosphere

Are woven, and the mind, together with all the life-breaths (*prana*),

Him alone know as the one Soul (*Atman*). Other

Words dismiss. He is the bridge to immortality." [\(15\)](#)

To reveal the nature of *atman* (the individual consciousness) we must refer to the Chandogya Upanishad.

The Sixth Prapathaka contains the instruction of Svetaketu by his father, Uddalaka Aruni, concerning the key to all knowledge. In the Eighth Khanda Uddalaka begins to reveal that all of reality is *Atman*.

"...(7) That which is the finest essence - this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality (*satya*). That is *Atman*. That art thou, Svetaketu.' "

In the Ninth Khanda, Uddalaka tells how all creatures, knowing and unknowing are *Atman*.

"1. 'As the bees, my dear, prepare honey by collecting the essences of different trees and reducing the essence to a unity, [2] as they are not able to discriminate "I am the essence of this tree," "I am the essence of that tree" - even so, indeed, my dear, all creatures here, though they reach Being,<sup>(16)</sup> know not "We have reached Being."

3. Whatever they are in this world, whether tiger, or lion, or wolf, or boar, or worm, or fly, or gnat, or mosquito, that they become.

4. That which is the finest essence - this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality. That is *Atman*. That art thou, Svetaketu.' "

In the Tenth Khanda Uddalaka continues.

"1. These rivers, my dear, flow , the eastern toward the east, the western toward the west. They go just from the ocean to the ocean. They become the ocean itself. As there they know not "I am this one," "I am that one" - [2] even so, indeed, my dear, all creatures here, though they have come forth from Being, know not "We have come forth from Being." Whatever they are in this world, whether tiger, or lion, or wolf, or boar, or worm, or fly, or gnat, or mosquito, that they become.

3. That which is of the finest essence - this whole world has as its soul. That is Reality. That is *Atman*. That art thou, Svetaketu."

In the Eleventh Khanda, Uddalaka repeats.

"3. ' Verily, indeed, when life has left it, this body dies. The life does not die.

That which is the finest essence - this whole world has that as its soul. That is Reality. That is *Atman*. That art thou, Svetaketu."

And in the Twelfth Khanda;

"3. '...Believe me, my dear,' said he, 'that which is the finest essence - this whole world has as its soul. That is Reality. That is *Atman*. That art thou, Svetaketu.' " <sup>(17)</sup>

"That art thou, Svetaketu." This statement is the key to all spiritual knowledge. It is made a total of nine times within the Sixth Prapathaka of the Chandogya Upanishad, emphasizing that the individual self is indeed the same in nature as That (*Brahman*).

It is not my intention here to present a compilation of these Hindu writings, but I do feel it is important to present all of these particular verses in order to fully clarify my point.

The individual self (*atman*) is the river that leads to the great ocean of the Universal Self (*Atman*) both being, in their true nature, the water of ultimate reality (*Brahman*), its nature being *sat-cit-ananda*. Indeed the ancient Hindu scholars had found the three-in-one that is the core of all reality.

During roughly the same time period as the latest of the Upanishads, and in another part of Asia, there was a scholar who came to be known as *Lao Tzu* or "Old Man".

Lao Tzu was an older contemporary of *Gung Fu Tse*, known to westerners as Confucius (551 - 479 B.C.), and is said to have lived for over 160 years, as his life was dedicated to the cultivation of the *Tao*<sup>(18)</sup> which in turn is said to cultivate longevity. Though it is known that Lao Tzu lived during the Eastern Chou Dynasty (770 - 256 B.C.), the exact dates of his birth and death are uncertain, as is his true identity. However this problem has had little effect on the fact that the writings that are popularly known as the *Tao Te Ching*, which are attributed to the hand of Lao Tzu, is the most translated Chinese manuscript in history.

For the purpose of this chapter I have chosen the translation of D.C.Lau, because of his knowledge and understanding of the Chinese characters from that period and for his clear and concise English rendering.

It should be no surprise that in this *Tao Te Ching* we find parallels with other religious thought. In Book One, Chapter One, we see an immediate reference to that which cannot be named or spoken of.

"1. The way that can be spoken of

Is not the constant way;

The name that can be named

Is not the constant name.

2. The nameless was the beginning of heaven and earth;

The named was the mother of the myriad of creatures." <sup>(19)</sup>

In chapter Five the "Old Man" again refers to that illusive essence.

"15. Is not the space between heaven and earth like a bellows?

It is empty without being exhausted:

The more it works the more that comes out.

16. Much speech leads inevitably to silence.

Better to hold fast to the void." [\(20\)](#)

In Chapter Fourteen we find a description of the Tao as the unknown.

"32. What cannot be seen is called evanescent;

What cannot be heard is called rarefied;

What cannot be touched is called minute.

32a. These three cannot be fathomed

And so they are confused and looked upon as one.

33. Its upper part is not dazzling;

Its lower part is not obscure.

Dimly visible, it cannot be named

And returns to that which is without substance.

This is called the shape that has no shape,

The image that is without substance.

This is called indistinct and shadowy.

Go up to it and you will not see its head;

Follow behind it and you will not see its rear.

## 34. Hold fast to the way of antiquity

In order to keep in control of the realm of today.

The ability to know the beginning of antiquity

Is called the thread running through the way." [\(21\)](#)

And from Book Two, Chapter Forty again we see a reference to the origin of all things.

"89. The myriad creatures in the world are born from

Something, and Something from Nothing." [\(22\)](#)

Of course there are many other descriptions of the Tao in other verses, but with these few verses one can see similarities in these descriptions to those given for Brahman of the Upanishads, or for the Dharma-Kaya of Buddhism, or even for the Holy Ghost as interpreted by Christian mystics. In Chapter One, Verse 2, as well as in Chapter Forty, Verse 89, there are suggestions of a primordial triad; that triad being the "nameless" or "Nothing", the "named" or "Something", and "the myriad of creatures".

Every faith that I have mentioned thus far is still being practiced somewhere in the world today. Any attempt to go further back in history may lead to a vague, rather blurred vision of the truth that we seek. For example, we could examine the Ancient Egyptian religious beliefs and practices, but we would be hindered by a lack of information, in particular to the esoteric meanings of those beliefs and practices, and by the fact that what little information that is available is quite disputed as to its true implications.

In other words, there is no complete body of scripture available, nor are there any living priests or practitioners of the Ancient Egyptian faiths who can provide proof of a true, unbroken lineage of succession in regards to the transmission of that faiths teachings. Therefore there is no where to turn to find the true teachings of this faith because its line has been long since broken.

If, as the Biblical story suggests, Moses was raised from childhood by the Egyptian hierarchy, and raised to be Pharaoh, then he must have taken with him when he escorted the Jewish people out of Egypt, all of the exoteric and esoteric knowledge of the times. If that is the case, then one could say that the teachings of Moses carry the only living channel into the esoteric truths of the religion of the Pharaohs.

That question, however, gets into a whole other area of research that is outside the purpose of this book. I will therefore leave it at that, that being food for later thought.

In regards to the faiths of aboriginal peoples, there are those much better versed in such faiths than I.

However, what little exposure that I have had with the Southwestern Native American people indicated that many tribes have absorbed the Christian faith into their own, much in the way that Shinto<sup>(23)</sup> Japan absorbed Buddhism into its culture.

God as the Father, God as the Holy Ghost/Spirit, God as Christ, The Blessed Mother Mary, etc., all relate closely (within the spiritual visions of these people) to the concepts or deities of their tribal faiths. One exception being the Hopi belief system, which is very closed to non-Hopi people.

Another exception is the Maya, who have maintained their own scientific-religious teachings in secret over the centuries. The full impact of my childhood experiences with the Maya is only recently revealing itself to me. Thus, I still have much to be shown. Perhaps there will be more about that in another writing. For now, I can say that the numerologic system of the Maya has only three symbols: a dot, for One; a bar, for Five, and a glyph which represents Zero. These numbers are thought of as having both quantitative value and philosophical value. As such, One is One, the All-Thing; Five (the number of fingers on one hand) is the extension of One which becomes many, or Each-Thing, and Zero is Zero, that essence-less essence, the No-Thing.

A small group of third grade school children were taken on a field trip to the Redwoods of Northern California by their teacher; we'll call her Ms. Williams. The group followed a trail deep into the woods until suddenly they came upon the largest Redwood tree anyone had ever seen. The children were so excited to see such a tree that for a moment Ms. Williams thought they might get out of her control. After calming them down, she led them through the woods where they saw much more of nature's glory, but none quite like that huge Redwood tree.

Upon returning to school, the children all went home for the night, as there was class the next morning. That very next class, Ms. Williams asked the children to each describe what they had seen the day before. The large Redwood tree was the central topic of discussion.

"It had such a huge trunk," said one child, "that if we all held hands and tried to circle it we couldn't!"

"It was so tall!" exclaimed the next. "If we tried to climb to the top, we couldn't!"

"It has so many branches! I'll bet it holds a lot of birds nests." another noted.

"I remember how good it smelled!" said another.

And on and on until each had given a different description of what they had experienced that day, most focusing on the massive Redwood tree. But each using different words to describe the same thing.

Are we not like excited children playing in nature? Have we all not seen the same tree, or river, or mountain? Only now we seem to amuse ourselves with disputes over the name and nature of what we have all seen. Ask a Buddhist to describe the Holy Spirit. Ask a Christian to describe Brahman. Ask a Hebrew to describe the Dharma-Kaya.

As my late and dear friend Alan Watts<sup>(24)</sup> once wrote while blessing a handwritten version of a particular Buddhist scripture, "Yama wa yama!"

### **A mountain is a mountain!**

1. Excerpted from *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*; (c) 1994,1995,1996 SoftKey Multimedia Inc.

[\(Back\)](#)

2. *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man*, Raimundo Panikkar, 1973, Orbis Books, New York, N.Y.; p. 42.[\(Back\)](#)

3. *Gods of Life, Idols of Death*, Raimundo Pannikar; trans. by Clare Hallward, Oblate of The Benedictine Priory of Montreal, and Robert Moran of the Roman Catholic Chaplaincy, McGill University; Published in *Monastic Studies*, Number 17, Christmas 1986; The Benedictine Priory of Montreal; p. 101, 102. This article was originally published in Spanish: *Dios de la vida, Idolos de Muerte*, V Congreso de teología, *Mision Abierta* 5-6 (Diciembre 1985), 85-102.[\(Back\)](#)

4. *The Jewish Mystical Tradition* Ben Zion Bokser, 1981, The Pilgrim Press, N.Y.C., NY; p. 113,



114([Back](#))

5. For those readers who are not familiar with the triangular relationship between Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar, I recommend that they read the 16th, 21st, and 25th chapters of the Book of Genesis as well as Chapter 14, the Chapter of Abraham, from the Koran. Such reading should give some insight into the origin of the conflicts that pervade the Middle East.[\(Back\)](#)

6. *Cracking The Bible Code* , Jeffrey Satinover, 1997; William Morrow and Company, New York, N.Y.; p. xvii[\(Back\)](#)

7. University Books, Inc.,1966[\(Back\)](#)

8. Handoverly, 1862[\(Back\)](#)

9. The earliest Sanskrit work was in Vedic or Vedic Sanskrit, named as such because of the work, the *Veda*. The Vedas are the oldest known Hindu scripture and appeared before 1500 B.C. The first is known as the *Rg Veda*, and is considered to be the oldest existing Indo-European literary and philosophical treatise. By comparison, the most ancient fragments of the Hebrew text of the Holy Bible are the 2nd Century B.C. papyrus of Nash. The earliest Greek text to the Holy Bible are from the 4th Century A.D. The actual dates for the Qumran Scrolls are, to my knowledge, still in dispute.[\(Back\)](#)

10. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, trans. by Robert Ernest Hume, 2nd Ed. 1977, Oxford University Press, London; p.110[\(Back\)](#)

11. *A Sourcebook In Indian Philosophy*, ed. by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Charles Moore, 1957, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey; p. 39[\(Back\)](#)

12. Sanskrit, called by some, "the language of the gods", is considerably complex in nature, contains some words for which there is no absolute translation, particularly into English, and some other words that would require at least a brief essay to thoroughly define. This definitely gets into controversy between those who practice the art of translating, as to who said it best and whose version is the most accepted. In the final analysis, Hume's Upanishads translation is one of the most accepted.[\(Back\)](#)

13. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, trans. by Robert Ernest Hume, 2nd Ed. 1977, Oxford University Press, London; p. 395, 396[\(Back\)](#)

14. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, trans. by Robert Ernest Hume, 2nd Ed. 1977, Oxford University Press, London; p. 370[\(Back\)](#)

15. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, trans. by Robert Ernest Hume, 2nd Ed. 1977, Oxford University

Press, London; p.372([Back](#))

16. In deep sleep and in death. - Hume([Back](#))

17. *The Thirteen Principal Upanishads*, trans. by Robert Ernest Hume, 2nd Ed. 1977, Oxford University Press, London; p. 246 - 248([Back](#))

18. D.C.Lau translates this word as "the way".([Back](#))

19. *Lao Tzu / Tao Te Ching*, trans. and intro. by D.C.Lau, 1963, Penguin Books Ltd., England; p. 57([Back](#))

20. *Lao Tzu / Tao Te Ching*, trans. and intro. by D.C.Lau, 1963, Penguin Books Ltd., England; p. 61([Back](#))

21. *Lao Tzu / Tao Te Ching*, trans. and intro. by D.C.Lau, 1963, Penguin Books Ltd., England; p. 70([Back](#))

22. *Lao Tzu / Tao Te Ching*, trans. and intro. by D.C.Lau, 1963, Penguin Books Ltd., England; p. 101([Back](#))

23. *Shinto* is a religion of ancestry exclusive to the Japanese culture. Though there is no known founder of this faith and no scripture as such, there are two books considered important to *Shinto*. These are *Koji-ki*, or *Records of Ancient Matters* (712 A.D.) and *Nihon shoki*, or *Chronicles of Japan* (720 A.D.). The focus of worship for its practitioners is *Amaterasu O'mikami*, the sun goddess, from whom the first Japanese emperor, Jimmu Tenno (7th century B.C.) is said to have descended.([Back](#))

24. See "Suggested Reading".([Back](#))

[3. Science &  
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# Chapter Three

## Science and the Mind

Since it is the mind that contains knowledge, in order to fully understand the state or fact of knowing we must first understand the true nature of mind. Conversely, in order to fully understand the mind we must first understand the state or fact of knowing. In this chapter I will attempt to combine the two subjects in order help the reader more clearly understand that which is known in old Tibet as the Tri-Kaya.

As we look at the universe that surrounds us all, and of which we are all a part, we see that it is filled with large bodies, some of which are stars, some are planets, smaller ones are asteroids or meteorites or comets. Now all of this seems to be spinning in something known as space, and appears to go on, in terms of distance, forever. If we follow the discoveries of recent times, we will see that this universe appears to have been here for about 15 billion Earth-years, yet while there are theories regarding the beginning of time, the Big Bang, and such, there is no empirical evidence to support such a concept.

Because of the time required for the particles of light to travel from any given stellar event to the lens of our telescope, looking out over the universe is much like looking at a very old photograph. We see the light impressions, some cast billions of years ago, but we do not see what is happening at that location at this present time.

Some say that because the universe appears to be expanding, this confirms that it has a beginning, called "The Big Bang." But we are not in a position to know if this perceived motion is a singular motion or one of a series of waves of expansion and contraction. Neither are we in a position to know if there was a beginning to this motion, especially if this motion is part of a series, or of a continuum, of waves.

But even if what we see now as the form and mass of the universe has a beginning, what and where could it have been created from? From nothing? We are told that matter can neither be created or destroyed, but merely transformed. If this is true, and if there was a Big Bang, there must have been both the detonator and the detonated, and there must have been the space within which to detonate. In other words, our universe must have existed in another form, if there was a Big Bang, or a creation, other than the form in which we now see it.

As if to underscore what I am implying here, quite recently it has been discovered that the detected expansion of the known universe is progressing along an exponential curve. This observation practically throws the whole Big Bang theory right out the window.

In an explosion, such as is suggested by the Big Bang theory, the highest pressure created by the explosion against the matter which is exploded happens at the instant of that explosion. The speed with which the fragments of matter are projected outward from that explosion will constantly decline from that instant. What is being currently observed from the Hubbell telescope is the constant *increase* in the speed of that expansion. This type of motion does not suggest that an explosive force is its cause.

Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that, relative to our own position in space and time, the universe, regardless of whatever form in which it may have manifest, is infinite, both in dimension and in time. Its vastness continues to appear to be beyond our knowledge. Its history continues to appear to be uncountable as does its future. Still, it is our universe, one and complete within itself.

Now let us look at our own immediate material surroundings here on earth. We know from our basic high school science classes that ordinary matter is made up of molecules. These molecules are built from the atoms of chemical elements, each chemical element (such as iron) having only one kind of atom within its structure, each atom having a balanced electrical charge. Each atom contains a nucleus, which is held together by what is known as the strong nuclear force, and has a certain number of electrons in orbit. Some of these particles emit electromagnetic radiation or light.

If we look even more closely at these atoms we will notice that the apparent mass of the nucleus is approximately 100,000 times smaller than the mass of the atom we are looking at. We will also notice that the electrons, which circle the nucleus at such a vast relative distance that they mark the outline of the atom, are 1800 times smaller than the nucleus that they circle. It is much as if we were looking at a model of some recently discovered solar system; the nucleus being its sun, the electrons its planets, the vastness of space separating these heavenly bodies. In this way, all matter appears as transparent. It could be said that the closer we look the less we see.

If we wish to look any further at these sub-atomic particles and the energy waves that they radiate, we must apply Werner Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle<sup>(1)</sup>. A principle that must be applied to any wave/particle evaluation, it is as much an observation as it is an idea. Its equations regarding the error in the calculation of waves and particles that apply to this discussion are as follows:

(A)

$$\Delta x \Delta p_x \geq \frac{h}{2n}$$

(B)

$$\Delta t \Delta E \geq \frac{h}{2\pi}$$

In Equation (A)  $\Delta x$  is the error in determining the location of the  $x$  co-ordinate of the particle at any given instant, and  $\Delta p_x$  is the simultaneous uncertainty in its component of momentum.

$h = 6.624 \times 10^{-27} \text{ erg-s}$ , also known as Planck's Constant.<sup>(2)</sup>

In other words, if we want to know how fast a particle is moving at a given time, we must give up knowledge of its exact location at that time. Conversely, if we want to know a particle's exact location at a given time we must give up knowledge of its exact momentum at that time.

Equation (B) is more subtle and the circumstances of its application affect its interpretation. (B) relates to the uncertainty in the energy radiated by a system to the uncertainty in the time in which it radiates. In other words, there is no way that we can be certain of an energy's lifetime.

From this it becomes obvious that any further investigation into the sub-atomic realms will be based on theoretical assumptions, many of which are debatable, and all which may not apply in every given situation. One theory has it that the nucleus is made up of even more space and even smaller and more basic particles called *quarks*. These quarks are particles of apparent mass which exhibit an intrinsic angular motion and contain a fractional electrical charge. Further theory holds that *leptons* exist outside the nucleus, which are unaffected by the strong nuclear force and have a negative electrical charge. Leptons are theorized to have a type of motion similar to that of quarks and are said to respond only to the electromagnetic, the weak nuclear, and the gravitational forces. Each lepton is associated with a neutrino which has no electrical charge and relatively little or no apparent mass. Electrons are in this category.

For every sub-atomic particle there exists an antiparticle, as theorized by P.A.M. Dirac in the 1930's. This antiparticle has the same mass, but an opposite electrical charge from its counterpart. The antiparticle of an electron is a positron. The antiparticle of a proton is an antiproton. The antiparticle of a quark is an antiquark.

Again we must keep in mind that all of this is theory, and no one has ever actually observed these particles in such a way as to absolutely prove their existence. And, as time goes on, science will indeed continue to theorize regarding that which is considered to be the building blocks of all material existence; that which will likely remain unseen.

So not only are these building blocks that make up the atoms very, very tiny, but they are also moving through a relatively vast area of space at very high speeds, making the simultaneous

detection of their location, their momentum, and their duration in time an impossibility. In other words, what may we think we may be looking at is, in fact, uncertain. This apparent particle will probably arrive at a location during a period of time with a possible momentum, but we are uncertain. Even if we could overcome the limits of our own knowing, we are still left with Heisenberg's Uncertainty principle regarding the study of the world around us, leaving us with only the probability of events.

When we step back from this view and look at our immediate surroundings in the ordinary world, for a moment everything becomes transparent. We can, at that moment, see the illusiveness of material existence. The old adage, "The more I know, the more I know I don't know!" becomes a reality.

It has been suggested that if all else ceased to exist, that only ordinary space and time would be left. May I suggest that if there are no reference points for ordinary space and/or time, there could be no ordinary space or time.

If I ask you to draw a round object on a piece of paper, you may draw the circle which defines a round object as shown on the paper (Figure 1). If you drew, say, less than half a circle (Figure 2), or did not draw a circle at all (Figure 3), the round object would not exist. Such it is with ordinary space and time.

Fig.1

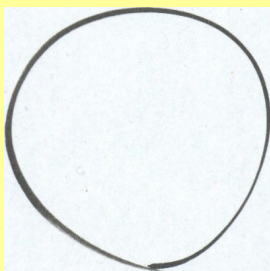


Fig.2

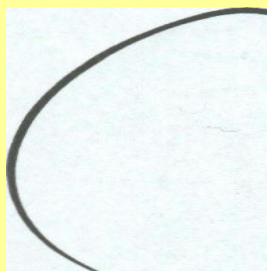


Fig.3

There could be no distance between two reference points if those points do not exist, either in the space continuum or in the time continuum. If all else ceased to exist so would ordinary space and so would ordinary time. The existence of ordinary space depends upon the existence of material



bodies. The existence of ordinary time depends on the events that mark the motion of ordinary time. This interdependent relationship is a naturally occurring symbol of the interdependence of the Each-Thing with the All-Thing and with the No-Thing.

Evidence of this, with regards to time and its relationship to mass, is the concept that the passage of time is slower when the observer is on a 'round trip' from and to the point of reference, than it is to the observer that is situated adjacent to the same point of reference. In his book, *Relativity, The Special and General Theory*, Albert Einstein puts it this way.

"Every reference-body (co-ordinate system) has its own particular time; unless we are told the reference-body to which the statement of time refers, there is no meaning in a statement of the time of an event." (3)

If this is true, then could it be that if one were to travel far enough into deep outer space one might observe at some point in space, time would stop (with reference to the earth) and even reverse itself (again, with reference to the earth) once the observer had traveled beyond that point in outer space?

A similar experience, without the use of a spacecraft, may be observed mentally with the use of certain meditation practices which allow the observer to enter deep meditational states, thus allowing that observer to experience the mind of the universe. Such traverses of mental space allow one to experience the stillness of time on a deep internal level. Here again, the further the mind travels from its "seat", the slower the passage of time (with reference to that "seat"), even to the point of timelessness.

If I may interject, it may be of some importance to mention at this point that Professor Einstein's theory does demonstrate how even the fundamental components of nature appear to change according to the point of reference from which they are observed.

Also Professor Einstein does give an equation for determining the radius of the universe. However, he does state that the theory, upon which that equation is based, may not be applicable under all conditions. It seems to me, therefore, that we perhaps cannot know if the universe even has a radius, let alone if any equation based on  $E=Mc^2$  would be accurate under such conditions, at least until someone actually captures a panoramic image of the universe by whatever technological methods there might be that would allow for such an image.

We must remember that  $c$  (the speed of light in a vacuum) is not known to exist, since, as you will see, a vacuum is not known to exist. Therefore the theory is hypothetical, and does not apply to all situations. Now, with regards to ordinary space and its relationship to mass, in science a perfect vacuum has never been observed, therefore space without mass is not known to exist. *The New Columbia Encyclopedia* defines a vacuum like this:

"Vacuum, theoretically, is space without matter in it. A perfect vacuum has never been obtained;



the best man-made vacuums contain less than 100,000 gas molecules per cc, compared to about 30 billion billion ( $30 \times 10^{18}$ ) molecules for air at sea level. The most nearly perfect vacuum exists in intergalactic space, where it is estimated that on the average there is less than one molecule per cc." (4)

I think that perhaps the concept of a vacuum is as close as we will get, using scientific research, to observing the No-Thing. That there is no known perfect vacuum demonstrates the possibility of the inseparability of ordinary space from mass. If a perfect vacuum were attainable, then perhaps the concept of the Tri-Kaya as described in the first chapter, being the unified and unseparable thread of the fabric of reality, would be demonstrated as incorrect. But ordinary space, separate from any and all mass, is not known to exist.

Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia states it this way.

". . . Since there is no method or device that can remove all matter from an enclosed space, a perfect vacuum is unknown and has only theoretical meaning. It was once thought that a perfect vacuum might exist in outer space. Now scientist know that the apparent empty space between the stars contains a large mass of gas which is mostly hydrogen." (5)

What is meant by "has only theoretical meaning" is that a perfect vacuum is a theoretical possibility, but has to this point not been discovered.

But if, somehow, there were no ordinary space and there were no ordinary time, and if the reference points by which we identify this ordinary space and time, for some reason, did not exist, then all that would be left is the mother of all space and time, the pure and true nature of all realities, the No-Thing.

Now let us look at the nature and makeup of that which we call "mind". When one "loses their mind", where does their mind go? Can one actually lose their mind? By what does one know that one has a mind in the first place? Show me your mind. Where does one's mind reside? Does mind exist?

All of these questions become evident when one studies the nature of mind. We see the results of mind in the behavior of humanity and it's individuals. We experience our mind with every pulse and breath of our heart and lungs as our thought patterns are very much tied to the rhythms set by these organs.

When an individual feels mental excitement or panic, they may stop to "catch their breath" or perform a deep breathing exercise in order to slow their heart rate and regain mental control. To the practitioner of *Jnana* yoga, the breath and heart rates are synchronized and controlled in such a way as to allow the yogin to enter deep mental states where one may better experience the processes and

nature of mind.

There is clearly a direct mind/body relationship on both the conscious and sub-conscious levels. The sub-conscious parts of the brain receive the information and relay that information to the other locations within the brain through networks of information carrying neurons. This information is, at that point, an electro-chemical signal. The brain then receives, evaluates, and sends whatever information that is required to maintain the body of which it is a part.

Thousands of connections are made as the electro-chemical action takes place. An electrical signal is sent to a neuron down a path to a gap called a synapse. The signal stimulates a chemical reaction in order to cross that gap and get to the next neuron, where it may or may not become another electrical signal, depending upon the signal it received, and so on and so on until all of the parts of the brain have been either informed or not informed, that depending on the original stimulus.

Electrical signals are made up of waves of sub-atomic particles known as electrons. Chemicals are an arrangement of a certain number and kind atom, and, as I have already mentioned, atoms are made up of a nucleus and a number of electrons, both of which depend upon whatever is required to give the atom a balanced electrical charge. For example, the hydrogen atom has as a nucleus of only one proton, which has a positive charge, and that proton is encircled by one electron, which has a negative charge.

If mind truly resides within the nervous system, primarily the brain, then mind must be either the combination of electrical and/or electro-chemical impulses throughout the nervous system, or the combination of interactions made between these electrical and/or electro-chemical impulses throughout the nervous system, or a combination of both combinations.

Either way, we can say that mind has no certain mass or substance, just as we can say that electrons have no certain mass or substance and atoms have no certain mass or substance. The mind, as an object or item, appears to not exist. At best, existence of mind is theoretical. Mind, like the No-Thing, appears to be pure, without form, without substance, weight, color, odor or taste.

We can also confirm this with certain meditational practices which allow one to view thought patterns through concentrated introspection. When the meditator first practices the art of meditation, he or she is generally overwhelmed with a flood of raging thought patterns. This overload of mental images is what keeps many people from ever trying meditation a second time. In some individuals it is impossible to endure without counseling.

However, those who can take all of the chaos that their minds can dish out will be rewarded when, eventually, all of that chaos begins to settle down. The body will feel more relaxed and comfortable with itself. The mind will throw out fewer thoughts-per-second than it did initially. The meditator sees the mental patterns more clearly and with even further practice they are able to view each thought, from one to the next, clearly and uninterruptedly. The advanced meditator is even able to

observe the space between the thoughts, carefully and calmly, just as a physicist sits in his laboratory and calmly observes the electron interact with its nucleus while swimming in all that space.

And just as the atom is transparent, so do thought forms appear to be transparent. That No-Thing is absolutely everywhere, within and without.

Now let's put science and the mind together. When a person (the viewer) looks at an object (the viewed), what happens? The light that is cast upon the viewed is reflected into the eye of the viewer and that impression is sent from the retina of the eye across a circuit of nerves to the brain where it is acknowledged.

Say, for the sake of discussion, the viewed object is a round silver ball, and the environment enclosing both the viewed and the viewer is both clear and well illuminated. The viewer looks at the ball. Given the features of the ball and the environmental conditions, a clear and well defined reflection of the ball is sent uninterruptedly to the retina within the eye of the viewer. The retina then sends an impression, via the optic nerve, and within a few milliseconds the brain of the viewer acknowledges the round silver ball in a clear and well illuminated environment.

The reflection is massless carriers of electromagnetic radiation, or light particles known as photons. The impression between the retina and the brain is an electro-chemical signal. We know that electro-chemical signals are comprised of waves of negatively charged sub-atomic particles called electrons, and chemical elements which are made of atoms which are made up of a nucleus, which is made up of even more and smaller particles and even more space, and its electron(s). Electrons are also an important component in ordinary matter and, as I mentioned earlier and must re-emphasize, are massless or very near massless, and are extremely small being 1836 times smaller than the nucleus of a hydrogen atom, which is 100,000 times smaller than the atom itself. The mass of the brain of the viewer, which receives the electronic signal, is made up of a concentration of various molecules which are made up of atoms of the various elements which are made up of sub-atomic particles and waves. And finally, we know that the mind of the viewer, which experiences all of this, is either the combined signals and impulses that run across the circuitry of the brain, or the combined interactions between these signals and impulses or both.

Given the elapsed time that it takes for a photon to travel to the retina, and the elapsed time that it takes for an electronic signal to travel to the brain, and again, the elapsed time that it takes for the brain's sub-conscious mind to inform the brain's conscious mind, there is a considerable time lapse between the event of the viewer "aiming" or "focusing" his eyes at/on the viewed, and the conscious perception (the viewer consciously acknowledging the viewed) of that event.

This time lapse is so great in most individuals that in some sports, an experienced player may

actually take advantage of his opponents response time lapse in order to win a match. This response time is a combination of the elapsed time between the event and the actual perception of the event, plus the elapsed time between the perception of the event and the actual physical response to the event.

In a martial arts contest, the experienced player may observe his opponents response time by monitoring that opponents eye movement. He may then factor that time into a move or set of moves that will put the player in the winning position at the instant of his opponents time lapse.

In the form of automobile racing known as drag racing, response or reaction times, are often the difference between winning and losing, especially in a contest where competitors may cover the distance of a quarter mile from a standing start in less than 6 seconds.

In today's baseball games, pitchers are known to throw the ball at speeds exceeding 90 miles per hour. This leaves a batters with slow response times unable to hit such a high speed projectile.

As we apply this time lapse between the event and the conscious perception of the event to the energy and mass that is that observed object, the round silver ball, and to the uncertainty of sub-atomic existence, we realize that by the time we actually acknowledge what may have occurred, everything we thought we were looking at is well on it's way in it's own life process and we have no absolute knowledge of what happened to what we were observing during that instant in time. Even the actual apparently inert round silver ball that we were observing milliseconds ago has gone through changes, such that it is not exactly the same ball when we perceive it as it was when we focused our eyes upon it.

In other words, the mind, due to it's own illusive nature as well as the illusive nature of the viewed object, cannot know exactly what it is looking at. It must make a decision based on the best information it can perceive as sent from the various sensory inputs, and accept the uncertainty, the unseen, and the unknown as part of existence. That best information is based on what was observed as having probably occurred, since matter appears not to exist within the bounds of certainty. We can say that matter appears to exist, and that matter probably exists, but we cannot say that matter definitively and absolutely exists. Hence, probability is perhaps a more stable basis for our analysis than is matter. And it is the interactions between each and every probable event that makes up the whole of reality. At the sub-atomic level there no 'things', only interactions between probable events, and at that level there is an interactive relationship between all events within all of reality. All of reality is, at the sub-atomic level, one big matrix of interaction between probable events.

And, likewise, we cannot say that mind exists within the bounds of certainty. We can say that mind appears to exist, and that mind probably does exist, but we cannot say that mind definitively and absolutely exists. So what if there was a photon reflected from a silver ball to the retina of an eye, only to be intercepted by a theoretical mind. We could just as well theorize, with just as much basis for our theory, that none of this really happened; that this was all a dream, created by some greater

intelligence, and of which we are all participants.

From this I think it is fair to say that the true nature of matter and the true nature of mind are the same, and that the discovery of mind was the discovery of science; that in fact and in substance, the mind is science; science is the mind. The chicken is the egg; the egg is the chicken.

And from this view point it can perhaps more clearly be observed that all of reality is three simultaneous primordial conditions or states. We can observe that all that exists is unified and interrelated as if it were one existence. We can observe that existence is, simultaneously, non-existence. Finally, we can observe that there is an infinite number of possibilities of events within that existence/non-existence continuum.

In still other words, there is one big event, there are an infinite number of small events, and yet, there is no event at all. Considering the absolute lack of absolute proof, how could we conclude anything more?

1. See *McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science & Technology*, 7th Edition, Vol. 19.[\(Back\)](#)
2. Planck's Constant, also known as Planck's Law. According to the McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science & Technology, 7th Edition, Vol.15, it is "A law of physics which gives the spectral energy distribution of heat radiation emitted from a so-called blackbody at any temperature. Discovered by Max Planck in the twentieth century, this law laid the foundation for the advent of the quantum theory because it was the first law to postulate that electromagnetic energy exists in discrete bundles, or quanta."[\(Back\)](#)
3. *Relativity, The Special and General Theory*, by Albert Einstein., trans. by Robert W. Lawson; Crown Publishers, Inc., New York, N.Y.; 1961[\(Back\)](#)
4. *The New Columbia Encyclopedia*, Columbia University Press, New York, N.Y.; 1975[\(Back\)](#)
5. *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*, (c) 1994, 1995, 1996; Soft key Multimedia, Inc.[\(Back\)](#)

[4. Philosophical  
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# Chapter Four

## Philosophical Considerations

As I begin to write this chapter I am reminded of a song by '60's folk singer, Odetta, which asked, "Why? Why? Why?" and answered itself with "Because! Because! Because!"

It has been said that with religion we ask "who?", with science we ask "what?", and with philosophy we ask "why?" This discussion of the subject of the Tri-Kaya would not be complete if I did not include a brief look at some of the classic and modern philosophers and how they may or may not have viewed this triad, its components and/or its implications.

Thales of Miletus is given credit for being, during the early Sixth Century B.C., the first classical Greek philosopher. Thales was also credited as the first physicist. For one of such credits, there is surprisingly little information regarding this conceptual inventor's original philosophy, except for a few statements made by Aristotle in *Metaphysics*.

According to Aristotle, Thales was the first to ask "What are all things?", the answer being, as stated by Thales, "All things are water", and "All things are full of soul."

Here Thales is acknowledging that there is some unity, form, and continuity to all of the world (reality), and that the question can be answered with what is essentially one answer. This appears to be the first pronouncement by European non-theologians that the infinite variety of things all have a common origin, that there exists a thing which is all: an All-Thing.

Let's analyze these statements which constitute Thales' description of the world. The first, "All things are water" relies heavily on the meaning given to the Greek word for "water", *hydor*.

There are some who feel that this statement was made as a consequence of Thales' life in Miletus, a cosmopolitan seaport, his personal exposure to water-surrounded territories, and the assumption that he made trips to inland areas where he found seashells at high altitudes. I think that possibly this interpretation is incorrect. At the



other end of the spectrum, it may be equally incorrect to assume that Thales had some insight into the relative importance of the hydrogen atom.

The word *hydor* is translated, not only as "water", but as "all things in a fluid state." In those days the difference between one liquid and another was not established, as the science of chemistry had yet to make its appearance.

Now since Thales recognized that everything that is, is a part of a world or reality of being and that all things have some common quality or property, then perhaps he also recognized the impermanence of all things, and a certain fluidity to all the world (all of reality). To say that "All things are in a fluid state" is, from that viewpoint, a true and correct statement which correlates with the teachings of several religions as well as with modern scientific thought

In the statement "All things are full of soul", we must look at the Greek word for "soul" as used by Thales in this statement, that word being *psyche*. It is generally accepted that Thales came to this conclusion after experimenting with iron, magnets, and amber. These experiments demonstrated that these objects held some sort of inner power; the iron and the magnet showed some attraction for each other, the amber gave off an observable electrostatic discharge. From that Thales may have concluded that even inert objects had *psyche*. Considering that in Miletus, in the sixth century B.C., just as there was no chemistry as we know of today, neither was there a physics that differentiated between an electrostatic charge, a magnetic field, and the consciousness principal in living beings. It was all *psyche*.

Perhaps what Thales was saying was, "All things have inner power and are in a fluid state." By acknowledging such characteristics, Thales may have thus acknowledged the existence of a unifying presence, the existence of an All-Thing, who's "inner power" and "fluidity" make it such.

Continuing on, Anaximander, a younger contemporary of Thales, had his own ideas which, on the surface seem to contradict the older thinker's teachings. Anaximander believed that all things arise out of a substrata which is eternal, ageless and infinite. This basis for all things is not one of the elements, but a primordial substance which he referred to as "the Boundless". He taught that all things came from the Boundless, and to the Boundless they return.

If not contradicting Thales, then at least redefining the substrata of the universe, the apparent contradiction seems less so when one thinks about the motion to which Anaximander refers. Here again, we see two observations. The observation that all things come from something, and the observation that only the substrata from which all things arise and to which all things will return, is eternal. That leaves all else to change.

Everything changes. So in that way perhaps Anaximander was simply redefining or reclarifying Thales concept. At the very least, he was upholding the concept of a universal unity of all things (the All-Thing) from which each thing (the Each-Thing) flows.

We must remember that the vocabulary of the Sixth Century B.C. was also relatively undeveloped, just as were the sciences. By keeping this in mind we can understand that the struggle was just as much how to describe an idea as it was to create that idea in the first place. Certainly the art and science of semantics flourished during these times.

Then there was Anaximenes, an associate of Anaximander. It was Anaximenes who taught that all change was mechanical in operation and depended upon heat and cold which causes condensation and rarefaction, which in turn causes changes in density.

Now Anaximenes was not aware of the expansion and contraction of molecules, a discovery made much later. He saw the underlying element as being *aer* (air), and somehow this *aer* was to be condensed or rarefied in order to take form as the infinite number of things. Unfortunately he was not too clear on this point, and this whole idea seems, from our modern perspective, to be a step backwards from Anaximander's theory.

But if we consider that, in those days, no one had ever actually seen air or had any realistic concept as to its nature, that it was an "unknowable", then we can see how closely Anaximenes may have come to having some sort of concept of the No-Thing, air being just so much No-Thing to Anaximenes and his colleagues.

Anaximenes did finally get away from personifying the elements of nature, something that Thales idea of *psyche* and Anaximander's concept of the Boundless had failed to do. As we shall later see, that too may have been a step in the wrong direction, but a step that would eventually be required in order to attain the proper objectivity. A sort of "one-step-back-two-steps-forward."

In about 530 B.C., in the southern Italian city of Crotona, the Greek scholar Pythagoras continued the effort to resolve Thales' primal question by teaching that all things are number and scale. His ideas of form were derived from the study of music, his having observed the relative lengths of a vibrating string and its harmonics, the ratios for the octave, fifth, and fourth as being  $\frac{2}{1}$ ,  $\frac{3}{2}$ , and  $\frac{4}{3}$  respectively. He noticed that these ratios were approximately the same ratios exhibited by the periods of planetary motion. With this, Pythagoras concluded that the celestial system was a system of number and scale that had the mathematical simplicity of harmonic music.

Now by saying that all is number and scale, Pythagoras is declaring that all is not born of *hydor*, nor of "the Boundless", nor of *aer* ; that all is not a substance, but a concept, since there is no where that numbers grow, or are manufactured, or even exist, except as conceptual. Therefore, Pythagoras becomes the first of the classical philosophers to leave the idea of a substantive origin of all things. Like Anaximenes, Pythagoras may have been very close to a concept of the No-Thing. And while he disagreed with his predecessors on its nature, he did seem to acknowledge the unity of origin of all things, thus acknowledging an All-Thing.

Pythagoras gave everyone further food-for-thought when he declared religion and science to both have validity, a concept that even to this day confounds many. However it is known that Pythagoras has studied in Egypt during a time when Egyptian science and religion were considered to be of the same divine origin. Therefore this concept does not seem to be as out of place as it would be if Pythagoras had never left Greece.

The concept of the unification of religion, science and philosophy is paramount to the purpose of this book. For that purpose, Pythagoras represents a turning point in the development of western thinking.

Heraclitus of Ephesus was perhaps the first existentialist poet. His work flourished from 504 B.C. to 500 B.C. As compared to the Miletus school, his style was flamboyant, oratorical, poetic, sometimes angry, often unscientific, and as some scholars feel, a bit uncentered. Some even feel that Heraclitus was not a philosopher at all, but rather just some sort of mad poet. This was probably due to the volatility of his choice of words. Yet still, some scholars feel that Heraclitus was a plurisignationist. That is, one who deliberately uses words with more than one meaning in order to communicate a complex concept.

Within one hundred and thirty fragmented verses compiled by John Burnet, in his book *Early Greek Philosophy* [\(1\)](#) there are a very few statements that demonstrate Heraclitus' view of a central primordial reality. In the first verse we see:

"(1) It is wise to hearken, not to me, but to my Word, and to confess that all things are one."

Here his statement "all things are one" acknowledges a common origin or cause of all things. He could, perhaps, not more clearly express the All-Thing. In verses 20 and 22 we see that Fire (*pyr*) is the word chosen by Heraclitus to express his view of this origin.

"(20) This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or man has made; but it was ever, is now, and ever shall be an ever living Fire, with measures of it kindling, and

measures going out."

"(22) All things are an exchange for Fire, and Fire for all things, even as wares for gold and gold for wares."

Like Thales, Heraclitus saw all things as being in a state of flux, however as *pyr*, not as *hydor*. And like Anaximander's "the Boundless", Heraclitus' Fire "...was ever, is now, and ever shall be..."

Was Heraclitus simply looking for a better description of what everyone agreed (but to that agreement no one would admit) was the true primordial reality? He most likely considered it in his own best interest to not agree with anyone. However, like *hydor*, *psyche*, and *aer*, the development of the meaning of *pyr* was in its early stages, and looking at the obvious qualities of what we today call fire, one can see how Heraclitus could have developed this theory and still not be in total disagreement with his predecessors. *Hydor* is "all things in a fluid state." Fire has fluidity, though the flow of fire is not influenced by gravity in the same way as is the flow of water. *Psyche* is an inner power. Fire has *psyche*. *Aer* is air; gaseous and unseen. Fire is also gaseous, but it is often transparent, not always invisible, which is due to the temperature of the actual combustion, which is its apparent "inner power" or *psyche*.

This also, however, was a step in the opposite direction of that for which the destiny of western philosophy was bound, for Heraclitus had left the idea that primordial reality is conceptual, as taught by Pythagoras, in favor of the earlier idea of an elemental or substantive center of all things.

Parmenides of Elea, in the southern part of Italy, came into prominence during approximately the same time as did Heraclitus of Ephesus. His verses were preserved to some degree by Simplicius. The example shown here is, again, from John Burnet.

"Come now, I will tell thee - and do hearken to my saying and carry it away - the only two ways of search that can be thought of. The first, namely, that *It is*, and that it is impossible for it not to be, is the way of belief, for truth is its companion. The other, namely, that *It is not*, and it must needs not be, - that, I tell thee, is a path that none can learn of at all. For thou canst not know what is not - that is impossible - nor utter it; for it is the same thing that can be thought and that can be." (2)

Here, rather than dealing with the nature of primordial reality as either substantive or conceptual, Parmenides wrestles with the duality of presence/non-presence or being/non-being. This dynamic perception, for the first time, brought to western thinking a discussion of the unknowable, unperceivable aspect of primordial reality, as well as a

perception of the apparent contradictory nature of this primordial reality. In this way Parmenides may be inadvertently acknowledging the possibility that the primordial reality is both substantive and conceptual.

Parmenides had shown, to quote Robert S. Brumbaugh, "that the existence of change, or even the appearance of change, required that being be many, not one; and, if many, divided by not-being into its separate parts." (3) On the surface it appears that Parmenides had come upon the three-in-one primordial condition that is the subject of this book. However, he had not given validity to not-being, or "what is not", and the apparent contradiction between the one and the many is left unresolved. Neither had he resolved the question of the true nature of the "one" and of the "many", as well as the true nature of "what is not".

A contemporary of Parmenides, Zeno, who was also from Elea, set out to prove Parmenides theories by demonstrating that all plurality, change and movement are illusory. And though he failed in that respect, he did succeed in re-enforcing the concept that all things follow a pattern of logical form.

Anaxagoras, a native of Clazomenae, made his appearance by making statements about the nature of the stars, planets and comets as being stones revolving around the earth in a rapid motion. When a large meteorite fell to earth in Sicily in 467 B.C., shortly after this pronouncement was expounded, some felt that Anaxagoras was a seer of future events. The scientific community, however, saw this as insight, and while still in his twenties, Anaxagoras was selected as "consulting scientist" for an Athenian group of cultural leaders headed by Pericles.

What Anaxagoras brought into the discussion and debate among philosophers and scientist of the day was the idea that mind (*Nous*), as a factor in the equation of reality, stands alone and orders all things.

Now this was a concept of mind as a substance, which Anaxagoras held as "unmixed and pure", and which he credited with having originally set the universe in motion; a cosmic mind which is "dispersed in shares" throughout the infinite things. And because Anaxagoras did not attribute this cosmic mind to any of the local deities of the time, as well as the fact that he declared that the sun was a burning rock and not of divinity, he found himself renounced as an atheist. Today the idea of a cosmic mind would only be considered as support for religious and spiritual beliefs.

Leucippus of Miletus was the first western thinker to be credited with the theory of the atom, in approximately the mid-5th Century B.C. Records of his teachings were kept by both Theophrastus and Aristotle. Theophrastus, in his *Opinions*, translated here again by



John Burnet, writes as follows:

"Leucippus of Elea or Miletus (for both accounts are given of him) had associated with Parmenides in philosophy. He did not, however, follow the same path in his explanation of things as Parmenides and Xenophanes did, but, to all appearance, the very opposite. They made the All one, immovable, uncreated, and finite, and did not even permit us to search for *what is not*; he assumed innumerable and ever-moving elements, namely, the atoms. And he made their forms infinite in number, since there was no reason why they should be of one kind rather than another, and because he saw that there was unceasing becoming and change in things. He held, further, that *what is* is no more real than *what is not*, and that both are alike causes of the things that come into being; for he laid down that the substance of atoms was compact and full, and he called them *what is*, while they moved in the void which he called *what is not*, but affirmed to be just as real as *what is*."  
(4)

The No-Thing (*what is not*) is at last acknowledged as being as valid as the All-Thing (*what is*) within this definition of primordial reality.

Just on the outskirts of the city of Athens, as it stands today, is the *Democritus Nuclear Research Laboratory*, named for Democritus of Abdera. It is this philosopher/physicist who is given credit for having, in approximately 400 B.C., developed the first systematic explanation and the first applications of, and thus giving stabilization to, Leucippus' original atomic theory. This era of development is generally considered to be the high-point in ancient Greek philosophy and clearly lays the groundwork for today's philosophical and scientific views, though today's atomic theory, as you will recall from the previous chapter, differs greatly.

There are four essential ideas of Greek atomism. The first is that matter comes in individual particles, which are minute to the point of invisibility and hard to the point of indivisibility. *Atoma* means "unable to be cut." The second idea is that these particles move about in an empty space, which does exist as space. The third idea is that atoms differ only in shape and in volume. The fourth idea is that all change is caused by a transfer of the momentum of the atoms, by the atoms. This transfer is made only when there is actual physical contact, one atom to another.

In his *On Generation and Corruption*, referring to the new theory of the atom, Aristotle writes:

"The most systematic and consistent theory,...., was advanced by Leucippus and Democritus: and, in maintaining it, they took as their starting-point what naturally comes first."

As Aristotle continues, he discusses how previous philosophers had given their versions of "The Truth" based on mistaken ideas that they should disregard sense-perception, "on the ground that 'one ought to follow the argument': and so they assert that the universe is 'one' and immovable." He seems to chastise his predecessors for the ever-present human error of getting so caught up in the debate that one loses touch with the information being conveyed by their senses; i.e., smell, taste, sight, hearing, and touch.

He then praised Leucippus for his balanced view.

"Leucippus, however, thought he had a theory which harmonized with sense-perception and would not abolish either coming-to-be and passing-away or motion and the multiplicity of things. He made these concessions to the facts of perception: on the other hand, he conceded to the Monist that there could be no motion without void. The result is a theory which he states as follows: "The void is a "not-being", and no part of "what is" is a "not-being"; for what "is" in the strict sense of the term in an absolute *plenum*. This *plenum*, however is not "one": on the contrary, it is a "many" infinite in number and invisible owing to the minuteness of their bulk. The "many" move in the void (for there is a void): and by coming together they produce "coming-to-be", while separating they produce "passing away". Moreover, they act and suffer action where-ever they chance to be in contact (for *there* they are not "one"), and they generate by being put together and being intertwined.' From the genuinely-one, on the other hand, there never could have come-to-be a multiplicity, nor from the genuinely-many a "one": that is impossible."

The ancient Greek doctor Empedocles of Acragas lived around the time of Leucippus, though he was probably the younger. Mixing chemistry with philosophy and psychology, Empedocles wrote that all things are composed of six elements: earth, air, fire, water, love, and hate. The first four; earth, air, fire, and water come in particles with certain shapes and sizes. These particles fit together to form larger shapes, and do so in a way that allows for "pores" between the particles. Empedocles did not allow for a void, as the pores were filled with a fluid of smaller particles of other kinds, causing change by reciprocal displacement. Aristotle did not see eye to eye with Empedocles, though he does, too often, refer to Empedocles' doctrines (and usually for the sake of stating how not to think) in his own writings.

"Empedocles too is practically bound to adopt the same theory as Leucippus. For he must say there are certain solids which, however, are indivisible - unless there are continuous pores all through the body. But this last alternative is impossible: for *then* there will be nothing in a solid body (nothing besides the pores) but all of it will be void. It is necessary, therefore, for his 'contiguous discretives' to be invisible, while the intervals between them - which he calls 'pores' - must be void. But this is precisely Leucippus' theory of action and passion" [\(5\)](#)



Aristotle was not the creator of any theory concerning the nature of primordial reality, but rather he took the atomic theory of Leucippus and Democritus, and, combined with Plato's theory of forms, reconciled materialism with formalism, bringing organization to this interpretation of primordial reality. This interpretation held for more than two thousand years.

It is the progress of the science of optics that has, since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, given the study of atomic theory such encouragement. With those discoveries of atomic science, there has been a development of philosophical ideas that are closely related to those concepts. Thus, the era of philosophy of the mind is born.

Enter Rene Descartes. Descartes was born in La Haye, France, in 1596. He received his education at the Jesuit College at La Fleche, and at the University of Poitiers. After military service to Prince Maurice of Nassau, he retired to Holland in 1628. There he began his studies in science, mathematics, and philosophy. Descartes left Holland to live in Sweden in 1649, at the invitation of Queen Christina. He died there one year later.

It is Descartes who gave us the declaration, *cogito ergo sum*; "I think, therefore I am". This declaration was made as a conclusion to the line of questioning that follows doubt, yet accepts the existence of the thinker and of God. This rather dualistic approach held that since the idea of God was caused to be, God must exist. It also held that God would never deceive the thinking mind, therefore, the thinking mind must be correct in the perception of its own existence. Another way of stating it could be, "I cannot doubt my existence since it follows the fact that I am thinking."

In his *Meditations I*, Descartes discusses the limits of his doubt.

"...I have long had fixed in my mind the belief that an all-powerful God existed by whom I have been created such as I am. But how do I know that He has not brought it to pass that there is no earth, no heaven, no extended body, no magnitude, no place, and that nevertheless [I possess the perceptions of all these things and that] they seem to me to exist just exactly as I now see them? And, besides, as I sometimes imagine that others deceive themselves in the things which they think they know best, how do I know I am not deceived every time that I add two and three, or count the sides of square, or judge of things yet simpler, if anything simpler can be imagined? But possibly God has not desired that I should be thus deceived, for He is said to be supremely good. If, however, it is contrary to His goodness to have made me such that I constantly deceive myself, it would also appear to be contrary to His goodness to permit me to be sometimes deceived, and nevertheless I cannot doubt that He does permit this." [\(6\)](#)

I certainly did not plan to discuss theology in this chapter, but Descartes has left me no

choice. Unfortunate is the fact that Descartes did not follow this line of doubtful thinking to its obvious and through conclusion: to doubt "the fact that I am thinking", and to even doubt, not so much the existence of God, but the idea that any man can judge the acts of God and thereby make such statements as "God did this because it is good." or "God did not do that because it is evil". In fact, even doubting the existence of God would have allowed for a more objective view.

Albert Einstein once stated that, "God does not play dice", whereupon Danish physicist Niels Bohr replied, " Albert, don't tell God what to do." Likewise, it is ridiculous for philosophers, or any body else for that matter, to suggest that God behave in any certain manner. No man is in the position to determine what is good or what is evil in the mind of God. We may determine that an act is evil for us as individuals, but we can perhaps never know the view that the Universal Mind beholds.

In the New Testament of the Holy Bible it was a man named Thomas who so notoriously doubted Jesus (John 20:24-29), only to find a closer relationship with God. His skepticism became the occasion for the reassurance for future generations of Christian believers by his acceptance of the divinity of Jesus as Christ. Therefore it would be easy to see that perhaps the God of Abraham may not consider "doubt" to, in every instance, be a sin. However, the application of logic would suggest that faith in one's religion should not be used as an excuse for blind acceptance of any doctrine. One does not discover the truth by blindly accepting that which is presented by man as evidence of God.

In *Meditations II*, Descartes discusses what he perceives as the "nature of the human mind." Here he is more interested in the behavioral nature of mind than he is the physical nature of mind. Perhaps if he had better understood the actual physical nature of mind he would have concluded other than *cogito ergo sum*.

"Archimedes, in order that he might draw the terrestrial globe out of its place, and transport it elsewhere, demanded only that one point should be fixed and immovable; in the same way I shall have the right to conceive high hopes if I am happy enough to discover one thing only which is certain and indubitable." [\(7\)](#)

As we have seen from the previous chapter, the uncertainty of events is inescapable. The very existence of mind is uncertain. A more enlightened Descartes might have said, "I appear to think, therefore I just might be."

The difficulties within Descartes' way of thinking resulted in the birth of empiristic philosophy, that is, a philosophy which relies on, or is derived from, actual observation and experience, not from theory. The philosophers best seen as representing this line of

thought are John Locke, George Berkeley, and David Hume.

Locke, an English philosopher who lived from 1632 to 1704, wrote that all knowledge is ultimately founded in experience, which may be the actual perception of the operation of our mind. Knowledge, therefore, becomes the perception of the agreement or disagreement of two ideas.

Berkeley (1685 - 1753) was an Anglo-Irish philosopher and clergyman who proposed the idea that if knowledge is the result of perception, then there is no meaning to the statement that things exist. If there is a perception of something, then it does not matter whether that something exists or not. Therefore, to be perceived is to exist.

Hume, a Scottish philosopher who lived from 1711 to 1776, was a skeptic of extreme proportions who denied induction and causation. If taken seriously, his ideas would have annihilated empirical science.

Perhaps the next great philosophical mind in the west was that of Immanuel Kant. Kant was born in Konigsberg, Germany in 1724. Son of a saddlery maker, he was educated locally at Collegium Fredericianum, and at the University of Konigsberg. His focus of study was theology, physics, mathematics, and the Latin classics. Kant is today considered to be the father of idealistic philosophy.

In 1781, Kant's most renowned work, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft (Critique of Pure Reason)*, was published. With this writing he established the difference between things of mind and things of substance. He suggested that substance is known only when it possesses characteristics that fall within our minds categories of understanding. Those categories are the foundation for our understanding of the phenomenal experience. In other words, things that exist in the world are real but mind is required for there to be order and form, and to know the relationships between those things. According to Kant, only mind can encompass things in space and time. Kant has, therefore, retained the idea that the "thing-in-itself" is separate and different from its perception. In this way he appears to attempt to maintain some connection with realism.

In the introduction to the first chapter, *Transcendental Doctrine of Elements*, Kant summarizes this view.

"In whatsoever mode, or by whatsoever means, our knowledge may relate to objects, it is at least quite clear that the only manner in which it immediately relates to them is by means of an intuition. To this as the indispensable groundwork, all thought points. But an intuition can take place only in so far as the object is given to us. This, again, is only possible, to man at least, on the condition that the object affect the mind in a certain

manner. The capacity for receiving representations (receptivity) through the mode in which we are affected by objects, is called *sensibility*. By means of sensibility, therefore, objects are given to us, and it alone furnishes us with intuitions; by the understanding they are *thought*, and from it arise conceptions. But all thought must directly, by means of certain signs, relate ultimately to intuitions; consequently, with us, to sensibility, because in no other way can an object be given to us." (8)

Dr. Werner Heisenberg, whose "Uncertainty Principal" was explained in the previous chapter, summarizes the lesson taught, in light of today's knowledge of atomic structure and its implications, by the views of Descartes and Kant.

"Any concepts or words which have been formed in the past through the interplay between the world and ourselves are not really sharply defined with respect to their meaning; that is to say, we do not know exactly how far they will help us in finding our way in the world. We often know that they can be applied to a wide range of inner and outer experience, but we never know precisely the limits of their applicability. This is true even of the simplest and most general concepts like 'existence' and 'space and time.' Therefore, it will never be possible by pure reason to arrive at some absolute truth." (9)

And yet, in this last sentence there lies a glimpse of absolute truth. For pure logic and reasoning of the facts indicates that the statement, "it will never be possible by pure reasoning to arrive at some absolute truth", may be within itself an absolute truth.

1. *Early Greek Philosophy*, John Burnet, 1958, Meridian Books, New York, N.Y.; p. 132 to 135.(Back)

2. *Early Greek Philosophy*, John Burnet, 1958, Meridian Books, New York, N.Y.; p. 173(Back)

3. *The Philosophers of Greece*, Robert S. Brumbaugh, 1981, State University of New York Press, Albany, N.Y.; p. 82(Back)

4. *Early Greek Philosophy*, John Burnet, 1958, Meridian Books, New York, N.Y.; p. 333(Back)

5. *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, Ed. and Intro. by Richard McKeon, 1941, Random House (by Agreement with Oxford University Press) New York, N.Y. ; p. 497 to 499([Back](#))

6. *Introduction to the Philosophy of the Mind*, Ed. by Harold Morick. 1970, Scott, Foresman and Company, Palo Alto, CA; p. 4, 5([Back](#))

7. *Introduction to the Philosophy of the Mind*, Ed. by Harold Morick, 1970; Scott, Foresman and Company, Palo Alto, CA; p. 7([Back](#))

8. *Great Books of the Western World, Vol. 42. Kant*, Robert M. Hutchins, Ed. in Chief, 1971; William Benton, Pub.; Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.; London; p. 23([Back](#))

9. *Physics and Philosophy*, Werner Heisenberg, 1958; Harper & Brothers, New York, N.Y.; p. 91-92([Back](#))

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# Chapter Five

## In The Final Analysis

Whether we view this primordial reality as something divine in nature, as something that is the basis for revolutionary philosophical concepts, or something that is merely a composite of scientific theories is determined by our genetic make-up and where and how we spent our lives up to that moment of discovery. Of course there are those who would state that we would also be influenced by the actions of our previous lives, to which I would state that this may indeed be a possibility, there being no scientific proof to the contrary. However there is also no scientific proof to uphold the idea of reincarnation. Therefore, for the sake of clarity, I will forego the use of that concept in this discussion.

But doesn't it seem as though we might have a better view of that primordial reality if we were to either drop all prior conceptions and attempts at definition of that reality in order to clarify, or on quite the other hand, gather up all prior concepts and attempts at definition of that reality in order to expand our knowledge of it? Perhaps both.

In order to know where (or how) to look for this primordial reality, it would be helpful if we knew all of its names and its descriptions. But in order to experience, in what we might call an up close and personal way, that primordial reality, one must drop all pre-conceptions and surrender to the pure knowledge of that experience.

In this chapter I will attempt to do the former. That is, gather the information that we have seen in the previous chapters and combine that information in such a way as to allow the reader to have a fuller comprehension of prior experiences and/or observations. I will discuss certain yogic methods and techniques used for attaining personal internal experience in the sixth and final chapter.

I should remind the reader that, in regards to interpretations of religious concepts, I am only analyzing their mystical or esoteric meanings. I will not attempt to analyze these events as being historical. Such events are much like so many sandcastles on the beach and over time such analysis, in most cases, has become an impossibility. In some cases the origin and dating of some historic scriptural text is in dispute, in others, the meaning given to the text itself is debated.



In the case of the Dead Sea Scrolls, for example, there are reasonable people on all sides of what has become a multi-sided debate over the dating, origins, and even the translations of these documents. And since the subject of that debate is not within my area of expertise, I will not involve myself in the discussion/debate regarding these particular findings except to acknowledge that such differing opinions do exist.

And I am certainly not implying that the historic Gautama Buddha is the same as, for example, Jesus Christ of the New Testament. However, within the hidden, or esoteric meanings of all of these faiths, a message that is the common thread becomes apparent. It is that hidden thread that we will here analyze in comparison to scientific observations and their very closely related philosophical conclusions.

In attempting to integrate the concepts that underlie science, philosophy, and religion, the immediate question that comes to mind is, simply, "Where, within the volumes of ideas and information that constitute the libraries of science, philosophy, and religion, could there possibly lie a common element?"

We could state with flippancy, "Why, within the concept of the Three Bodies, of course." But it may not be so clear as to how this three-in-one concept fits these three different applications.

Looking at each part of this three-in-one concept, we should perhaps start with what I have called the All-Thing. As I have discussed in the second chapter, there is a concept of a deity that some call the Father, the One God, the Creator, King of the Universe. Others say it is the all-embracing, all-compassionate, all-pervasive, exquisitely perfect, pure, eternal presence.

Some call it the circle of Perfection and the source of absolute knowledge, as it is the embodiment of every experience, thus every condition and incident. Still others call it the cosmic self, or the Inner Self of all, or the One Self. And so on.

If we refer to the third chapter of this book in hopes of an objective view of this All-Thing we would want to step back, away from the sub-atomic particles, away from the planets and stars and heavenly events. In fact, for us to make a conclusive statement regarding the outward nature of the All-Thing from scientific study, we would require an objective view of the All-Thing that is not actually available to us. The observer would have to step outside of existence in order to view this one existence, this All-Thing, objectively. One cannot look at a house from the outside if one never steps outside that house. However, outside of existence there is only non-existence.

Since stepping outside in this case is not likely, using known scientific evaluation, one must determine this one existence much in the same way that a person inside a house



would if they were unable to exit that house. That would be to observe, study, and evaluate every condition, every feature, every event and known thing regarding that house, and thus determine that it is (or it is not) one house.

If we examine every condition, every feature, every event and known thing regarding the universe, the cosmos, existence, we will see that, just as a complex machine is one machine made of many different parts, motions, forces, and functions and just as a complex human being is one human made of many different organs and fluids and functions, so is this All-Thing, this one existence, made up of many parts, motions, forces, and functions. Yet it is still one existence or universe or cosmos. It is still the All-Thing.

Looking deeper into our material surroundings, it is the consistency of atoms throughout the known universe that implies a unity of overall structure. As I mentioned in Chapter Three, even in intergalactic space there is still one molecule of hydrogen gas per cubic centimeter of space. Molecules of hydrogen gas are made of the element hydrogen which is made of hydrogen atoms. So atoms are everywhere known, and with their sub-atomic parts, make up the material aspect of this existence and verify the existence of that which is all; that All-Thing. In the fourth chapter we must again step back and objectively consider the philosophers' statements in light of the known arts and sciences of those times. The fact that the ancient Greeks sought to define the substance that forms all things, indicates that the concept of a unified reality was an underlying factor in the search for an ultimate truth.

Though that underlying factor was considered to be practically everything from *hydra* to *pyre* and even to a otherwise unidentified "boundless", there never seemed to be any doubt that there exists "the one" from which "the many" was formed, right up until the writings of Parmenides, who seems to be concerned with the duality of existence/non-existence more than he was with the duality of the one/many. The later question he seems to answer by suggesting that if there are many, there cannot be one. As we can see in Chapter Four, Parmenides' idea is supported by Aristotle in his analysis of Leucippus' atomic theory where Aristotle states that, "This *plenum* is not 'one': on the contrary, it is a 'many'...."

This appears to be the point in history where philosophy lost sight of the concept of a unifying All-Thing. The problem with this philosophical approach is that it eliminates the concept that you and I and everyone else are all a part of a whole, and in that way we are excused from our concern for one another. It is exactly this type of thinking that can make life miserable for so many.

It was Anaxagoras who taught that *nous* (mind) was the substance that set the universe in motion. In the later writings of Descartes, Locke, and Berkeley we find that while

there seems to be no direct attempt at defining "the one", it is apparent that mind itself becomes the unifying factor. From the idea that because one is thinking one must exist, to the idea that there is only perception and therefore existence as such does not have meaning; it is mind itself, for these philosophers, that becomes the stuff that reality is made of.

Then Kant came forward to propose that things of mind and things of substance are separate and different. This dualistic approach leaves us with the idea that "the one" is actually "the two". That is, all things are either born of substance or born of mind. But we can see that this merely divides all things (All-Thing) into two categories, thus reducing its omnipresence, at which point it is no longer all things (All-Thing) that we are discussing. The subject becomes a discussion of particular features of the Each-Thing. In this way Kant seems to agree with Aristotle, implying that there is nothing which is all; there is no "one"; there is only "the many".

And of course it is Werner Heisenberg who reminds us not to make hasty decisions regarding what we may think we perceive. And that leads us to the next strand of the thread to be followed through the realms of religion, science, and philosophy; the strand that is the No-Thing. Could it be that this unknowable, this Void, this Great Space is a common factor (non-factor?) within the studies of science, philosophy, and religion?

Let us now go back to Chapter Two so that we can begin to follow the history of descriptions that have been given to this No-Thing. Again, it appears to be the general consensus of all of these faiths that I have mentioned that there is a deity who or which is of such a physical nature that none can behold His/Her/Its existence. This deity has been described as being the underlying and true nature of all reality, and as being pure, untainted, unseen, unknown and unknowable, eternal and immutable, incomprehensible, concealed, and hidden. It has been called "the nameless". It is said that only this deity can know its own true nature, and that this true nature is in fact the ultimate reality, which has always been and will always continue to be beyond human comprehension. The names given to this unknowable deity are names which translate to such terms as Primordial Enlightened One, the body of Truth, Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost, the face of God, Nothing (because we as humans cannot know this deity), the circle of Infinity, the Essence of All, and, simply, the Way.

All of these descriptions are as correct as human language will allow, for after all of this study we will still find that there are really no words to describe that underlying principal of reality, be they divinely inspired Sanskrit, Hebrew, or Arabic terms or common English phrases. There is simply no way to speak of that which we do not and cannot know.

And now, looking at the fourth chapter of this book we can search through the words of

the ancient and modern western philosophers to find more clues to this unknowable No-Thing.

Perhaps Anaximenes did not know of that to which we refer as "vacuum" when he declared that all comes from *aer* (air). Perhaps, because of the limited development of the semantics of language, as I previously discussed, he could not have known the difference between a space occupied with a gas or a gaseous compound such as what we today call "air", and a space that is devoid of any such occupancy. If we consider that Anaximenes may not have known that there was a difference between the two conditions, then we must give him some credit for perceiving an apparent "emptiness" as being at the foundation of all existence. However there seems to be an unfortunate lack of clarity concerning what exactly he was talking about.

Parmenides discusses "what is not", suggesting, much as a practitioner of a mystical religion might regarding the No-Thing, that we cannot speak of, or even think of "what is not." However he was certainly not declaring divinity for "what is not"; to the contrary, he was most likely suggesting that we not waste time on this discussion.

But we are not talking about nothing. Those who call it "Nothing" do so for the same reason that I use the word "No-Thing, which I have hyphenated for clarity. The reason being that, as I have mentioned, it is not that there is nothing, but that there is nothing we can know about this No-thing. Again, we can know the cup is empty, but we cannot know that emptiness itself.

Democritus, in explaining Leucippus' original atomic theory, redefined empty space as the second of the four essential theories of Greek atomism. That redefinition being that empty space does exist as space. This definition is accepted in both philosophy and science to this day. In light of the concepts put forth by the scholars of esoteric religion we are left with the idea that there are different kinds of space. Some of these spaces are large, some are small, but they are all just plain ordinary spaces, most of which are not actually empty. They are all limited by something. And they are either full of something or contain something and/or are changed by something. However the Great Space that is the No-Thing is pure, unfilled, untainted and unaffected in any way by anything. These ordinary spaces do not have that quality.

And that brings us back to Werner Heisenberg. Dr. Heisenberg shows us, in mathematical terms as well as in his philosophical interpretation, the limits of our ability to know. We can know "this", but we cannot know "that". If we know "that", we cannot know "this". Conceptually it is like running into a brick wall that does not exist.

I should perhaps mention that, at some point, as we approach this unapproachable, this truly unknowable, everything that we consider to be knowledge will seem to appear as

transparent. This is the effect of the No-Thing on all else. Or, again, perhaps we should call it a non-effect. For at that point we will begin to understand the true nature of all knowledge.

If we seek the invisible foundation of all using scientific evidence, we can start by stepping into our imaginary research space craft and traveling into outer space, past the planets of our solar system, past the stars of our galaxy, on out into the deepest intergalactic space. We would then stop (if the condition of "stop" exists out there) and take a one cubic centimeter sample of this intergalactic space. In this sample we would find that there exists, as I have mentioned earlier, one molecule of hydrogen gas. Looking at this one molecule through the latest high power optical magnification device (doesn't every research space craft have one?) we magnify until we have selected one of the hydrogen atoms to inspect more closely.

What we will see is one proton that is relatively the size of a small pin head at the center of the rapid melon sized orbit of an electron that is so tiny (less than the size of a pin point, as compared to our pin head) that it is practically unseen except for its radiance. And nothing else. We look within the proton but there is nothing definitive. No "absolutely there" anything. There is some of "this", and some of "that", but we can never seem to get the "this" and the "that" both clearly identified together.

Therefore, we are unable to know anything further about these particles except for the theories put forth by Dirac, Yukawa and others. These theories are based on many observations of the "this" and the "that", repetitively, until a conclusion can be drawn regarding the nature of "this" and "that", their motion, make up and so forth. But no one ever sees the whole picture at once, therefore no one can ever do more than theorize. Again, we come upon that conceptual brick wall that is the unknowable. Every thing that we look at, appears as transparent. Every concept appears to be transparent. Even the small spaces between the apparent particles seem to vanish into the absolute Void. This transparency allows us the opportunity to imagine the complete thoroughness with which the No-Thing underlies all realities, thus being the true nature of primordial reality.

Now it was not necessary to have to travel out into intergalactic space to look at this hydrogen atom, but I did want the reader to understand that even in deep intergalactic space, one cannot realize the pure No-Thing by just looking out of the window. One must reach beyond the limits of ordinary knowledge for this realization. And to do so requires an inwardly concentrated effort. Again, we can look at the electrons across the circuitry that is the nervous system and determine that even the existence of mind is purely theoretical, but if we really want to experience the realization of the true nature of that which is the primordial reality, we must search inwardly, which we can do through the use of meditational and yogic techniques.

Now let us look at the final strand of the thread that underlies all of reality, the strand that is the No-Thing and the All-Thing in manifestation, the Each-Thing.

Philosophers and scientist alike have referred to the Each-Thing as "the many", as opposed to "the one". I refer to it as the Each-Thing because it is that thing which is presented to us as each event, be it the event of ordinary space, the event of ordinary time, the event of the existence of an object, or of a force, or of an action or reaction, the event of a thought, of a breath. Any event of any kind whatsoever, being perfectly what it is, including its flaws (which only complete its perfection), is in fact a manifestation of the Each-Thing, which is, again, the manifestation of the other two strands of the thread of primordial reality, those being the All-Thing and the No-Thing.

It was Aristotle who denied the existence of "the one" in favor of "the many". We have no trouble identifying "each thing". But the Each-Thing is not necessarily each thing, just as the No-Thing is not necessarily nothing.

The Each-Thing is the body of primordial reality manifest. And that appears to us as each thing. When we speak in terms of esoteric religion, we refer to the Buddha, or the Christ, or the Word, and so forth, as being this manifestation. The difference between the Buddhas and the non-Buddhas is the absolute and pure knowledge of the primordial reality attained by the Buddhas. I am not just talking about an intellectual understanding of the principals behind the concept, but a complete realization of this primordial reality. That is why the Gautama Buddha is revered to this day. This is not an ordinary person, but one with exceptional understanding of the human situation.

Likewise, Jesus Christ is seen by all Christians as the physical manifestation of God the Father. If we consider the nature of the realization that this one must have had that would have marked him as the Christ, then it is easy to understand that it is the realization that Jesus experienced that is of utmost importance. Therefore, to the scholar of the mystical interpretation of the New Testament, it is not so much the historical accuracy of the stories, but the hidden meanings given to those stories that hold the knowledge that represents the Christ.

In the same way, within the ancient Hebrew writings that comprise the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, it is "the Word" that represents this manifestation. Not just any "word", but the word or words which contain hidden knowledge regarding the primordial reality, or God. In the case of Biblical research, that would be the first five books of Moses, known as the Torah.

For the student of the Upanishads, it is *atman*, the individual self, that represents the Each-Thing. It is *atman* that is the river that runs into the great ocean that is *Atman*, the Cosmic Self, the All-Thing, the essence of which is the pure clear water that is



*Brahman*, the essence of all, the No-Thing. And That thou art, dear reader.

The three bodies that are the Tri-Kaya are inevitably found when truly sought after, though their true nature remains unseen. Thus we can expect to find a reference to this phenomena, in some form or part or aspect, within any body of study whose focus is the primordial truths, be it religious, scientific, or philosophical.

Another question that arises when we consider the history of these three schools is the question regarding the appearance of religion as the first school to identify the three bodies of the primordial reality. One might ask, "How is it possible that ancient religious preceptors knew about this phenomena in its completeness before the more objective philosophers and scientist?"

It is the "vision" or "religious experience" that gives to the religious preceptor knowledge of the primordial reality. We know that religious preceptors have attained this vision of a divine three-in-one through internal practices of various kinds. This vision has been interpreted into various descriptions which give us the variety of faiths that we see in the world today. In some cases the original vision has been forgotten and all that remains is the shell of a story whose esoteric meaning is now all but lost. The origin of the idea to have this vision may lie beyond recorded history, though, as you will recall from the second chapter, there are religious writings from as early as 1500 B.C. that offer prayers to *Brahman*; over a thousand years before the birth of atomic theory. Thus it is clear that ancient religious preceptors have had their eye on this phenomena long before anyone ever sought it out through the scientific research of the external world.

It was Anaxamines who first chose to de-personify the elements of nature, thus sending religion and philosophy each off on their separate ways. Perhaps it is for this reason that many since have imagined a god that is somehow apart from nature in its many forms. But it may also be this view that allowed Anaxamines' predecessors the freedom of mind to be most objective in analyzing the external world without fear of "offending the gods." Without such objective analysis many truths would have likely gone unrevealed.

The local shaman, medicine man or holy man is the astrologer, physicist, philosopher, and physician for many aboriginal cultures today, just as in ancient times. They deal with all of the problems of their tribes, or other social orders, that concern with the unknown, and that, of course, means dealing with the primordial deity. They are proficient in their visionary skills, using all and any means to invoke a vision or dream, from use of the system of internal self-control known as *yoga*, to the use of hallucinogenic plants and minerals, to actual physical self-mutilation, the object of these extreme techniques being to thrust the subject into a mental state that is so far outside the norm that an extraordinarily clear and objective view of reality is attained.

The nature of this vision of primordial reality is such that the preceptor or visionary identifies the All-Thing through practices that allow the apparent separation between things to dissolve. At that point, if correctly controlled, a sort of non-vision occurs which allows the visionary to realize the true nature of things, the No-Thing. And it is upon returning to ordinary consciousness from these two occurrences, which actually appear as one occurrence, that one realizes the Each-Thing as the manifestation of this phenomena. As I mentioned, I will discuss a version of this visionary exercise in some detail in the final chapter.

Today the social order of things seems to be too often contrary to the implications of the natural law that is the primordial reality. Our eachness is celebrated in the extreme, and for the most part, we have forgotten, or have chosen to totally ignore, the fact that we are apart of something other than that to which we ourselves choose to be a part.

We seek personal gain by the use of divisiveness. We emphasize that "those people" are not a part of "us." "Their needs" are not "our needs." Whether it be religion, politics, science, philosophy, or any other discipline, this tendency of ours is sadly ever present.

Unless and until we as humanity can realize "That thou art," that we are all each and everyone, a relevant part of the whole of reality; that our surroundings are us; that everything we do as individuals and as a species effects the whole of reality, we will continue to bash about within this universe like the proverbial "bull in a china shop," never attaining any semblance of harmony with our surroundings.

We need to stop saying and thinking, "I am different from this" or "I am different from that." Stop worrying about being separate from what is outside of yourself. You are different. You are totally unique. Don't worry. That will take care of itself. What is being forgotten is that you are also, simultaneously, a part of it all. And that has become a problem.

Are we arrogant when we say that we stand alone, or just naive? We should take a lesson from those aboriginal cultures, and consider that life may exist in places and things that we as a 'civilized' society do not now recognize. And if there is intelligent life on other planets, they should perhaps, for their own safety's sake, avoid us until we get this problem worked out.

Though all of these descriptions suggest that all of these different cultures worship different aspects of the same deity, or same truth, the history of man is filled with wars fought on behalf of one name against another name; it being very likely those names being different names of the same deity. For are we not all, each and everyone limited in our own ability to express that which knows no limits?



Yet still, like the school children in the redwoods, we squabble about the magnificence of that in which we believe.

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# Chapter Six

## A Yogic Experience

Regarding the existence of hidden truths, it has been suggested by some that there are no secrets to be revealed; that all of reality is like an open book. I think, however that reality is like an Echer drawing. If we look at it in one way, it appears to be a certain thing. Yet if we, say, close one eye, it may appear as something else entirely.

In this final chapter I will describe the experience as might be viewed by a Buddhist yogi, using techniques which ultimately open the eye of the mind and reveal the true nature of primordial reality. I will not attempt to give to the reader the instructions that he or she might require to personally experience this vision, as each person is different and each person requires their own personal techniques, even though many people may share the same general system. In other words, I can tell you about the path, but the way in which you walk it is yours alone, and that is between you and your personal spiritual guide: your own guru, or sensei, or lama, or sifu, or rabbi, or teacher by what ever term you may use.

I cannot overstate the importance of the spiritual guide to anyone who truly seeks personal experience with the primordial reality. This guide must be knowledgeable in these things, and he must be of such a lineage that can be traced to an authentic source. This is extremely important, for the nature of the primordial reality is such that this experience is more a sort of non-experience, and there are many other experiences and feelings that can occur that one might confuse with the actual experience that they are seeking. Only a properly trained and experienced teacher of an authentic lineage can assure the seeker of what they may have found. One will find that such assurance is absolutely invaluable. So keeping that in mind, I will now proceed with a hypothetical account of how one person might approach this primordial reality.

Our seeker of truth is an average human being, a mature male (though which sex is not important here, nor is age) of excellent physical condition who has brought the subtle physical and mental controls into his life using basic yogic techniques. These basic techniques, once mastered, allow the yogi to attend to more subtle techniques which eventually allow the yogi to develop what is known as *siddhi*, or "psychic powers", of

many different kinds.

These techniques include basic meditation skills, sexual self-control which leads to the control of the subtle energies throughout the body, and control of the breathing process which leads to control over the heart rate, both of which effect control over the actual mental vision itself.

Our yogi here seeks the ultimate *siddhi*. That is the power of the seeing of reality. He is not interested in the other powers, the ordinary *siddhi*, as he knows such things are obstacles along the path and are, like other worldly attachments, merely illusory in nature. His goal is simply to go straight up the mountain of a path that he has chosen, up to the vision of ultimate reality.

This yogi performs a ritual prayer and meditation, or *puja*, twice a day as taught by his teacher. He starts each *puja* with an offering of flowers and incense and food from his limited supply of grains, and then a physical exercise combined with a set of prayers. This exercise is known as "taking refuge", and may be repeated over a hundred times. All of the prayers he uses in this ritual are traditional Buddhist prayers, again, as taught by his teacher. These prayers may be repeated literally thousands of times in one ritual.

Since our seeker of truth is of the Buddhist faith, and since he seeks only the knowledge of primordial reality, his prayers are to Guru Rimpoche, to Avalokiteshvara, and to the Adi Buddha; the three deities of Buddhism which represent the three bodies of primordial reality. Clearly, the self-discipline required here is extreme. This yogi has learned to pray, control his breath, heart rate, and thought patterns simultaneously. That plus the external movements required to maintain the order of the *puja* keep this yogi quite busy.

In order to protect himself during this time when he is most vulnerable, our yogi has chosen a location that is remote from the populated areas and not easily accessible. He is additionally protected by the presence of two Buddhist monks who are there with him in residence at this location. These monks are aware of his vulnerability during this time, and are there to assure him of his personal security. In this way he may feel free to go about the duties required to reach his goal without interruption.

On this day our yogi will make a special effort to experience, in three stages, the primordial reality as an internal vision or religious experience. He has prepared himself for this day several weeks ahead by limiting his diet from his normal vegetarian feasts to only a very narrow diet of rice, wheat, and barley, with only one turnip per day as a vegetable. His fluid intake is reduced to three or four pots of tea per day. This diet gives him the sensitivity required to perceive the subtle levels of consciousness through which he must ascend. For today he will mentally exit and re-enter existence. Today he will

achieve both Sambhoga-Kaya consciousness and Dharma-Kaya consciousness, and thus achieve full awareness of the true nature of the three bodies of primordial reality.

It is a new moon. The hour is about 4:30 a.m. Our yogi has arisen and is midway into his *puja*. The intensity of his meditation practices over the past two years have given him the ability to settle his mental activity very quickly. He is now at the point in his ritual where he will enter a deeply concentrated state using his breathing techniques both to focus his thoughts, as well as to increase the flow of psychic energy within his body.

Our yogi is quite skilled in this area. The duration of his in-breath has been slowed to about 30 seconds. His out breath has been slowed to about 40 seconds. The transition from in-breath to out-breath and back again would be practically imperceptible to anyone, should they be observing this process. It has been said that an observer can hold a feather under the nose of one who has mastered this technique, and they will not perceive any movement whatsoever of that feather from the breath of the yogi.

The heart rate of our yogi is now slowed to about one beat every second and a half. Both his heart and breath will come to an absolute pause for the brief time that he is immersed in Dharma-Kaya consciousness, though he will be unable to determine that experiences actual duration. This is because the state of Dharma-Kaya consciousness is timeless, and the state of Sambhoga-Kaya consciousness, from which he will enter Dharma-Kaya consciousness, is a level of consciousness where he will be indeterminate about the difference between events or things. All will appear as one to our yogi in Sambhoga-Kaya consciousness.

As taught by his teacher, our yogi meditates with his eyes opened unblinkingly. His eyes are fixed on a flame of a candle that is placed in his line of vision, approximately six feet in front of him. It has been said that one cannot see reality if ones eyes are closed. This is so important that every time he blinks, he must start this whole internal process all over again. He must enter these higher states of consciousness with his eyes wide open. There is no other way, using this path.

His heart rate is now down to less than one beat every two seconds. The only sounds he hears are the sounds of his own heart beat and breath, and the other sounds inside of his inner ear.

As his eyes are held, or perhaps more correctly, locked open, his vision of the things around himself begin to appear to swirl in such a way that light seems to be trying to enter the room. Physically, the rhodopsin, or visual purple is beginning to fade from the retinas of his eyes.

It is at the transition from in-breath to out-breath that our yogi begins to enter Sambhoga-Kaya consciousness. At the beginning of the out-breath all recognition of any separation between events or things begins to dissolve into pure light. The visual purple fades and a feeling of complete oneness comes over the yogi. Every bell in the universe seems to simultaneously ring. Tears stream from his eyes and small beads of sweat accumulate on his forehead. The hair on the back of his neck and on his arms seems to stand at attention. His breath is ever so slowly, ever so evenly exhaled.

It is as he reaches the end of this long, slow, even out-breath that there is a feeling of complete release. He ascends from Sambhoga-Kaya consciousness into the consciousness of the Dharma-Kaya, the pure knowledge of the No-Thing.

There is an immeasurable pause. Our yogi inhales and is returned to awareness of the Nirmana-Kaya; the Each-Thing. He knows that he has entered Sambhoga-Kaya consciousness and yet to say to himself, "I have entered Sambhoga-Kaya consciousness" would have made it not so. He knows when he left Sambhoga-Kaya consciousness, and he knows when he returned from Dharma-Kaya consciousness, but now he understands why he cannot know the experience of this non-experience; the experience of Dharma-Kaya consciousness; the non-experience of this No-Thing.

He now has the impression that he has "been somewhere". But that place is unknowable, therefore there is nothing he can speak of or even think regarding where he has been, for today he has attained the knowledge of the true nature of primordial reality.

The closing prayers are said as our yogi returns to normal consciousness. He partakes of tea and food to help ground his consciousness at the end of his *puja*. Now he is quite happy just to go outside and see the new day. He must speak to his teacher as soon as possible to have the experience confirmed. In this way he will further ground his consciousness for re-entry into the work-a-day world. His teacher has assured him that as a Buddhist such re-entry is his duty, now that he carries the knowledge of this experience with himself where ever he goes.

So there you have a hypothetical picture of a typical technique for experiencing the vision of primordial reality. And as you can see, even without my having given the exact details of these methods, the commitment required here is extreme. This is true no matter which path one chooses for this journey. The commitment and self-control required to approach the primordial truths have always and historically been extreme, which is why you should never even want to attempt such a journey without a proper guide. Would you get into an airplane if the pilot had never flown? I hope not.

And when you have finally chosen your personal path and are beginning to close in on that 'goal of goals', you will find the need to abandon all previous ideas, concepts, names, descriptions, visions, and dreams. For when the object of your search is finally experienced, that experience will be far beyond all else that anyone who has ever shared that experience can ever, or will ever, describe. Nothing that I or anyone else has ever written can fully prepare you for that experience. We can only put up the sign posts that hint at the direction that one should follow. Once you have had that experience, your description will be uniquely yours. Your own way of telling about the primordial reality will be unlike any and all other. Then it will be your duty to carry that experience with you where ever you go.

As a final thought, I can only ask that the reader consider this book to be no more than a pointing finger.

**NOW**

**GO**

**FIND**

**THE**

**MOON**

**!**

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## Suggested Reading

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