

Humanity's Primordial Wisdom Tradition and the Emerging World Reformation

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Who Is It? The Problem of Subjectivity

There is light within a being of light, and it lights the whole world.

- Jesus of Nazareth (Gospel of Thomas)

What is the secret of human happiness? The root cause of unhappiness? What shall we do with this precious life we've been given? What is the real meaning of human life? What is our relationship to the infinite? Who is it that is born, suffers and dies? Who is it that is finally liberated from this infernal cycle? Such ultimate questions of existence arise in self-aware beings through the continuum of this living bodymind, the physically embodied consciousness or awareness that is our individual and collective mind. This mind is our fundamental relating instrument, the vehicle that unifies all our physical, sensory, emotional, mental and spiritual experience and understanding—our suffering and our happiness. Everything that we experience, all of our reality arises through the compound aggregate of this embodied mind. Why do we not then engage these essential questions? Why, for the past three centuries have we marginalized mind's inherent capacity to understand the unbounded whole of reality? Why has the exploration of the subjective life of this wondrous instrument been sacrificed to its objective counterpart? Why is our subjective nature taboo? And what after all, is mind's ultimate nature or essence, the ultimate source or ground of the mind? What is the essential nature of this bright awareness prior to mind's perceptual, conceptual and emotional content? "In whom does this all arise?" These many questions represent the *ultimate* "hard problem" as to the nature of human consciousness. We will see that it is the discovery of this essential nature and ultimate source of experience that is the inherent treasure of mind, our heart's desire, and the root of all our seeking. It is this luminous, essential Nature of Mind—"Big Mind" or "Basic Mind"—that will be our quest in the following exploration.

The Bright. Even a cursory review of the major religious-cultural traditions of humankind reveals that there is one "Great Tradition" that is expressed in different times and cultures through a tapestry of differing mythical, religious, philosophical and scientific systems. This *Great Wisdom Tradition* or *Perennial Philosophy*

is so overwhelmingly wide-spread . . . that it is either the single greatest intellectual error ever to appear in humankind's history or it is the single most accurate reflection of reality yet to appear.

- Ken Wilber

This “single philosophical consensus of universal extent” (Alan Watts), especially its highest non-dual view, has provided the resolution to the great questions and the way to liberation from suffering and the realization of our inherent happiness since the very beginning. It is taught that this, our synthetic Great Wisdom Tradition represents an unbroken whole, a fundamental metaphysical unity in which, or in whom, the subtlest or highest essential wisdom view of each religious-cultural tradition arises and participates. All the masters of the three times (past, present and future) have told it: the Nature of Mind is our infinite, interdependent, perfectly subjective luminous source of reality, this always present continuum of awareness undreamt of in the thoughtful slumber of human reason and belief. All beings are not separate from *That*. *We are* this Reality! So it is taught by our Great Wisdom Tradition.

The inner Self dwells always at the Heart. That one is The
Bright, the luminous immortal Self.

- *Katha Upanishad*

We will examine this highest, fundamental non-dual view of our Great Tradition, the esoteric and greater esoteric meditative-contemplative maps of some of its primary religious-philosophical systems, and the *paradox of the path* to the personal realization of awakening to this great primordial infinite sourceground. Who is it then, that wakes up? Who is it, this ultimate identity of our individual and collective bodymind?

The Innermost Secret. At the highest, deepest or most subtle level of each tradition, at its esoteric heart—“hardly altered by difference in clime or creed” (William James)—is the deep atavistic imprint of our supreme “non-dual” (*advaya* or *advaita*, *gnyis med*, *gnosis*) liberation view and teaching. Grounding this highest teaching is a corresponding path and contemplative practice that transcends yet embraces the inner esoteric, and outer exoteric less subtle, mind/body, self/other, spirit/matter dualities and sectarian bias of relative-conventional ego accommodation views and practices within that tradition.

The term “non-dual” at least partly avoids or transcends the perennial duality of the One and the many, of the Infinite and the finite, of Being and becoming. “One” and “unity” suggest a prior or initial condition of separation, whereas uncreated, primordial radically non-dual universal being—“not one, not two”—is and always has been “unseparate from the very beginning,” and before. This “Absolute Reality”—non-dual ultimate Spirit Itself—is, according to our Great Wisdom Tradition, the most fundamental prior unity of every appearing duality. This primordial Ultimate Reality and its relative-conventional spacetime manifestations are then, both two *and* one. *We live in two reality dimensions at once!* In this way all beings, indeed all “individual” holons—quarks to galaxies—live together in an interdependent *Relationship* through the agency of all-inclusive Reality Itself, perfectly subjective non-dual Spirit. And *That* is who we are. Because there is no *essential* separation, each “compound individual” (Whitehead), each

whole or “holon” (Koestler) that is a part of a more complex whole (e.g. atoms in molecules in cells, etc.) has an innate or inherent potential or capacity to *know* this ultimate relationship to the larger whole and all its interdependent participating parts. (We will explore three aspects of non-duality: ontological, epistemological, and developmental, that is, non-dual perfectly subjective pretheoretical *Being* Itself, objective and subjective conventional *knowing*, and psychospiritual *evolution*, respectively.)

The resolution of this primary duality, the diaphanous dialectical balance of these “two fundamental truths” — perfectly subjective ultimate reality and its finite particulars — will be our quest in the following exploration. Our primary vehicle will be our Great Tradition’s “Middle Way,” culminating in the supreme non-dual teaching that transcends yet includes and realizes all of the various vehicles and paths.*

Although outer, exoteric-conventional religious belief (waking state), and the “lesser esoteric” (dream state) inner sectarian view and yogic transformative practice of each tradition differ, the “greater esoteric” (deep sleep state) and the “innermost secret” or non-dual view of each tradition is, at its heart essence, of the same ultimate ontological order. The view and even the practice of each tradition at this level or dimension is nearly identical. For example, the Buddhist tradition has at least four supreme non-dual views—Dzogchen, *Anuttara Yogatantra* or Highest Yoga Tantra (Essence Mahamudra), Definitive Madhyamaka, and Saijojo Zen—all identical with respect to the fruition of the view, Buddhahood, and nearly identical as to the view and the conduct of the path. (Chap.III, The Buddhist View). What is the purpose of this view? It is the realization of the transcendent *primordial awareness wisdom* that is the final union of knower with the unbounded wholeness that is ultimate Reality Itself. This is awareness knowing its prior unity with the unbroken whole. This is the realization that our egoic-self presumption of “otherness” or separateness from one another, from our environment, and from our ultimate source is false to the fact of our prior and continuous identity and participation in it, this ultimate Spirit that is the ineffable “Supreme Source” and basis of all arising in this mindscape of spacetime phenomena.

Indeed, we will see that it is this utterly open, vast emptiness matrix, this “basic space” (*dhatu/ying, Tao*), beyond any concept of space, that is the very Nature of Mind, the singularity of Mind Essence (*cittata, sem nyid, gnosis*). *That (Tat)* is the sourceground of the multiplicity of life, and of the wise, compassionate activity of love that is the secret of individual and thereby collective human happiness. According to our Great Tradition it is the knowledge and recognition (*sophia, prajna*), and ultimately the personal realization (*vidya/rigpa/christos/gnosis*) of our always present unseparate prior unity and identity with this sourceground that is our release from suffering and the actual *root cause* of ultimate human happiness. It is this realization and its actualization in human conduct that is both the origin and aim of the psycho-emotional, religious and spiritual endeavor in all traditions. As to integral social and political theory and practice, “If you want to change the world, begin with yourself” (H.H. the Dalai Lama). “Be the change you wish to see” (David Dellinger). A New Reformation, a new knowledge metaparadigm and metanarrative for the Collective begins, as it always has, within emotional-spiritual

growth (evolution), the thoughts and actions of its individuals.

This great sourceground, this infinite potential of all appearing phenomena, has many names (p.83). By whatever name, its essential nature is *Tao*, luminous great openness or emptiness, depth or stillness, *That* that cannot be named (*neti, neti* - not this, not that). It is this bright *kosmic* womb of the infinite expanse of pure primordial awareness or ultimate Spirit Itself in whom arises finite becoming, the energy-motion emanation that is *Kosmos*, Voice, The Word, all physical, mental and spiritual phenomena. *Kosmos* is the *Great Chain of Being*: holonic spacetime process structures (micro, meso and macrocosmic wholes or holons nested within holons, from quarks to galaxies) and stage-levels or dimensional realms of primordial awareness or consciousness—degrees of inclusiveness or embrace—from matter, to life, to mind, to soul, to non-dual Spirit Itself, our Supreme Source. Thus is Spirit being conscious of itself in ever more inclusive stages. *Who is it? Tat tvam asi: That thou art!* But how may we know it? How may we recognize, then realize, then actualize the ultimate happiness of this Great Wisdom Tradition truth in our lives?

Heartmind Path

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling doth glance
from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven.

- William Shakespeare

At the esoteric heart of our Great Wisdom Tradition then, is an ancient core of deep background cross-cultural, non-dual meditative-contemplative spiritual practice (*sadhana*) that transcends but pervades relative-conventional symbolic and conceptual belief. Realization of our Supreme Source—self-realization that is our 'Supreme Self'—through such transcendent yogic practice is then, by definition and by empirical experience, beyond the conceptual limit of conventional, material-objective "scientific method," and beyond the grasp of conceptual philosophical theory and religious belief. "The eye of mind sees everything, but cannot see itself" (H.H. the 16th Karmapa).

What matters in religious experience involves much more than what we believe, or what we do not believe. . . besides belief, Christianity involves practice—and paths toward transformation.

-Elaine Pagals (*Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas*, 2003).

Yet, a profound *noetic*-contemplative (mind-spirit) science of mind (*adhyatmavidya*) has been the basis of the "View" and its realization or fruition through the meditation and conduct of the "Path" (*marga*) of our non-dual Great Wisdom Tradition since before recorded history. The Three Steps or Three Wisdoms of this perennial spiritual path are: *hearing* or intellectual understanding, *meditation* or contemplative mind training, and

realization with its meditative stability in the everyday lifeworld. “The more we listen, the more we hear, the deeper our realization” (Dilgo Khentse Rinpoche).

The essence of this heartmind path is the master-student relationship, the cross-cultural “method of the *siddhas*” that facilitates emotional-spiritual development beyond the obstructed, conditional egoic-material lifestages and consciousness states—*physical, emotional, mental*—toward the less obstructed *subtle*, then *causal*, and finally the unobstructed *non-dual* or ultimate stages and states and their corresponding matter-energy bodies and fields (*koshas/vijnanas*). (Appendix A, *The Seven Stages of Life and the Dimensions of Consciousness: A Great Wisdom Tradition Topology of Spirit*, Part I and II) “Every one of the great religious systems recognizes some version of body, mind, soul, spirit” (Huston Smith, *Forgotten Truth*, 1967).

However, we must remember that ultimate mind nature is formless, non-physical, non-material, non-mechanical and utterly free of all of the empirical, relative-conventional algorithmic limits of levels, steps, stages, states, dimensions, memes and all other conceptual data structures—“a view free of being caught by anything at all.” The great expanse of primordial awareness cannot be reduced to concepts, mere thinking and theory, no matter how subtle, elegant or integral. Neither objective third person nor subjective first person models can grasp our primordial ultimate sourceground. But the noetic “higher order operator” of subjective first person contemplative methodologies—spiritual practice—can bring forth a direct first person realization of this perfectly subjective ultimate reality that transcends yet embraces the many worlds of objective, third person experience. We must always remember the urgent primordial wisdom teaching: objective and subjective are actually, “always already” a prior unity.

Form is emptiness. Emptiness also is form. . . There is no birth and no cessation. There is no impurity and no purity . . . no ignorance, no end of ignorance . . . no suffering, no cessation of suffering, no path, no wisdom, no attainment, and no nonattainment. . . Since there is no obscuration of mind, there is no fear. . . Therefore . . . the bodhisattvas fully awaken to unsurpassable, true, complete enlightenment.

- From the Buddha's *Heart Sutra*

Together we participate in the karmic learning game of the conventional *horizontal path*, the historical development field of the first three lifestages (physical, emotional, mental) whether or not there is personal conceptual awareness of it. But the most profoundly subtle contemplative practices of our Great Wisdom Tradition constitute the path less traveled, the diversity of the conscious *vertical path* (higher mental, subtle, causal and non-dual), the ultimate lifestages toward the timeless realization of the supreme, transcendent Primordial Awareness Wisdom, the compassionate voice and mind of the buddhas, sages, *mahasiddhas* and saints.

There is a self-existent Reality which is the Base of our awareness of our ego-self . . . that Reality is the primordial Witness . . . luminous Spirit Itself.

Shankara (*The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*)

The Witness Presence. This enlightened, compassionate voice and mind of the vast, Primordial Awareness Wisdom is then, the great happiness of the “pure presence” of our always present *witness awareness* that is both “the seer and that seen,” the seeker and that sought, prior unity of knowing subject and the object known—primordial Being Itself, original, primordially pure pristine awareness just as we are, here and now, always already free of any separate dualistic emotion, concept or even mystical experience of Being. “In seeing there is just seeing; no seer and nothing to see” (Shakyamuni, the Buddha). “If you understand, abide in that; if you do not understand, abide in that.” Whatever arises, “its just *That* and nothing more.” So, *let it be, as it is.* That’s it!

“Use the mind like a mirror, receive, but do not cling” (Chuang Tzu). A mirror receives and reflects everything, yet grasps at nothing, and is tainted by nothing. This precious witness awareness/presence is Plato’s “spectator,” Plotinus’ “ever-present wakefulness,” Saint Augustine’s “interior witness,” and the *atman/saksin* of the old *Vedas*, *Upanishads* and *Vedanta*. It is this mindfulness and penetrating insight (*shamatha-vipashyana/shikantaza*) that is the non-conceptual “direct seeing” (*kensho/satori*) of zen mind. This is the “naked awareness” (*vidya/rigpa*) that is the essence of luminous clearlight mind of Tibetan Buddhist *Dzogchen* (the infinite sphere of *The Great Completion*), and of Highest Yoga Tantra’s *Essence Madhamudra (The Great Seal/ Symbol)*. “The Bright” of the witness presence then, is not a “true self” or “higher self,” but inherently selfless always present, non-conceptual, pretheoretical, non-dual utterly ineffable Spirit Itself. Who is it? Wonder of wonders, *That* is our Supreme Identity. *That* is who *we* are! So it is taught.

The grail of the “neural correlate” of this witness-presence by neuroscientists may be located in the left prefrontal cortex, the seat of positive emotions and happiness. Recent research in neuroplasticity—positive structural and functional changes in the brain secondary to compassion meditation by the Dalai Lama’s most highly trained monks—reveal high activation levels of high frequency gamma waves, subjectively experienced as happiness and well-being (p.52 and www.mindandlife.org).

A Most Unusual Paradox, Or How To Know God. We will see that this paradox of “letting it be” (*wu wei*/non-doing), the non-dual realization of the masters—is the ever-present Primordial Awareness Wisdom of the prior unity of our very heart and mind, of spirit heart essence and human cognition, of the infinite expanse of still emptiness and the finite spacetime phenomena descending from and perceived therein. And the stable inherent happiness of such personal realization is, as demonstrated by the lives and teaching of these masters, the actual potential of each human being. The promethean capacity of Abraham Maslow’s “farther reaches of human nature . . . ,” “the depth of that divine” lives sleepwaiting in every one of us. But it’s the *sadhana*, the renunciate rigor and mind training of the spiritual path that opens the door, step-by-step.

Each and every one of us has the potential to realize fruition. . . It is you yourself, who make the decision . . . open the door . . . follow the path, right to the end.

- H.H. The Dalai Lama

These higher evolutionary potentials, although somewhat available as non-ordinary or altered cognitive *states*, become permanent, behavioral lifeworld *traits* through the heartmind practice of the spiritual path. Fleeting meditative and joyous emotional glimpses of this bright witness presence (“brief moments many times”) become, after much dualistic lower lifestage interpretive unpacking, in due course and by grace, stabilized consciousness or awareness *structures*. Our Great Tradition knows this process as ascending steps culminating in the *meditative stabilization stage* of spiritual development, the gradual fruition of the path—a phase transition from the spiritual materialism of egoic-personal neurosis to the transpersonal, *poietic* emergence of a new being.

The Problem of Gradualism. Is this great, profound permanent realization gradual or sudden? Of course it is both. Gradually the prepared mind evolves new consciousness structures from its infinite wisdom potential. At some point in the development process the center of gravity of the duality of separate-self/essence-self shifts and *satori/samadhi* glimpses of the truth, through the innate ever-present witness presence, become more or less constant—then, suddenly—Enlightenment, and with it, the potential of the full *bodhi* of buddhahood. As if it were not always, already present from the very beginning. Indeed, a most unusual paradox.

The Great Dialectic of Spirit Manifest: According to the perennial view of our Great Tradition, non-dual Ultimate Spirit Being enfolds and embraces all unfolding relative phenomenal becoming. As perfectly subjective Spirit *descends* (*Plato’s Eros, Telos, involution, ontogeny*) as *Kosmos*, the Great Chain of Being (matter/life/mind/soul), its higher or deeper levels—the subtle, causal and non-dual—become the cognitive- emotive and moral awareness potentials and structures in self-aware beings of the *ascending* Spirit current and its “spiritual” path (*Agape, development/evolution, phylogeny*). These consciousness or awareness structures are the very lifestages and mindstates—subtle, causal and non-dual—of our individual and collective return to the Supreme Source, Absolute Spirit Itself. (Appendix A: *The Seven Stages of Life: Part I and II*).

The dialectic of integration: each descended lifestage is a thesis that becomes a limit that transcends yet embraces itself in the next ascending stage, a subtler or higher, more inclusive synthesis.

At the moment of synthesis, the antithetical state is both preserved and transcended, negated and fulfilled.

- Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind* (1991)

“This lower is the necessary foundation for the higher, and the latter subsumes the

former in itself” (F.W.J. Schelling). This Great Chain of Spirit manifest—Spirit in motion—is the temporal, historical development field through which the dialectical process of this great unfolding and its “myth of eternal return” plays out for sentient beings.

Therefore, *non-dual Spirit is both pinnacle and base—the pinnacle of emotional psycho-spiritual development—and the all inclusive base or sourceground of the evolving, developing bodymind*, and indeed of all phenomenal manifestation. Fundamental, absolute or ultimate Spirit is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the First (Spirit descending) and the Last (Spirit ascending or returning) through the evolutionary lifestages and energy dimensions or bodies of the great continuum of primordial awareness/consciousness that is only and always non-dual Spirit Itself, the *ens perfectissimum*, already perfect at every point of every state, stage and dimension on this ascending spiritual path. “Those who have arrived all traveled the same path” (Zen aphorism).

In the following chapters we will explore these lifestages, consciousness states and energy dimensions/bodies of our Great Wisdom Tradition path of the transcendent Primordial Awareness Wisdom (Appendix A). This wisdom’s ultimate fruition—enlightenment (*bodhi*)—is the personal realization of non-dual Spirit manifesting as love, the great ethic of kindness, generosity and compassion that is material and spiritual abundance—Happiness Itself—right here in the everyday lifeworld of human beings on this precious little planet. According to our Great Tradition, this is the time we’ve been given to learn to open and receive, then give this great truth. “Now is the time to enter into it” (Garab Dorje).

The Bad News: Narcissus, the Infernal Taboo and the Idols of the Tribe

The trouble with most poetry is that it
is either subjective or objective.

- Basho

The *noetic*-contemplative (mind-spirit) view and research that represents our return to these urgent truths of our Great Wisdom Tradition are conspicuously absent in Western and Eastern formal education. Indeed, what is substituted for this emerging discipline is the metaphysical dogma of scientific materialism. Such ideological indoctrination and institutional and parental censorship is particularly egregious in the case of children and adolescents for it abrogates their “inalienable right” to know the depth and span of our great human intellectual and spiritual tradition—knowledge that may shape their conceptual and belief systems, and thereby their emotional, psycho-spiritual development, their opportunity for happiness, for the rest of their lives. This is the relative truth of the “sins of the parents visited upon the children.” Yet who can resist it? The receding Information Age, under sway of the prevailing ideology and bias of the metaphysics of scientific materialism idealizes and trains the intellect, ignoring wisdom—emotional-spiritual intelligence—the *Integral IQ* of the higher or subtler dimensions of

mind nature. The recent school-based Emotional Literacy Movement — “life skills” or “social and emotional learning” — is a huge step in the proper direction (Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 1995). *This spiritual, Integral IQ has now become a New Reformation leadership and educational imperative.* We must train the mind in emotional-spiritual equanimity — to open, receive and follow — in order to learn to lead, and to know when to do which. Yet, as the New Reformation and its Communication Age dawns, educators rarely provide even the most rudimentary introduction to the contemplative theory and practice of our Great Wisdom Tradition, or access to its living masters. Why?

The Taboo and the Ego-I: Scientific and Religious Fundamentalism. As we explore the nature and varieties of our Great Tradition’s subtle wisdom teaching we discover the scientific, religious and cultural *taboo of the subjective* against the exploration of the subjective aspect of our basic relating instrument, the mind. Alan Wallace has aptly termed this trend “the marginalization of the mind.” Subjective emotional-spiritual research and practice has been repressed, suppressed and excluded by massmind sociocultural norms dictated by the protoreligion of a paternalistic scientific materialism through our religious, educational and political institutions, their leaders, and their intellectual ideologues. *The transegoic esoteric, greater esoteric and non-dual emotional-religious response of the higher or more subtle human developmental lifestage potentials is not attractive to individuals within political, academic, business/corporate or religious organizations — conservative or liberal — whose primary goal is the fulfillment of material and emotional desires of the bodily-based ego, or to governments whose existence depends upon the control of the hearts and minds of these individuals and groups.*

In secular societies governments enforce this taboo by tacitly discouraging both conventional and esoteric meditative-contemplative education and practice (the sacred principle of church-state separation), as well as education in the humanities, supporting instead the “hard” sciences that promulgate the prevailing objectivist worldview of scientific materialism. And all under the awesome authority of “Science.” In the Western postmodern Information Age this fundamentalist cult of scientism — the metaphysical idol of rational objectivist scientific materialism — has become the handmaiden to political and economic power of oligarchic corporate controlled governments who use it to control media, thought and morality under the guise of scientific objectivity.

Science is the religion of the state with scientists as the priesthood. This modern religion receives far less criticism and far more blind faith and obedience than any religion in history.

- Ken Wilber

Indeed, in the 20th Century, under the state religion of Marxist scientific materialism Europe and Asia were decimated, and the contemplative knowledge and science of our Great Tradition nearly annihilated. The astonishing irony is that it was the mid-century European Fascist and Chinese Marxist holocausts that created the cause for

the spread of Zen and Tibetan Buddhist wisdom and contemplative technology to the West.

The fearful, angry Christian and Islamic fundamentalist response to modernity is that the esoteric and greater esoteric spiritual response—tolerance, kindness, wisdom—is sacrificed to the prevailing authoritarian exoteric conventional religious view, to the same purpose, priestly and governmental power over of the polity. Historian Arnold Toynbee and sociologists of religion have pointed out that theocratic, oligarchic, plutocratic and militaristic governments, including those claiming to be democratic, have always feared and suppressed esoteric transcendental religious individualism. The ultimate result of such authoritarian scientific and religious fundamentalism is the greed, inequity, provincial intolerance, then hatred that ultimately begets religious homicide, genocide and war.

The final gasp of a religion that has forsaken its contemplative heritage is fundamentalism. . . which defends its beliefs with a raw appeal to authority. All forms of fundamentalism, religious and scientific, regard themselves as self-sufficient, displaying no interest or concern for external challenges to their dogmas. The contamination of science with scientism and of religion with fundamentalism constitutes a lethal infection, which, if left unchecked, is bound to result in the death of its host. . . .

-B. Alan Wallace (*The Taboo of Subjectivity*, 2000)

Narcissus and the Idols of the Tribe. In secular Western societies *mythos*—philosophy, religion and art—is “deconstructed” to fit the popular and intellectual *ethos* and *logos* (prevailing authority and rationality) of the tyrannical pluralist cultural relativism and cultural particularism (the denial of deep background cross-cultural truth) of the nihilistic, anti-metaphysical postmodern program. In this radically perspectivist Western Canon, subjective qualitative value hierarchies (the wisdom of kindness) are sacrificed to objective, quantitative materialist truth and object values (profit, acquisition). Relationship values that include but transcend relative-conventional secular humanistic social, religious, personal and immediate family relationships—relationship values that culminate in transegoic, transpersonal Spirit, the ultimate relational truth—are taboo. (There is something exceedingly odd about social, psychological and religious studies scholars and philosophers of mind who refuse to leave the sanctum of objective exegetical academic discourse to emotionally and normatively engage the great subjective depth of their estate.)

The despair of any integrated outlook and attitude [is] the chief intellectual characteristic of the present age.

- John Dewey

The emerging noetic integral vision of the New Reformation *reconstructs* this nihilistic, pathological pluralism and individualism of the postmodern outlook. We must remember that any dogmatic, systematic deconstruction and exclusion of the emerging integral metaparadigm is itself a paradigmatic view that cannot survive its own critical deconstructive methodology. The sword of deconstructionist ideology cuts both ways. Quite simply, a reconstructive approach is necessarily less exclusive, that is, more inclusive and constructive.

Indeed, the goal and fruition of an *integral noetic science of mind* is the reconstruction, then transformation of the despair of individual emotional trauma and relational conflict inherent in the personal and social politics of dualistic, “normal neurotic” (Freud) perception, toward the insight of our Great Wisdom Tradition’s non-dual “pure vision” (p.16). This new view initiates a vertical identity shift, the inner freedom to choose, then spiritually and ethically practice a worldview beyond the limits of unconscious narcissistic egocentric, ethnocentric and gendercentric massmind political and social programming (see Spiral Dynamics p.71). The goal is the gradual freedom to choose our already present (if unrealized) state of clarity and happiness over habitual, negative, painful judgmental-critical mindstates. Meanwhile, the individuals steeped in competitive, commercial consumer mass-culture become progressively more alienated from the cooperative *wisdom of kindness* and the less material values of Spirit, and from our Great Wisdom Tradition teaching that reveals, grows and grounds it all.

We will examine the root cause and (it would seem) deplorable result of this taboo against knowing our ultimate nature, the “Supreme Identity” told in our Great Tradition—our intimate Relationship with radiant, always present presence of Spirit Itself. *I will argue that the alienation and suffering of human beings is our lost connection to That—the mistaken identity of our essential Supreme Self (that is paradoxically no-self) for the reactive egoic narcissism of the personal-political separate self* (p.77). In the darkness of ego-induced ignorance (*avidya/hamartia*) we mistake Nagarjuna’s rope of liberation/enlightenment (*vidya*) for the illusory satanic snake of desire-mind that is *maya* (chap. V). “Desire is the creator and destroyer of worlds” (*Bhagavad Gita*). “By desire the world is bound; by desire the world is liberated” (*Hevajra tantra*). Through desire for the world we descend into spacetime; through desire for return we ascend again to the Source.

We will see that it is this *noetic, essential-self*—beyond ego self—that reveals and transcends the *taboo of the subjective* and opens, navigates and integrates the various identities of the obstructed, reactive *personal-political self* through the developmental stage levels—from narcissistic prepersonal and personal, to esoteric transpersonal, to stabilization in the view and conduct of all-embracing Absolute Spirit. Our Great Wisdom Tradition teaches that the ascending emotional-spiritual development process through these stage levels is the progressive outgrowing of egoic narcissism with the simultaneous development of compassion. I have termed this process and its result the *wisdom of kindness*. However, for on-going growth to occur the egoic personal self must be properly introduced to indwelling Spirit presence, and continually—step-by-step—respond. This introduction and response is the practice of the spiritual path under the guidance of a

qualified spiritual guide. Our Great Tradition is quite clear on this point. The wisdom Nature of Mind must be introduced and guided by a qualified or better, a highly realized spiritual master. Advocates and apologists for egoic-self guidance, beyond a certain point, do so at great risk.

Under the guidance of the master, the lineage and the support of the spiritual community, attention or mind training practice transforms the egoic effort and desire of commercial and spiritual materialism into the dawn of selfless wisdom and altruistic compassionate activity. The payoff is, as we shall see, the fiery double edged sword of wisdom. After all, without the self there is no suffering, but no happiness; there is no ignorance, but no truth; there is no death, but no life; indeed, there is no duality at all. So what shall we do? Here, enlightenment—seeing and knowing the diaphanous complementarity of appearance—is not actually different from ignorance. Why?

From the “pure vision” (p.16) of the non-dual state of presence of the witness awareness there is no such dualistic process of separation and return, no binary oppositions—inside/outside, spirit/matter, good/evil—no witness, no view or path, no concept, no self at all. “That from which we can deviate, is not the true Tao. . . The Tao that can be spoken, is not the eternal Tao” (Lao Tzu). “All views must be burned in Zen.” “Whereof one cannot speak, one must remain silent” (Wittgenstein). Yet, there is always, everywhere, each moment, the selfless, sentient bright flow of the universal being—“Interbeing” or Being Itself—the non-objective primal “feeling of being,” awareness or mind without content, and our choice to respond. And this response, this process of receiving, then giving again must be generous and kind to the many beings of our shared dualistic relative-conventional spacetime reality. We will examine this most unusual *paradox of mind* (p.70), and the path to its resolution that is our ultimate completion—not the happiness of a self, but Happiness Itself, this timeless moment now (*turiya*), the openness in the gap (*bardo*) between past and future. “Who are you in the *space* between two thoughts?”

This great archetypal process of separation and return—descent and ascent, ontogeny and phylogeny, involution and evolution—this *process of practice* that results in the attentional stability that cuts through the confusion of the outer and inner aspects of the spiritual path, then its wondrous fruition, is the essential theme of our exploration.

The Good News: The Heartseed of Enlightenment

Without past, present, future; empty awake mind.
- Dogen Zenji

A New Enlightenment, A New Reformation. The decision by recent and living masters of the primary Eastern wisdom traditions—Buddhism, Vedas, Vedanta, Taoism, Sufism—to transmit their Great Wisdom Tradition view and contemplative yogic technologies to prepared students and teachers in both the West and the East has, during the past century, initiated a new worldview that has become an incipient global consciousness reformation of the highest order. This *New Reformation* in religion, science and culture is as important for the evolution of lifeforms on this planet as were the first and second scientific revolutions—the *Copernican Revolution* of the 17th Century with its Enlightenment (the modern Age of Reason), and the postmodern *Quantum Revolution* of the 20th Century (chap.VII). This New Reformation is as important as the incarnation of all the buddhas, avatars and prophets—as important as the descent of Shakyamuni the Buddha, Jesus the Christ, Lao Tzu, Nagarjuna, Plotinus and Shankara. This view is now facilitating—through the global dissemination of the esoteric, the secret greater esoteric, and the “innermost secret” non-dual teaching of these great masters—our next evolutionary step. This transformation is nothing less than the collective emergence of our species into its next lifestage, the *development stage* that is the psycho-spiritual foundation for our eventual *completion*—the kinder, gentler species *Homo Noeticus* (*Homo Universalis*).

After a time of decay comes the turning point. The light that has been banished returns. . . The old recedes and the new ascends . . . No blame.

-I Ching (*Fu, Return*)

Nevertheless, a grave misunderstanding developed as Eastern contemplative wisdom entered the West. Eastern wisdom and practice is often viewed as negative, nihilistic, atheistic and passive-escapist. *Noetic* (mind-spirit) analysis reveals that such notions are often based on a biased superficial and merely exoteric-conventional understanding of the view and practice of these traditions. However, the seed of truth here is that one or more of these criticisms may be true of the exoteric conceptual, relative-conventional view of *any* tradition. Ignorance (*avidya, hamartia*, missing the point) and its sectarian bias occur at the outer exoteric and inner esoteric (but not the non-dual) levels of all traditions, theistic, non-theistic, philosophical and scientific.

Things are not what they seem. Contemporary particle physics, after the progressive relativizations of Special Relativity, then General Relativity, then the Quantum Theory, reveals that the very heart and core of matter is empty space. The fundamental nature of matter, energy, space and time remains a complete mystery! Further, Nagarjuna, Hegel and Derrida have shown that all texts, all arguments, all

conceptual, relative-conventional views may be deconstructed and shown to be self-contradictory. (I cannot but hope that this conjecture of mine is the exception.) Yet, the non-dual greater esoteric view of our great religious traditions, the view of the infinite—*sub specie aeternitatis*—transcends, but includes the “cloud of unknowing” that is the inherent limit of this objective realm of *things*, of empirical, relative-conventional truth. Tibetan Buddhists speak of this limit as the “two-fold ignorance,” *forgetting* and *thinking*. The first is innate ignorance, forgetting (the Greeks called it *amnesia*) the divine non-dual Source of this ubiquitous egocentric self-other duality. The second—the endless cycle of conceptual thinking—results from the first. This culture conditioned and transmitted ignorance (*avidya/marigpa/ ajñāna, hamartia/sin*) is the “sins of the parents visited upon the children” (Jesus), the error and bias of our judgmental critical concepts and beliefs, and our attachment to, and ego defenses of them. This ignorance is the dualism and bias of the less subtle developmental views and mindstates (physical, emotional, and mental), and the negative destructive behavior that results therefrom. Growing through this dreary roller coaster of negative and positive cognitive-emotive mindstates into the subtler, happier lifestages (psychic, or higher mental, subtle, causal) is the great work to be done.

B. Alan Wallace has codified these psychoemotional obstructions into the Four Imbalances (www.sbinstitute.com). These are *Motivational*: pursuing narcissistic desire-mind goals that result in suffering; *Attentional*: negative cycling between dullness (laxity) and agitation (excitation); *Emotional*: cycling between self-centered positive desire/hope/elation, and negative fear/anger- aggression/depression; *Cognitive*: the ignorance (*avidya*) of ego self-induced illusion and delusion resulting from the *fear* of opening to emotional-spiritual growth. This fear manifests as ego defenses—projection, denial, splitting—that distract perception and thinking away from the discipline of the selfless wisdom of kindness, and back into our uncomfortable comfort zones of normal, aggressive egoic narcissism. The antidote to these Four Imbalances is, of course, the training of the mind (the union of *shamatha/vipashyana*) that results in equanimity (*upeksha, harmos*) and compassion (*karuna, ahimsa*) through the full engagement of body, voice and mind in the discipline of the spiritual path. “The bottom line, train your mind.” The near term result is enhanced health and well-being, for oneself and others.

The ultimate fruition of this path is the perfect non-dual realization of the Christ, the buddhas and *mahasiddhas* which dialectally subsumes, embraces but transcends the lesser esoteric, yet profound devotion (*ishta, bhakti*), and discriminating wisdom (*prajna/serab, sophia*) of the saints and the yogis. Just so, the realism of the material-objective view (rational empiricism) of exoteric-conventional, philosophical and scientific theory—especially contemporary linguistic philosophy and theoretical physics—is transcended yet included in a subtler, more inclusive knowledge metaphysic, the *noetic, primordial transcendent wisdom*. This highest realization is beyond mere concept, data or information. It is this prior ontological sphere or Ultimate Reality Base, our Supreme Source, by whatever name (p.83), that compassionately grounds our empirical relative-conventional existence. “To grow your mind, be very kind.”

This, our ultimate source is the ground of all ethical activity. Without this ultimate

basis, good and goods cannot be equitably and appropriately distributed to human and other beings. Without this greater view, conventional knowledge is inevitably directed to serve the “will to power” of egocentric and ethnocentric individual, special, corporate and national interests. The result of this lesser view is, of course, the horrible violence of poverty, war genocide and despair.

However, the relative, conceptual-emotional dimension of mind cannot conceptually bootstrap itself to a grasp of the most fundamental, non-conceptual, primordial purity of the infinite that is non-dual Spirit Itself. The mind cannot think itself beyond itself anymore than the eye can see itself, or the tongue can taste itself. Again, “the eye of mind sees everything, but cannot see itself” (H.H. the 16th Karmapa). It is a great truth of our Great Tradition that the ultimate Nature of Mind, non-dual Ultimate Reality Itself, our Supreme Source, may be only *directly* or immediately realized through the dark night of the confusion and complementary wisdom of the inexorable process of growth through the lifestages and mindstates of the spiritual path. It is this *direct* spiritual cognition by the prepared and trained mind—beyond the ideology and idiom of intellectual, emotional and exoteric conceptual belief, indeed, beyond all egoic, even lesser esoteric mystical experience—that is the very heart of the “greater” esoteric, then non-dual lifestages of emotional-spiritual evolutionary development. *Any attempt at a rapprochement of subjective religion and objective science that does not integrate this Great Wisdom Tradition truth of the process of the four views or aspects of experience—exoteric/outer, esoteric/inner, greater esoteric secret, and innermost secret/non-dual—cannot succeed* (p.25).

These four views correspond approximately to the *four inherent potentials or consciousness states of human consciousness—waking state* (third person gross physical and mental, the realm of science), *first person dream state* (subtle), *deep dreamless sleep state* (causal), and non-dual *turiya*, “the fourth state” (p.25 and Appendix A-II). So there are at least these four ways of knowing, explaining and responding to any given phenomenal quantum event-moment. For example, we might reject an hypothesis or an idea—say the existence of “God”—if we limit our view merely to an outer or exoteric authoritarian fundamentalist concept of God, yet open to it at the deeper or subtler levels of the greater esoteric or even non-conceptual, non-dual understanding. The wisdom method of zen mind (*shoshin*)—the beginner’s mind—is that we may suspend a defensive emotional rush to judgment in order to open to a more inclusive view (p.83), or even ultimately, to the view of a christ or a buddha, the radically unbiased view that is “no-view” at all.

We are able to access these four views in accordance with the limits of our present lifestage development. For example, a human adolescent would not usually be able to access the evolutionary potentials of a living mahasiddha, buddha or christ. The innate potentials are always present, but the evolutionary lifestage development has not proceeded beyond the 3rd or 4th stage. Even though 5th or even 6th stage samadhi *states* may be experienced, they have not yet become stable lifeworld *traits* (Appendix A).

What then, is the role of “inferential valid cognition” (*pramana*) of our rational, conceptual mind? Shall we abandon the intellect—the concept and belief of the mental and psychic/higher mind lifestages, the faith of our fathers—and attempt to take heaven

by the storm of pure non-dual mystical cognition? What is the New Reformation view?

Pure Vision. The various traditions within our Great Wisdom Tradition, both in the East and in the West have created a duality of intellectual understanding versus direct, contemplative penetration, the non-dual or ultimate realization of Absolute Spirit. This polarity of the “two ways of knowing” — the Two Fundamental Truths (relative and ultimate)—has in turn given rise to another duality, the perennial sectarian debate between the proponents of “gradual” enlightenment and those who argue for “sudden” enlightenment. We will see that the “pure vision” (*vidya, rigpa, alétheia/Truth*) of the primordial non-dual view of our Great Tradition sees the truth of both sides or poles at once, without any dilemma or contradiction whatsoever.

The great transcendental dialecticians—Nagarjuna, Plotinus, Shankara, Kant and Hegel understood that “all finite things-in-themselves are contradictory” (Hegel). All the masters have told it: *the poles of dilemma are always, already a prior unity!* The Two Great Truths: there is the fundamental Great Infinite, and the many finite outpicturings thereof; there is the universal Absolute, and multiplicity, its innumerable particulars; there is the infinite nature, essence or Source of mind, Suzuki Roshi’s “Big Mind,” and its relative phenomenal, material and psychological manifestations, or “small mind.” However, “if the view is dualistic, there can be no enlightenment” (*Ch’an* master Hui-neng). *When we limit our view to the dilemma—the discontinuity—we cannot see the dialectical complementarity that reveals the continuity, the prior unity, and we become a part of “the problem.”* Only the infinite expanse of the Nature of Mind, Spirit Reality Itself transcends yet includes all the illusory “concealer truths” of the dualities of habitual objective, empirical relative-conventional knowing and feeling in the radiant embrace of its metaphorical, non-dual ultimate Truth. “Truth is one; many are its names” (*Rigveda*). The relative truths of discursive concept-mind cannot grasp, describe or explain the dimension of ultimate truth, non-dual Spirit Itself. Yet, wonder of wonders, Spirit may be realized, understood and expressed through the poetry of the wisdom of kindness, right here now.

Our Great Tradition, whether physics and the sciences, or metaphysics and mysticism generally views this process, this primordial dialectic of the Universal or Absolute and its descending spacetime phenomenal particulars or productions (*Kosmos, the Great Chain of Being*) as an infinite/eternal *process*, permeating the “three times” — past, present, future — of all phenomenal existence, all universes, all *dharms*, all dimensions. Disagreement arises however, as to the essential nature and constitution of the apparent reality of these physical and mental particulars—the actual nature of mind that manifests as the experience of self-aware beings. Are we really as separate as it seems from the Universal Absolute? Following the “principle of universal relativity” (p.37), how do we avoid creating or reifying an objective “idol” or a “false absolute” from the perfectly subjective whole of Being Itself. Moreover, is this imputed Universal Reality aware? Or just a mass of electro-chemical particulars arising in a collection of inherently separate purely physical brains? What is ultimate Spirit’s objective spacetime location? In Christ? Buddha? In Jews or Muslims? From the Pure Vision of our Great Wisdom Tradition’s non-dual View there is *only* Spirit. Between the lines we are all together only Spirit. We all

share the same Ultimate Reality—non-dual “Real God.”

The path of Spirit for self-aware beings must then, include a deepening understanding of these “two truths” or two ways of knowing, the two minds of our Great Wisdom Tradition (p.23). Thus, in response to our question as to the nature of inferential valid cognition, there are two basic forms of valid cognition. The first is *indirect* third person analytical, valid conceptual, interpretive understanding with its theoretical, exoteric religious and esoteric mystical supports (from science, mathematics and religious studies to prayer, mantra and deity practice). Then there is *direct*, first person, immediate, non-conceptual, metaphorical contemplative cognition of Spirit-presence. This direct cognition includes—by way of the appropriate mind training practices guided by devotion to the master or spiritual guide—the subtle and causal energy dimension *recognition* of ascending *samadhi* states (*vidya/rigpa, kensho/ satori, moksha, sahaj, metanoia*) and their corresponding lifestages. These states and stages precede the “permanent” *realization* or liberation/ enlightenment (*bodhi*) of the individual into her/his ultimate sourceground, and the compassionate lifeworld activity that follows therefrom.

As noted above, the step-by-step stabilization of this process of the continuum of dualistic *knowledge* and non-dual *realization* constitutes the *completion stage* of the psychoemotional spiritual path—individually and collectively—that results in the perfection of the individual buddhas, *mahasiddhas* and sages and ultimately, in the fullness of time, in the potential collective spiritualization and eventual perfection of our species—step-by-step, of course.

The Primordial Seed. So we begin, and then continue to receive, to work and to respond to our lifeworld *just as it is*—what we’ve been given, what we’ve created—here and now. We begin by approaching our unseparate, ineffable infinite Source simply and humbly, in dualistic ignorance with only a hint of its great potential. By grace, we open to our Great Tradition’s archetypal *primordial idea* that we have an inherent capacity or potential to recognize, then realize the essential Nature of Mind—the perfection/ completion (fruition) of our indwelling Christ-Buddha Nature. With an open mind and heart we conditionally accept this possibility as a working hypothesis. We acknowledge that we can and will grow beyond our present lifestage development. We then enter and take refuge in the teaching and practice of our chosen path. Thus, *the primordial wisdom seed* is sown. We read and study, then discover our Great Wisdom Tradition injunction of meditative-contemplative practice, teachers, then a master—a fully qualified spiritual guide—and a spiritual community. In lifestages four and five (Appendix A), with deepening rational conventional understanding supported by non-conceptual mindfulness—the peace, quiescence or equanimity and penetrating insight of meditation—we develop a compassionate faith and certainty of purpose that *gradually* removes the ignorance (fear, anger, pride) that obscures and obstructs the *sudden* direct, permanent realization of our already present primordial state of presence that is our Supreme Source, non-dual Ultimate Spirit. With practice, patience and profound discriminating conceptual cognition, self-centered dualistic meditation and imperfect compassion and devotion to the master are transformed into greater esoteric knowledge,

then non-dual *wisdom (vidya/rigpa/ gnosis)*. Thus do we grow into the illuminating process of the subtle and causal mindstates and lifestages of our chosen wisdom path. Again, the universal behavioral result of this evolutionary process is kind, compassionate conduct in the everyday lifeworld.

Thus, *we utilize the dimension of dualistic relative truth to support our recognition and realization of non-dual ultimate truth while ultimate truth guides our relative understanding*. We use reason and discriminating wisdom (*prajna/sophia*) to root out the “inherent flaw” of habitually conditioned discursive thinking mind—as a method or means (*upaya*) to cut through the very root of egoic ignorance and separation in order to recognize (*vidya/rigpa*), then realize the transcendent Primordial Awareness Wisdom (*Yeshe, Jñana, Gnosis, Shakti*) that is the Ultimate Truth of Reality Itself. This then is the prior unity and interdependent mutuality and reciprocity of the Two Fundamental Truths (p.23).

But as we enter the path it is the relative, conceptual understanding of the personal egoic self—and its painful limits—that begins, motivates, interprets and aligns with direct mystical or subtle experience, including, if we’re lucky, contemplative glimpses, beyond faith and belief, of the non-dual ultimate dimensional realm, all the way to the end of it. This fruition is the permanent, moment-to-moment self-realization of the christ-buddhas, the *mahasiddhas* and the saints. It is this realization, according to our perennial Great Wisdom Tradition, that is the indwelling heartseed potential abiding at the spiritual heart of each human being. To the spiritual aspirant such a realization seems miraculous. To the realizer it is quite ordinary, “nothing special” (*wu shin*).

In Chapters II through VI we will explore, through the varieties of our Great Tradition’s Heartmind Path, this apparent duality of the interdependent relationship of indirect conceptual knowledge and direct contemplative recognition, then realization that becomes the compassionate fruition of non-dual Ultimate Spirit right now.

The Task and the Bridge: The Paradox of Freedom

The only difference between a buddha and an ordinary person is that one realizes it, the other does not.

- Ch’an master, Hui Neng

The emerging New Reformation with its non-dual Great Wisdom Tradition vision and contemplative research methodology must transcend and heal the dualistic, separative and destructive result of the prevailing modernist ideology of scientific and spiritual materialism, postmodern pathological pluralism and nihilism, and both fundamentalist and liberal religious provincialism.

Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living

creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.

-Albert Einstein

Ego and Eros: The Transition. What then, shall we do with this precious life we've been given? The evolutionary ascent (Plato's Eros or Spirit-in-action) from this painful egoic prison begins with a gradual transition from the defensive, reactive adolescence of the personal, egocentric, gendercentric and ethnocentric worldviews and mindstates of the first three developmental lifestages of conventional egoic socialization (physical, emotional and mental). This phase transition or opening to a fourth, psychic/higher mental stage and "spiritual" ethical practice is a metaphysical, contemplative bridge to the deeper consciousness structures of wisdom-compassion. It is a transition to the worldcentric, then theocentric transpersonal, transrational mindstates of the subtle, causal and non-dual dimensions with their corresponding consciousness states (waking, dreaming, deep dreamless sleep, and *turiya*) and corresponding lifestages (p.25 and Appendix A, Part I and II). This transition is accomplished by engaging the "spiritual path" and training the wild horse of the mind (*lungta*) in equanimity and the kindness and compassion that flows from it.

This transcendental bridge between the personal, material dimensions of existence (objective third person experience data) and transpersonal Spirit (subjective first person data) is the gradual recognition of the *Mahatman* or "True Self," the *noetic* essence-self that is ultimately non-egoic no-self (*anatman*), the supreme identity of the highest personal self with the *Atman* that is no-self, Nirguna Brahman, the still luminous emptiness (Tao) that is the vast continuity of our Supreme Source. Therefore, contrary to a tired religious studies debate, from the ultimate or non-dual "view," Buddhism and Vedanta agree—there can be no eternal, permanently existing, surviving self. And yet, there is this bright continuity of non-dual mind essence through lifetimes in the continuous flux of relative time (chap.V).

Moreover, contrary to the Western, Freudian psychological paradigm under sway of our Judaic-Christian preconscious, deep cultural background of "original sin," the integral transpersonal view of the New Reformation recognizes our essential *original goodness*, the primordial indwelling, innate heartseed or potential for the ultimate happiness of spiritual realization that underpins and motivates each individual's evolutionary development through the painful, separative "normal neurosis" of the human condition. This emerging metaphysic of "Basic Goodness" represents a transition from the shackles of the negative problem oriented view of 20th Century depth psychology with its prideful therapeutic paternalism, to an incipient positive psychology that emphasizes discovery, development and training in the liberation of the essential heartseed wisdom presence dwelling within each one of us.

Such a sociocultural developmental stage shift from the neurotic, conditional, egoic-personal separate self to the reconstruction of the compassionate transpersonal worldview of the *Mahatman* or essence-self will not be an easy transformation. The ordeal of the out-growing, dismantling and transcendence of narcissistic desire-mind is indeed

formidable. In this dark time, the false promise of glamorous ego-fulfillment offered by utopian scientific and commercial materialism and the false hope of the prideful spiritual materialism of dualistic relative-conventional concept-God, idealized new age metaphysics, and popular exoteric (no *sadhana*/mind training) Buddhism, Taoism and Vedanta, permeate the negative conceptual and belief systems of our global massmind. This transition from the *taboo of the subjective* to the transcendent *Primordial Awareness Wisdom*(*Gnosis, Jnana*) will require a deep and difficult crisis of perception and belief, momentous paradigm shifts in individuals and thereby the collective. The transitional result is undetermined. The key is individual perseverance in training the mind in equanimity and the compassionate behavior that spontaneously arises therefrom.

As we enter the cusp of the Age of Synthesis that is the New Reformation of the 21st Century there remains a profoundly separative cognitive dissonance and emotional distance between ego-self and Spirit heart essence, between exterior surface and interior depth, between ego-ethnocentric/gendercentric, and worldcentric/theocentric view and conduct. According to our Great Wisdom Tradition, the root cause of *thanatos*—human evil—is the negative emotional poisons arising from the ignorance (*avidya, hamartia*) that is denial of the truth of our actual original nature (p.77). These are the ego-induced mindstates of grasping/ desire, greed, pride/envy and fear/aggression that inevitably arise in the dreadful face of emotional-spiritual freedom. This freedom lies in the possibility of progressive surrender and transcendence of these destructive thoughts and emotions. Our capacity to help others during this difficult transition exists in a direct relation to our freedom or liberation from serving and defending the ignorance that is ego-self.

The “restoration of subjectivity” inherent in the spiritual path of our Great Wisdom Tradition is the immediate antidote and, in due course, the ultimate remedy. There exists overwhelming psychological, clinical, and contemplative evidence that with practice, patience and the kindness inherent in the “courage to be,” the human mind can be contemplatively trained—far beyond the thin veneer of mere “positive thinking”—to choose and maintain equanimity, positive, peaceful and compassionate mindstates over the fearful narcissistic, neurotic chaos of negative, destructive mindstates. Indeed, this fact is the very essence of our Great Wisdom Tradition’s spiritual path, and of the outer and inner psychotherapeutic endeavor.

Further, as subjectivity is restored, the mind may be trained to trust the process of the transcendence of the habitual dualism of negative and positive experience and mindstates altogether (even blissful mystical mindstates), and just *be* in the spontaneous, unconstructed natural “pure presence” of unbiased non-dual Witness Awareness while functioning effectively and gently in the chaos of the world. This fact is profoundly demonstrated by the lives of past and present spiritual masters of all the varieties and lineages of our Great Wisdom Tradition.

All beings are ever free and pure by nature. They are ever
illuminated and liberated from the very beginning.

- Chandogya Upanishad

Development as Envelopment. We will examine this *paradox of freedom* and its law of cause and effect, the *Law of Karma* (actions/deeds), and explore the traditional evolutionary mind maps that describe its process—hierarchies (holarchies) of the invariant sequence of developmental lifestages and energy dimensions of the path, from physical to subtle to causal; from subconscious to conscious to superconscious, to being non-dual Spirit Itself.

We must note here again that from the non-dual view of our Great Tradition, all-embracing Absolute Spirit is not hierarchical. Indeed, it has no conceptual attributes or qualities whatsoever. Nothing at all can be thought or said about it without falling into dualistic confusion and contradiction. Yet how we try. Nevertheless, enfolded Spirit unfolds, descends and manifests (ontogeny)—the involution of *Kosmos*, the Great Chain of interdependent, phenomenal arising—then develops, evolves (phylogeny) and returns hierarchically, in egoic stage levels of growth: *koshas*, *vijnanas*, *bhumis*, *sefirot*, and corresponding energy dimensions, “many mansions,” *memes*. As Plotinus taught, “development is envelopment,” at ever subtler more inclusive levels of Spirit embrace.

However, *the bright uncreated witness presence (vidya/atman/ saksin/ christos) does not descend or evolve for it is identical with changeless non-dual Ultimate Spirit*. Therefore the witness awareness—our inherent Christ-Buddha Nature—is not actually a self, experience, condition or mindstate although conventionally, we think of and refer to it as such. Rather, it is the separate, egoic personal-self and the subtle, *noetic*-essential or soul-self that evolves upon the relative-conventional subject-object spacetime path to the ultimate non-dual realization of the sourceground of both. And this Supreme Source is, as we have seen, the “primordially pure” luminosity of ultimate Reality, the non-dual Spirit and Supreme Identity that we always actually are, before and after we think about it.

But alas, all of this is mere concept. Concepts, whether about phenomena, or about non-dual Spirit are still concepts. The phenomena of mind (spacetime figure and ground) arise from its non-dual primordial luminous Ground or Source through the cognitive mechanisms of attention, sensory-perceptual and emotional imputation and conceptual designation and belief. We reify or impute reality to appearing objects and emotions—in ignorance and forgetfulness of the Ground or Base—by fixating and clinging to our experience (sensory attention, concepts, opinions and beliefs), even direct, subjective loving and peaceful/blissful meditative-contemplative experience. The focus here is *namarupa*, reified positive and negative experience of the habitual distractions of the relative-conventional self of impermanent bodymind. The emptiness of Basic Space (*dhatu*, *ying*, *Tao*) that embraces and enfolds it all—our Supreme Source Identity—recedes from pristine immediate awareness, and the negative emotions arise. What to do? Here, now rest in the state of the Ground Luminosity, the very Nature of Mind while its relative phenomena—physical-perceptual and mental-emotional—continually arise as play for the bodymind of the beholder. After all, it’s merely the experience of relative mind. Nothing

more or less.

God, the world, the mind . . . are concepts. There is nothing whatsoever except concepts . . . Abiding without concepts is the undifferentiated state . . . the Reality of Supreme Absolute Being.

- Sri Ramana Maharshi, *Collected Works* (1970)

It is taught by our Great Tradition that everything that can be experienced—heard, seen, felt, thought or spoken—is metaphor: sign, symbol, concept or archetype. Nevertheless, non-dual witness presence arises upon this stream of primordial Voice, then abides as that one who is simply the vast expanse of perfectly subjective luminous awareness itself. That one is the silent interior witness—prior to concept, view or judgment—of its own objects, body/mind/spirit appearances. “Mind is experience—that’s all it is” (Tulku Urgyen). And it is the “pith instruction” of the master that “points out” the way to the conscious, continuous deconstruction and dissolution of the dualistic thought and concept of ego-I now revealing this prior unity of cognition and emptiness—appearance and its great source—the very Essence or Wisdom Nature of Mind. This marvelous paradox, and its subtle resolution, arises for us from our Great Wisdom Tradition. From the old Vedas:

Something lives within you that lives longer than the suns. It abides at the place in the heart.

Chandogya Upanishad

Who is it that shines within the heart of all beings? “Who is it that shines above the heads of those who are awake?” (Adi Da Samraj).

The further task of the integral view of the New Reformation is to “update” the premodern and modern truths of our non-dual Great Wisdom Tradition with the 20th Century postmodern discoveries of developmental and depth psychology, interdisciplinary autopoietic cognitive science—neuroscience including neurotheology, neuroplasticity, post-Darwinian evolutionary biology and psychology—and *post-*postmodern or postcritical integral studies including the new integral metaphysics, philosophy of mind, consciousness studies, and contemplative religious studies. Here we will explore recent integral critical attempts to evade metaphysics. I will argue that a truly holistic, integral view and practice—an integral noetic science of mind—must now include first person descriptions and the corresponding neural data of subjective spiritual experience. From such a return to subjectivity, balanced with critical, objective empirical scrutiny, certain valid non-objective metaphysical principles may be derived. Further, objective conceptual/theoretical maps of the path to this subjective ineffable Base or Source of experience cannot be accurate descriptions without the metaphysical

assumption and subsequent methodologies of such an integral ontology of interdependence between subjective and objective data. This updated postcritical view transcends, but includes premodern metaphysical speculation (God concepts), the modern metaphysical principles of scientific materialism (objectivism, physicalism, reductionism), and the “hermeneutics of suspicion” that marks the postmodern nihilist rejection (the “hard problem”) of the possibility of any truly unifying integral metanarrative as to the ultimate nature of Reality and our interdependent arising and participation in it.

The Transegoic Paradox. In Chapter VIII we will discuss the dilemma of ego strength and ego transcendence. Ego strength as a cohesive psychological self must be developed in order to integrate the personal lifestages and energy dimensions necessary for socialization—the Gross Body of the physical, emotional and mental—then, it would seem, dismantled and reconstructed to integrate the transpersonal stages and dimensions—psychic/higher mental, subtle and causal. “You have to *become* somebody before you can *be* nobody” (after Jack Engler). *The transegoic paradox:* in the personal lifestages the psychotherapeutic and meditative-contemplative activity of both the horizontal and vertical aspects of the path of development must increase ego strength. In the transpersonal lifestages such activity must have the opposite effect. And with higher realization—the causal and non-dual lifestages—the narcissistic personal ego is utterly deconstructed and transcended, yet these masters demonstrate a prodigious integrated functional self that engages the world at the highest levels of human capacity. An updated Great Wisdom Tradition view suggests an integral metaparadigm that offers a resolution to this ancient paradox, and an integral contemplative path that is a bridge of transition and transformation to the further reaches of our realization of the ultimate nature of mind. This then, is the daunting task of our new reformation in religion, science and culture.

One Ground, Two Truths: Toward an Ontology of Interdependence

“A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds.”

The Two Fundamental Truths. We live in two worlds at once! Our Great Wisdom Tradition teaches the primordial relationship of the dialectical unity of the “two ways of knowing,” the “two truths”: *samvritti satya*, our finite, objective empirical, relative-conventional reality, and *paramartha satya*, the infinite, perfectly subjective, non-dual, ultimate truth that transcends and embraces it; unfolding, descending, everyday phenomenal appearance, and the noumenon or prior ultimate Reality that enfolds it; the “provisional meaning” of obstructed conditional conceptual mind (*citta/sem/manas*) with its illusory or nominally real productions, and the “definitive meaning” of unconditioned, unobstructed Mind Essence (*svabhava, asti, ousia, eidos*), primordial Mind Nature (*cittata/sem nyid/gnosis*) that transcends, pervades and includes it all; the shadows of luminous Reality on the dim wall of Plato’s cave, and our clearlight mind that is his “First Principle,” this bright primordial continuum that is ultimate Reality Itself.

Thus do we dwell in two dimensions at once, relative conceptually designated finite reality

arising through its Supreme Source, infinite ultimate Reality Itself. We will see that it is non-conceptual cognition, the recognition or openness to this great radical truth—the momentous principle of the indivisible unity and dimensional interdependence (coemergence/coextension) of these fundamental Two Truths—that is the aperture to the path that leads to the realization of the happiness that cannot be lost. This is the truth of our primary relationship (*pratitya samutpada*), the truth that shall set us free.

The dharma that is taught by the buddhas relies completely upon two levels of truth; the worldly conventional level of truth, and the ultimate level of truth. . . There is no way to realize absolute truth except through reliance upon relative truth.

- Nagarjuna, *Fundamental Treatise on the Middle Way*

[The Absolute] is an essence (*asti*) without duality (*advaita*) . . . but not without relations (*visishthadvaita*) . . . this essence subsists in a two-fold (dual) nature (*dvaitibhava*); as being and becoming.

- A.K. Coomaraswamy, *Hinduism and Buddhism* (1943)

Form is emptiness, emptiness is form.

- from the Buddha's *Heart Sutra*

The Paradox of Realization and the Four Views. According to our Great Wisdom Tradition then, our Supreme Source, luminous non-dual Spirit Itself, the changeless basis of everything, is *perfect as it is*. “What you desire has come, but you do not know it” (Jesus). The imperative of the development stage of the path: recognize, then realize this great truth. Don't try to change anything! Yet, in the dark domain of relative-conventional spacetime reality of the early development lifestages of the path there is *only* change. Being Itself is *always* becoming. “Change is the only constant.” The evolutionary, developmental imperative: Revolution! We must change everything! We must change ourselves, change the world, battle evil, defeat suffering! Indeed, a most unusual paradox!

Do you understand the two minds: the mind which includes everything, and the mind that is related to something?

- Shunryu Suzuki Roshi, *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind* (1970)

Thus, the deepest or subtlest non-dual view of the varieties of our Great Wisdom Tradition teaches that the direct realization of the Supreme Source, *Mahashunyata* (emptiness), Tao, Nirguna Brahman is utterly non-dual. There can be no knowing subject experiencing a separate object, thing, reality or mindstate that is “enlightenment.” Following our *four part designation of knowledge*—*exoteric, esoteric, greater esoteric, and non-dual truth*—we may now trace our Great Tradition's continuum of the four consciousness or dimensional states with their respective views and levels of understanding, through the

lifestage process continuum of *dualistic knowledge* to the *non-dual realization* of the buddhas and mahasiddhas that is the actualization of the primordial awareness wisdom, the wisdom Nature of Mind (Appendix A: Part II).

Review of The View

One Ground, Two Truths, Three Bodies, Four Views, Five States

1. **Exoteric/Outer Waking States, Gross Body:** Dualistic, indirect, relative-conventional truth, concept-belief; empirical subject-object knowledge (*doxa, namtok*, opinion, information, third person objective scientific data). *Manovijnana*, the gross waking state (physical, emotional, mental). Spacetime *Nirmanakaya* access, Gross Body energy dimension; exoteric/outer conceptual and experiential belief in a separate God. The Bardo of living. Ground stage introduction to the view. *Shamatha*, mindfulness meditation practice.
2. **Esoteric/Inner Dream State, Subtle Body:** Dualistic, “lesser esoteric” form; meditative-devotional first person subjective recognition of the “state of presence”; discriminating, quasi- conceptual knowledge-wisdom (*dianoia, sophia, prajna*). Deity realms. *Sambhogakaya* access, Subtle Body energy dimension, *klishta manovijnana*, Saguna Brahman, Ishvara, esoteric/inner but separate God. Path stage. The Bardo of Becoming. Quiescence and introspection practice.
3. **Greater Esoteric/Innermost Secret Deep Dreamless Sleep State, Causal Body:** *Alayavijnana*, *Sambhogakaya* access, Causal Body energy dimension. Wisdom of *Satchitananda*, Fruition stage. The Bardo of *Dharmata*/Ultimate Reality. *Vapashyana* or insight meditation. “Path Luminosity.”
4. **Non-Dual State/Turiya, Essence Body:** The transcendent witness presence, beyond dualistic, two-valued concept, belief and even the subjective bliss of deep contemplative experience. Final fruition stage. Realization of the prior unity of the Two Truths (relative and ultimate): the primordial Tao/emptiness of Absolute or Ultimate Spirit lived with its cognitive, meditative and compassionate ethical conduct finally stabilized and actualized in the lifeworld (transcendent primordial wisdom, *prajnaparamita, noesis, gnosis, christos, logos, vidya/rigpa, yeshe*); Plato’s *noetic-logoic* final stage), *mahasiddha* Christ-Buddhahood. This is *Svabhavikakaya*, prior unity of the *Trikaya* of the Base (*gzhi*), body of pure *alaya (amalavijnana)*, *turiya* “the fourth,” realized as *turiyatita*, the final non-dual fifth state, “Ground Luminosity.” *Atman* that is *Nirguna Brahman*. Non-Dual “Real God,” beyond all theistic concept and belief. Fruition of *Mahamudra, Madhyamaka* and *Dzogchen* (see Appendix AI and AII). These five innate states of consciousness, supported by their corresponding energy bodies, are momentarily available *directly* to each self-conscious being. However, meditative states—the various levels of stable realization (*samadhi*)—are non-ordinary aspects of these five states that result only from the contemplative mind training of the spiritual path.

The various interpretations of the interdependent relation of these four views of the “two minds” or two truths of this one sourceground, the vast Reality that is non-dual Spirit Itself constitute both the exoteric-conventional and the more subtle, esoteric-contemplative *View* of the ultimate sourceground of all appearing reality for our religious and philosophical wisdom traditions, the *Path* to the realization of that view and its ground or Supreme Source, and the *Fruition* or result, the integration of the View and its Path into the everyday lifeworld and ethical conduct of the individual, and thereby the moral worldview and its potential realization for the sociocultural whole.

The Really Hard Problem: Unifying the Two Truths. *The perennial dilemma for religion, science and culture is the resolution of this duality, our relationship of the finite—our view and actions in the relative material world and the result of these choices—to our all-inclusive infinite source in whom this all arises and participates.*

Our emotional-spiritual growth and happiness, our ethical conduct, and indeed our very survival depends upon this path to the occasional, then more or less continuous *recognition* of the *prior unity* of the two truths—everyday personal relative and transpersonal ultimate—that is always this one great Reality, this “One Taste, the taste of liberation” (Shakyamuni Buddha). According to our great Wisdom Tradition, every problem, every dilemma is the result or effect of dualistic, self-centered view and conduct. A commitment to the path that trains the mind and the heart in the equanimity of this moment-to-moment recognition is the antidote to the “primary ignorance” of our presumption of, and clinging to a permanent separate self or soul, and to the “secondary ignorance” of grasping (desire) at the impermanent material “things” that appear through arising phenomenal reality. The lifeworld understanding of this primordial relationship (*hetu/tendrel*), the interdependent unity of objective and subjective knowledge is “discriminating wisdom” (*prajna*) And the lifeworld realization of the unity of the two truths is “the deep,” the subtle transcendent Primordial Awareness Wisdom (*yeshe*), beyond the self-full bias, judgment, concept and belief of our empirical relative-conditional worlds that are, paradoxically, “always already” embraced by Ultimate Spirit, our Supreme Identity. Therefore, in due course and by the master’s grace (*jin lab*), through the diligent practice of the path and a little bit of luck, this recognition of the two truths results in the instantaneous, continuous and stable heartmind *self-realization* that this Being (Interbeing) is, without changing anything, always just us! Spirit—emptiness, Tao, Brahman— here now lives us! And from this realization spontaneously flows the compassionate activity—for the benefit of all beings—that actualizes and stabilizes this great View in our everyday lifeworld.

Although Spirit already pervades everything, humanity is, in this world system, the “chosen people”—all individual persons—without a single exception. Thus informed, we may evaluate and act with impartial love-wisdom in the service of *all* beings, human and non-human, here in the midst of the natural, necessary chaos of this “normal neurotic” everyday world of relative-conventional reality. Keep this view and our ethical precepts keep themselves, effortlessly. Step-by-step, of course. “Keep the View,” unify the two truths, and be supremely happy!

When we forget ourselves, we actually are the true activity of reality itself. When we realize this fact there is no problem whatsoever in this world. -Suzuki Roshi (1970)

In Chapters II through VI we will follow the Two Fundamental Truths, these “two minds” —all-embracing Big Mind, and egocentric small mind—through the *View* and *Path* of the primary traditions of our perennial Great Wisdom Tradition. Our goal will be a return to our “always already present” wisdom potential of the realization, then actualization in the world of the prior unity of these two. This is the radical view of our Great Tradition’s Middle Way between heavenly eternalism, and earthly nihilism (p.55).