

Going Beyond

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From **STARFIRE** I:1 1986
BCM Starfire
London WC1N 3XX
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"Thus shall you think of all this fleeting world:
A star at dawn, a bubble in a stream;
A flash of lightning in a summer cloud,
A flickering lamp, a phantom and a dream."
- The Diamond Sutra.

Life is a dream - the dream of living. It springs from a non-dual background, but is interpreted dualistically on the basis of our preconceptions about reality. This interpretation gives rise to the illusion - the roots of which are obstinately deep - that there is a person, individual or soul who experiences things. The entire, colorful range of experience is born out of this illusion, beautiful though it may be at times. By way of an analogy, it may be likened to a play, in which all the parts are played simultaneously by the same actor, who however is so absorbed in the persons and events of the play that he identifies with them. The actor has become lost in the dream of existence, of **maya**, of **samsara**.

Sometimes it seems not to be appreciated how central this insight is to Thelema. Many seem to think that Thelema upholds the sovereignty and absoluteness of the individual and "his" True Will, in such phrases as "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law" and "Every man and every woman is a star." This is a misunderstanding which ignores the background of mystical insight from which **Liber AL** springs, and in which it is grounded. For several years prior to the reception of **Liber AL**, and indeed for several years after, Crowley was a Buddhist. He experienced profoundly the basic insight of Buddhism - **sunyavada**, the realization of emptiness or void. Simply, reality is emptiness, void of conceptualizations, empty of form. Form is, in fact, "our" projection onto this emptiness; indeed, it is the illusory nature of form that makes it amenable to manipulation by the magician. A consequence of **sunyavada** is **anatma**, the denial of the existence of an individual entity.

This insight pervades Crowley's subsequent work, and is fundamental. In particular, works such as **Liber Aleph** and **The Book of Lies** are saturated with it. Again and again the point is driven home that individual existence is an illusion, that this illusion is the sole obstacle to enlightenment or clear seeing. Thus, Thelema has strong affinities with that Current which flowers with Nagarjuna and the **Prajnaparamita**, and which culminates in the simplicity and clarity of Ch'an.

It may seem paradoxical that a doctrine of apparent individualism is rooted - if anything can be - in sunyavada. However, this is a matter of intuitive insight. Logic is essentially and inherently self-contradictory, and in these matters, appeals to it are futile. Interested readers may be referred to the works of the pseudonymous Wei Wu Wei.

This essay, then, is about going beyond - going beyond logic and duality, and crossing over to the other shore of direct, intuitive insight.

1: Advaita

The Master said to me: "All the Buddhas and all sentient beings are nothing but the One Mind, besides which nothing exists. This mind, which is without beginning, is unborn and indestructible."

-- Chun Chou Record, Zen Teaching of Huang Po.

Advaita is a Sanskrit word meaning not divided, not dual, whole. As a philosophy or doctrine, it is used to indicate that reality - by which is meant everything that is, as well as everything that is not - is a whole, a continuum. Division into individuals and objects is apparent, not real. This one substance can conveniently be referred to as "I." All things are not simply imbued with that I, but indeed are that I. I is the Actor playing all roles simultaneously - but also the stage, the audience, the bad reviews, the hooting owls, the slithering slug, the bright moon, and so on ad infinitum. I am all. All is I. The realization that this is so - the intuitive realization, rather than the intellectual supposition - comes as a tremendous shock to "one" for whom dualism has been an article of faith for so long. And yet, once it has been glimpsed, it all seems so natural. Indeed, the real mystery is this: why has it been taken for granted that dualism is a fundamental principle, the reality of things? In order to observe the world around us, and to divine its principles, we have chopped everything up into pieces or units - for more convenient observation. The problem is, however, that once this had been done, it was forgotten that this "division" into sections was purely theoretical, wholly schematic, imposed by the observer upon the observed. Instead, the schematic division itself is taken as real! In this way, we see a multitude of independent and isolated units where there is really a continuum.

An example of how pernicious this view can become is man's conception of himself and his place in the universe. From a dualistic viewpoint, each man is truly an island - for that matter, so is everything else - an isolated unit of existence in a sea of non-existence. Accordingly, a person sees himself as something akin to an inflated balloon, the skin of the body being its shell. The skin is the demarcation line between self and not-self: one is an isolated entity in a foreign land. Many people take this view even further, and identify the self as being one particular part or organ of the supposed unit - often the mind, the heart, the spirit, or the soul - which somehow inhabits a body, itself now little more than a sophisticated puppet. This is indeed dualism gone mad!

This, man's view of "himself," has led to a deeply-rooted belief that somehow man is separate from the rest of the universe, that a line can be drawn between man and "nature." We have the absurd idea that somehow man has, or can, "conquer" nature, that the universe, with all of its riches, is here specifically for the advancement of man; like an egg, waiting to be sucked. This view leads to rapacious, exploitive behavior and wanton destruction, culminating in 20th century Western industrialized society: not only is egotistical man entitled to rape the universe around him, but other people are also fair game for exploitation and conquest.

In the last few decades, scientific research, even though based on the dualistic notion of observer and observed - that the observer is completely detached from, and thus independent of his object of study - is leading some people to question the dualist notion. Nuclear physics, in particular the study of sub-atomic particles, is an interesting pointer. It has emerged that there can be no truly neutral observer, since the very presence of the observer modifies the behavior of the object of study - in this case, sub-atomic particles. This would indeed be a curious thing were one to suppose the basic premise of dualism to be sound - that the observer was an independent, self-contained entity who happened to be observing another independent, self-contained entity. However, in view of the influence, it can only be concluded that observer and observed are not so independent of each other after all. It is another discovery of research in the field of nuclear physics that indicates

the "mechanism" whereby such interaction between observer and observed is possible. That is, basically, that phenomena are composed of myriads of interlocking sub-atomic particles, having a solid appearance only when looked at from a relative distance.

Despite many a spirited chase throughout the centuries, an indivisible unit of matter – a sort of basic building block - has yet to be found. At one time it was hoped that the atom was this block. When the atom turned out to be composed of a multitude of sub-atomic particles, it was felt that the basic block might be one of those particles. However, we have yet to discover a particle that does not itself turn out to be made up of even smaller particles. There may be every reason to suppose that this process continues indefinitely, and that there is no basic building block. What we can fairly confidently posit, however, is that particles seem to be energy locked into certain patterns. Thus all phenomena can be considered as energy fields. The image is of a vast field of energy, the energy here and there locking or interweaving into whorls or areas of greater density and compactness. The whole scene is flowing and kaleidoscopic rather than static, with interchange and mutual influence between neighboring whorls or localized energy fields. It has to be said that this is a speculative image; however, the progress of nuclear physics this century seems to be pointing in such a direction. If correct, this would explain much. For instance, telepathy, clairvoyance and the like seem quite natural and comprehensible, given what is at the very least a link or connection between apparently individual phenomena.

The picture that emerges is, then, a monist one. Everything is composed essentially of one substance. Duality, which is based upon the principle of opposites, is seen to be an illusion, based on faulty concepts. We have imposed our preconceptions onto the universe, seeing divisions where there are actually none. A useful analogy is a magnet. Conceptually, we consider a magnet as having a north pole and a south pole. Now, the two poles exist only in relation to one another: they cannot exist apart. They are different areas of the same magnetic field. If we cut off the half associated with the south pole, a "new" south pole is immediately created on the first half, and likewise a "new" north pole on the second. Such distinctions as "north pole" and "south pole" are conceptual only. They are imposed by our intellect, projected onto what we observe. This analogy of magnetic poles is a fairly obvious illustration of an important principle. We have seen that we impose the duality of north and south poles where in fact none exists: we have made a distinction where there is none. This can be extended to our perception of the universe around us. We categories a continuum into separate objects on the basis of preconceptions, and see multiplicity where there is unity. The probable mechanism for this is some sort of supposed recognition by the intellect, on the basis of a minimum of sensory data. In other words, sensory perceptions are dealt with in terms of existing conceptual classifications, bare bones fleshed out by imagination. There is a tendency to look at the unknown in terms of the known or familiar. An example comes to mind from my own experience, when I was first living in a foreign country. In the face of almost every stranger I used to "see" the most striking resemblances to acquaintances in England. In retrospect, I recognized it as wish-fulfillment, the need to see the new in terms of the old and familiar. The same principle underlies, in all probability, our perception of the universe. A man has a perception; it seems a little like what he has learnt is a tree; and thus, he now perceives a tree. In reality, of course, "a tree" is an abstraction, a very sweeping generalization. No two bundles of perceptions that we call tree are the same. There are, then, no such things as trees. "Tree" is just a name, an abstraction or concept on our part. By such means our intellects have imposed a uniformity and structure where in reality none exist.

We have come some way, in that we have reduced supposed dualism to the One Substance, the Whole. This, however, is not enough: a further refinement is necessary. We have been using the term "one" or monism only in contrast to "two" or dualism. This is itself, of course, a duality - and

hence, as we have seen, purely conceptual. Since there is no multitude, then neither is there the contrast of "one." The fact is, that the universe is no more One than Two.

We can go on and on with this process of apparently resolving a duality, only to discover that the supposed resolution or abolition itself leads to another duality. The reason for this is that our intellect, our reason, is firmly embedded in the concept of dualism. Every thought is born out of dualistic concepts and is thus inherently untrue, given our conclusion that dualism is supposed rather than actual. Simply, everything that we can say about the universe is essentially untrue, a lie! We seem to be up against a brick wall here. If our intellectual processes are inherently dualistic, if whatever we could say about the universe is untrue, then should we not give up the struggle, ungird our loins, and despair?

At this point, it is instructive to compare the picture we have arrived at with traditions such as Advaita Vedanta, Taoism, Mahayana Buddhism and the like. It is axiomatic to these traditions that the universe is really beyond description - because language is based on dualistic concepts, and hence incapable of giving adequate expression to anything not itself dualistic. This is not to condemn language as erroneous or inadequate; it is a very useful tool, but has its limitations. We do not, generally, attempt brain surgery with a potato peeler! The most that can be hoped for is that language be used as a pointer. In other words, although reality is non-dual, yet in the first instance an admittedly dualistic language structure must be used as an early stage of its transcendence. Admittedly, this early stage entails replacing one concept with another; and since all concepts are false this might seem distinctly odd, not to say futile. Yet, by evolving a chain of imagery that seems to lead in a certain direction, the hope is that intuition will fathom what cannot be expressed in language.

This process can only be taken so far, however, and is limited. The idea is not to point at some non-dualist "Truth," however vaguely, but rather to demonstrate the futility and emptiness of dualism. Just as a magnetic north and south pole exist only relative to each other, and **not** as things objective or in their own right, so it is with all of the so-called opposites or dualities. For instance, black exists only in contrast to white. We call something black only to distinguish it from something else which we have designated white - or, in the context of this example, non-black. Were we to have a world totally black, then there would be no contrast and hence no need for non-black or white. In the same way, concepts more obviously abstract are mutually dependent; we need "evil," for instance, to define the parameters of "good," and vice versa.

If it is not realized that all of the so-called opposites or dualities are relative rather than real, conceptual rather than actual, then "the chain of imagery" will in fact be circular. This is because, no matter how subtly the language is stretched, it remains dualist - and subtle dualism is just as bad as the more common-or-garden variety - more so, in fact, since the practitioner thinks he is getting somewhere. A good example is the process of countering thesis with antithesis, and then flourishing proudly the emergent synthesis.

The problem is that the synthesis is itself its parents' child; and thus, remaining dualistic in nature, establishes its own polarity. Take, for instance, the metaphysical jargon of Noumenon and Phenomenon. The former may be seen as subject, and the latter its object. Noumenon may be seen as the synthesis of a duality: Phenomenon is the original thesis, whilst the negative of this, nothing or non-phenomenon, is the antithesis. However, Noumenon remains a dualistic concept, having meaning in relation to Phenomenon and non-phenomenon. Noumenon may be rendered as subtly as possible, but it remains **something**. Immediately, its opposite or relative **nothing** is evoked. We

can never overcome duality by this method, simply because we are by analogy continually dividing something, and being left with a fraction of something, which must always be **something**. We are faced with an infinite regression of sorts. This may all be dismissed as semantic juggling. It does, however, demonstrate that we cannot use duality and anything that can be expressed linguistically is by definition dualistic in order by itself to transcend duality. It can possibly be an aid, but then it suggests rather than expresses. Left to itself, logic will weave an ever-tightening and ever-denser web, which will, by its own momentum, strangle the aspirant! Better by far simply to cut through all this; what we need is the sword of **Prajna**, or direct insight into the nature of reality.

Prajna is a word often translated as 'Wisdom.' This is inadequate, however, not conveying the sense of direct, immediate insight. This direct insight tends to arise spontaneously, often when dualistic thinking has been exhausted and the inevitable brick wall reached. It is then, when thought can go no further and gives up, that this direct awareness can arise. Hui Neng, according to tradition, had this experience upon hearing someone read the **Vajracchedika** or **Diamond Sutra**, a short work of the **Prajnaparamita** class. When reading various anecdotes from the history of Ch'an and Zen Buddhism, one is at first rather puzzled at these spontaneous arisings of direct insight. They seem to be triggered off by remarks, phrases or actions that appear rather petty or even meaningless. However, when tossed into a mind that has become ready for them, they prove to be a catalyst, the "last straw."

It can be surmised, therefore, that **Prajna** arises when the mind is no longer preoccupied with the futile chatter of chasing its own tail (or **tale!**), of attempting to reach reality by logical thought processes. When this monkey is stilled, brought to a halt, then real awareness is no longer blocked. No longer distracted, seeing is direct and real. The conclusion is inescapable that this **Prajna** or direct insight is there permanently, obscured only by the machinations of the mind. In fact this **Prajna** can be identified with Enlightenment, Satori, Liberation, and the various other euphemisms for this state of direct awareness. Amongst scholars, this would be seen perhaps as a contentious statement: some see **Prajna** as a faculty only, at the disposal of the aspirant. However, scholars are generally people who have a love of categorizing and schematizing. Duality has been left behind, and with it these categories of experience. As Wei Wu Wei says, "*Prajna is the act of action - pure experience, dynamic and concrete; an experience, not a concept.*" (Fingers Pointing Towards the Moon). **Prajna** is the experience of experience, its very essence. Where **Prajna** is, there is no longer any distinction between experience, experiencing and experiencer. There is only an awareness, undivided, without subject or object. **Prajna** is therefore reality itself - reality stripped of concepts. Direct in-seeing would be a useful term, as long as it is remembered that there is no-one to look and nothing to be seen.

In reality, there is nothing we can say or do about the universe that would be true. We cannot describe or conceive it, because such would be based on conceptions; and all conceptions are, as we have seen, untrue. The universe is without divisions, neither one nor many, neither large nor small. It is expressed equally and not at all in silence as in noise, in rayon as in cotton, in plenitude as in void. We cannot even say that it **is**, since that immediately evokes the relativity of **is not**, and all such dualities are inherently false. Better not to say anything at all? just as the mood takes you, no doubt! Allowing that whatever can be said about reality is false - including whatever may be said in this essay - one or two ideas about the nature of **Prajna** may still be useful. We have already seen that **Prajna** is direct insight, and that this arises in the absence of conceptual and discursive thinking. Reality may perhaps best be expressed by the word **spontaneity**. By spontaneity, we mean natural behavior. Spontaneity is reality expressing itself. It is blind, unthinking, unreflective, abandoned and natural. In Thelemic terms, it is the True Will. Actually, behavior can never be anything other than natural. We are always being spontaneous, even when we think that we are

not. Nothing else could happen, other than what does actually happen. The problem comes when we think that "things happen" because of our own individual efforts. It is because of this illusion that we suffer, because we worry that "things" might have happened otherwise had we acted in a different way. But "things" did not happen because "we" did anything, and "things" could not possibly happen otherwise than as they did. This is not to champion predestination as against free will; that is simply another duality, as false as any other. One can say simply that "things" are as they are, and that is that.

We have arrived at the stage whereby we can recognize that, in dualistic terms – and linguistic expression can never be anything other the nearest that we can come to describing reality is simply to say that **it** is. However, we must bear in mind that **it** is not an object, since we ourselves are included in that **it**. Thus, the **Prajna** or direct insight that arises is a spontaneous experience of **it** - or rather, a reversion from illusion to reality.

2: Duality

As we saw in the preceding section, reality is non-dual, but our perception of it is firmly dualistic. We tend to see things in terms of two contrasting poles or opposites. For instance, there are the poles of good and evil, hot and cold, dark and light. Things or events are strung out at various points between the two poles; rarely is an event seen as wholly good or evil, but rather is it usually graduated - fairly good, not so bad, and so on. It seems natural to speculate on why such a disparity between reality and our perception of it has arisen. If reality is non-dual, why cannot we see it that way? If the world is devoid of particularization, if there are no entities anywhere to be found, why should it appear as otherwise to us? Why should our perception not be direct? Certainly, we communicate in a language that is dualistically structured. Grammatically we have subject and object as the foundation of the structure, from that much springs. It is true that we do not perceive in terms of language. However, we take the concept of subject and object so much for granted, that we automatically interpret everything in those terms. What we have here is a conditioning that is deeply rooted, in the light of which perception is interpreted. "Raw" or unvariegated sense impressions are ordered into patterns or objects, perhaps on the basis of what is **expected** to be perceived. However, this conditioning cannot have arisen purely and simply out of a dualistic language structure. It is more likely that the language structure evolved from a dualistic interpretation of reality, although of course the one reinforces the other.

Unfortunately, we may never know how this faulty mode of interpreting reality arose, interesting though it undoubtedly is to speculate. There is only ever **now** and the situation as it is, and pondering over what happened in the supposed past is futile. A lot of attention is paid to the 'question' of time, and the very existence of time is taken for granted. Yet, time is a clear example of how a concept is **imposed** upon reality, and then accepted as part and parcel of that reality. We conceive of time as some sort of moving stream, carrying things inexorably forward. We talk of past, present and future. Yet, upon reflection, time is remarkably difficult to track down. The present is the join between past and future; but we can never perceive it, because of the apparent delay between perception by the senses and the registering of that perception by the brain. By definition, the past is never here and can never be experienced, since it has long gone. The future has yet to arrive. Thus, past and future are conceptual constructs or abstractions and, due to the delay in the registering of perception we can never know the present, either. So just what **do** we perceive? Or rather, what time is it now, please? We could try to talk of a perceptual present; but in the absence of a past and a future there is certainly no need for the concept of the present. Upon further analysis it is apparent that time is used as a way of **measuring** events and motion, and is thus only as real as centimeters or kilograms, inches or stone. The "ticking of the clock" is just that - a spring moves a

marker across a dial, and we say that five minutes has elapsed. As long as time is regarded as only a concept, a useful way of measurement, then there is no problem. However, when we suppose that time has an objective existence, and is some sort of current with either a fixed or a variable rate of movement, then there is illusion.

We impose our ideas and constructs upon reality in various other ways. An example is the subject/object split, whereby my self is subject and all else is object. Similarly, there is the split between good and evil, the split between man and God - in fact. Any duality represents the splitting of reality. It seems likely that this division of the non-dual into the dual was done in the first place as a convenient method of observing reality. Generally speaking, scientific investigation proceeds on the basis of analysis. Whatever is being studied is split up into convenient pieces for individual attention, the hope being that by a subsequent process of synthesis the whole can then be understood. Thus, the variegation of an unvariegated whole is a convenient method of measurement and classification, as long as it is remembered that this division is purely schematic. But what precisely **has** happened is that the fragmentation of reality has come to be seen as actual rather than simply conceptual. It is now widely accepted, at least in the West, and perpetuated by a dualistic language structure, which reinforces this illusion. It seems hardly necessary to add that, since logic is founded upon dualism as a reality, then arguments against duality will seem frankly illogical.

Then, if duality seems so logical, from where has the contrary idea arisen? Why is it that, with the die so firmly cast in the favor of dualism, assertions of a non-dual reality remain alive and kicking? For one thing, as we noted in the previous section, many of the discoveries of physicists in the past hundred years have been so astonishing - from the standpoint of dualism - that they have been pointing in the direction of **Advaita**. But importantly, such discoveries are not isolated. There have always been mystical and religious traditions that have averred reality to be non-dual, a reality that could be experienced directly but not expressed in language. Examples are Taoism, Mahayana Buddhism, the Advaita Vedanta, and so forth. Much has been made in recent years of the parallels between these "discoveries" of nuclear physics and the view of reality as espoused by non-dual traditions. There is an exploration of this theme by Fritjof Capra, himself a scientist, in his book **The Tao of Physics**, and indeed, there are many more such books. It can be imagined that, to one for whom dualism is a deeply-ingrained view of reality, discoveries which seem to bring such a view into doubt come as a severe shock. However, a shock of this magnitude is necessary, it seems, to call into question our cherished ideas and preconceptions. It is then that direct seeing, or insight into the nature of reality, can arise spontaneously.

Without this direct insight, the conceptual split between subject and object remains. Because this condition is embedded in the mind, it is projected onto reality. In other words, we construct an illusory universe "out there." Further, not only do we construct a split between "me" and "not me," - but even the "me" is split up into parts. The commonest is, of course, the split between "body" and "mind," as if some sort of mind is the proud owner of a body, akin to a suit of clothes, or a car. In some ways this body/mind split is relatively easy to counter, the practices of **hatha yoga** properly pursued making one powerfully aware of the mutual interdependence and indeed essential unity of those aspects or categories. Once this has been experienced, we might also start to wonder about the duality of "me" and "not me" - and who knows where this line of enquiry might not end?

In the absence of the direct experience of non-duality, we tend to identify with one side or the other of the conceptualized polarity. The process of duality can be carried on **ad infinitum**, as noted earlier, and mind is commonly conceived as being split into thought and feeling or emotion. This is in fact a deep and widespread division of split mind, and we tend to identify predominantly with

one or the other. The split runs through the entire gamut of human activity. Generally, those identifying with "feeling" tend to be drawn more towards the Arts, whilst those identifying with "thought" tend more towards the Sciences and intellectual activity. And, in all but few individuals, it is the case that "... and ne'er the twain shall meet!"

Were one to accept dualism as a fact, it would still seem only sensible to conclude that both poles were necessary to achieve an harmonious balance. Yet, it seems that split mind feels the need to identify with one pole or the other, and thus it is that most people tend to concentrate on either the Arts or the Sciences to the virtual exclusion of the other. This is actively encouraged in our education system, children often being compelled to make a choice between Art and Science subjects. This tends inevitably to produce lop-sided people. Few indeed are the individuals who see the relevance of, and indeed need for, both aspects - still less the number who actually achieve that balance. The result is a gulf of understanding between the specialists of either side. Of course, part of the reason for this divergence is the sheer mass of material that has been accumulated in the way of knowledge, the mountains of data that have to be digested before even a superficial grasp of a specific area of, say, biochemistry can be achieved. The detail of the various divisions or branches of knowledge are now so wide that it becomes more and more difficult to gain some sort of panoramic overview. That such an overview is desirable seems obvious; it is easy to get so close to and absorbed in detail that the broader sweeps and patterns become lost, and we cannot see the wood for the trees. However, despite this reservation about the massive task necessary just for specialization, it is more likely that the real reason for the Art/Science split is identification with one pole or another. Long before the time for specialization arrives, a child has gravitated towards one pole or the other, plunged into one of the apparently divergent streams. It would be interesting to know to what degree conditioning as opposed to inherent factors is responsible; certainly, both must play their part.

The same type of split manifests in other fields and upon other levels. However, the basis is an apparent split between feeling and knowledge, sometimes characterized roughly as intuition and logic, emotion and thought, abstract and concrete, and of course Art and Science. It must be borne in mind that these divisions are somewhat arbitrary, and the distinctions between the two poles are therefore rather blurred. However, the connections are there. A good example is the split between intuition and logic - as we might expect from our deliberations so far, a split that is more apparent than real. Those in whom one predominates seem to distrust those who are of the opposite inclination. Intuition seems to work on the basis of a subtle sensing of a thing or situation as a whole. Whereas logical thought tends to approach a problem by analysis, intuition attempts a more holistic approach. It is interesting that intuition is sometimes referred to as the "sixth sense" - that is, something over and above the commonly-accepted five senses. Clairvoyance would seem to be a function of a well-developed intuition. People who place great reliance on the efficacy of logical thought or deductive reasoning usually have a great distrust of intuition; because they cannot see a chain of logical reasoning, they view it as guesswork or even pure fantasy. Yet, a moment's reflection shows that both have their place, and complement each other. Scientific discovery would be painfully slow if progress was on the basis of logical or analytical reasoning alone. There are so many options to be covered, so many possibilities to be considered, so much potential data to be processed, that in fact the investigator has to "hazard a guess" - that is, trust to instinct - as to which area or direction of research would be most fruitful, and work in that direction. The fact is that intuition and logic are not only complementary and need each other to work to best advantage, but are the same thing working, in different ways.

We can trace this to a further level, the duality of introversion and extroversion, and again this corresponds broadly to the split between intuition and logic. Introverts are supposed to be more in

touch with their "own feelings," extroverts more in tune with the "outside world." Introverts tend to be introspective, prefer the Arts, tend more to work by intuition. By comparison, extroverts are more outward-looking, drawn more to the Sciences, and prefer logical reasoning. The introvert faces inwards, the extrovert outwards. It must, of course, be stressed that these are pure types only. In practice, people tend to be a fusion of the two to some degree.

We are now at a stage in our investigations when we need to take stock. These categories that we are setting up - Art and Science, intuition and logic, introversion and extroversion, inwards and outwards - have meaning only from the standpoint of dualism, or two opposing poles. However, it has previously been argued that reality is non-dual. These poles are in fact aspects of the same thing. The split that we are investigating is conceptual only, and is not real. However, because of the widespread acceptance of dualism, this view of reality as being split between two opposing poles is widely accepted. It leads to people tending to concentrate on one pole or the other, to the exclusion of its counterpart, and hence to perpetuate and even to aggravate the predisposition that they have. Clearly the dualistic split, though conceptual in origin, perpetuates itself through conditioning or preconception.

The entire gamut of human experience is dependent upon this split, a split that is illusory. No matter what the nature of reality might be, our preconceptions act as a sort of strait-jacket, whereby perception and experience are forced or distorted into this pre-conceptual mold. Hence, a dualistic interpretation of reality is substituted for reality itself, and is self-perpetuating. At a fundamental level, this split can be further illustrated by considering Magick and Mysticism. Although they themselves are a duality, they do at least point the way towards the dissolution of our preconceptual habit of ordering and arranging perception.

3: Towards Reintegration

In terms of split mind and its projection onto reality, Magick generally corresponds to knowledge or logic, extroversion, and Science. Similarly, Mysticism may be seen as related to feeling, intuition, introversion, and the Arts. These are of course approximate rather than accurate correlations. A rough and ready distinction between Magick and Mysticism is that whereas the magician manipulates appearance, the mystic seeks to dissolve it. The magician basically plays with illusion - indeed, the word "magic" comes from the same root as **maya**, which means illusion or manifestation. Generally, he seeks to penetrate its mysteries not so much to search for "reality" as to mold it into the pattern that he chooses. Magick tends to consolidate the ego, the sense of individual identity: the magician appears to manipulate and to produce effects, and this leads to a sense of volition, creativity and power. Taken to extremes, this can lead to megalomania, and to identity of oneself with God. The mystic seeks, contrarily, to tear aside or dissolve the veil of illusion in the search for something that is conceived of as lying beyond. Rather than project himself outwards onto form, he seeks to turn his mind inwards upon itself in an attempt to locate the perceiver. He seeks to dissolve the sense of individual identity, to withdraw from the idea of ego.

It rarely happens that a person is wholly either magician or mystic, but one or the other usually predominates. Crowley, for instance, reckoned himself to be much more of a mystic than a magician. However, let us first examine the pure types. We would expect that sooner or later the magician, after playing around with manifestation much as a child toys with plasticine, would start to suspect that the stuff **was** indeed illusory, and begin to wonder just what the hell was going on. Indeed, it could be argued that insight into the nature of **maya** through manipulation of it is the main purpose of Magick. However, most magicians seem to play around quite happily for year after year without a suspicion of any such insight rearing its ugly head to spoil the fun. Of course, as has

already been suggested, Magick does tend to reinforce the ego, to strengthen identification with the concept of an individual self. The magician, through his jugglings, can all too easily convince himself that he exercises some sort of volitional control over events. Self-aggrandizement is a consequence of this; in the final analysis, no matter what nuggets of obscure knowledge are mined forth, no matter what powerful transformations of consciousness are experienced, the concept of an individual self doing, all these things remains.

There are hazards and seductions for the purely mystic, too. This way is very subtle, and the practitioner has to "play it by ear." The most obvious difficulty is, of course: how can one "dissolve the ego?" After all, the phrase implies some sort of volitional activity on the part of the apparent self or ego - it seeks to dissolve itself - and such an ambition merely **reinforces** the very thing that, hopefully, is to be negated! This difficulty aside, it is inevitable that the mystic will disengage from **maya** and its entanglements to at least some degree. If this is not done gradually rather than hastily, subtly rather than brusquely, like the falling of autumn leaves rather than rapid defoliation, then the consequent environmental "fall-out" or reaction is likely to be disruptive and insistent.

There are good reasons for this. It is not the business of the mystic to escape from **samsara**, whatever that may mean - for who is there to escape from what? - but rather to awaken to reality or - dare one say it - cosmic consciousness. In the final analysis, **samsara** is no different from **nirvana**. To say that manifestation is an illusion behind which masquerades reality is to conceptualize, to establish a duality, and is erroneous. A too rapid disengagement usually means that the mystic fails to see through the falsity of dualism to the non-dual or **Advaita**. He thinks that he is making progress by attempting to evade **maya** rather than seeing it for what it is - **maya**, and no more real or unreal than anything else.

Magick and Mysticism, then, constitute a duality, perhaps the basic duality. However, all dualities are purely conceptual and hence ultimately false. Seen as predominating tendencies in an individual, though, they can be quite useful. It should be apparent that some sort of fusion between the two is necessary, and is anyway the case. Magick without Mysticism becomes a futile and endless manipulation of **maya**, masturbatory and narcissistic. Mysticism without Magick, however, may be simply a refuge from **maya** that is also futile, and can lead only to the stillness of the grave. As pure types, the magician cavorts in **samsara** whilst the mystic sleeps in nirvana. However, **samsara** and **nirvana** are the same - absolutely and utterly the same. All that differs is the way that **samsara** or **nirvana** is perceived. And the perception differs only because it is interpreted - or rather, misinterpreted - in terms of a preconceived, conceptual framework.

What is needed is perhaps some sort of Middle Way, taking from both Magick and Mysticism whilst still recognizing that, as concepts, they are distinct. Such an eclectic path could perhaps be described as "Comparative Enlightenment." The aspirant would feel free to regard all systems and traditions as possible grist to his mill, but hopefully would take the trouble to understand something before swallowing it. The starting point for any aspirant is an individual who feels disillusioned with things as they appear to be, and who suspects that reality is something other than what commonly passes for it. If he has any discrimination he will study various systems and philosophies before deciding what he wants to do; if he has no discrimination, then of course he is liable to swallow the first morsel that presents itself. The aspirant would hope that, as a result of his studies and practices, he would "find reality."

Such a methodology, an eclectic path, could be termed a Western Yoga. This may seem a misleading term, since yoga is often associated with Eastern methods. However, in this case we mean to imply a means to enlightenment suitable for Westerners. Such a yoga would start from the standpoint of

an aspirant having to overcome a conceptual dualism in order to reach a non-dual reality. Strictly speaking, this is false: there is in fact nothing to be overcome, other than the **idea** that there is something to overcome! However, as far as the aspirant is concerned, enmeshed as he is in his conditioned, dualistic outlook, this **is** something that must - somehow or other - be overcome. At the outset of his search, of course, he will have little idea of what he is looking for, and will tend to toy with this or that in turn. Many such seekers never do come to have an inkling of a non-dual reality. Those that do, however, face a seemingly intractable problem in attaining to that non-dual reality.

Let us return for a moment to that term which we have used, **yoga**. The root of this Sanskrit word gives rise to the English word "yoke," **to join**. Yoga may therefore be translated as to join. However, this seems to tell us little. To join what with what? The answer often given is to unite the **jivatman**, or individual self, with the **Brahman**, or universal self. Yoga, therefore, is a name given to any practice or **sadhana** that has this declared aim. The drawback is, however, that the individual self does not exist; only the universal self does, and thus there can be no question of joining anything. It follows that any **sadhana** pursued with such a union as its goal is futile indeed, and serves only to further strengthen the illusion of a separate, individual self.

So many magical and mystical traditions seem to be built on this basis of dualism; and as long as it is accepted, even tacitly, then reality is as far away as ever. The religions of the West - such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam - are strictly dualist. There is the creator, God, and there is the created, the natural order. The mystics of these religions who have recognized a non-dual reality are few. For most of them, their preconceptions are too strong, and their visions remain dualistic. Many Thelemites, perhaps most, retain this dualistic outlook as well. The maxim "Every man and every woman is a star" lends itself too easily to the concept of a basic and eternal individualism, essentially a soul. A criticism of Crowley's "System" is that it encourages the idea that reality or truth is something to be attained only after a long, exhausting and testing struggle. His magical name, the Latin **Perdurabo - I shall endure** - shows this quite clearly. As long as the seeker thinks that there is some sort of "system" that he can follow and a final reality to which he can attain, he will be running around in circles.

If all effort towards enlightenment is self-defeating, what can be done? The real answer is: nothing. Reality is non-dual and has to be seen directly, since its expression in dualistic terms is immediately false. This direct insight is Prajna, sometimes translated inadequately as Wisdom. However, **Prajna** is not the experiencing of reality, or even direct insight - it **is** reality! This must be the case, because if reality is non-dual then there is no perceiver to perceive it; the nearest that we can come to expressing it is to say that there is a **perceiving**. This is still misleading, because it leads to a **concept** of perceiving. All that we can say about reality is that it is - whilst bearing in mind that **is** the polarity of **is not**. Better to say nothing, since all that we can say is untrue? No doubt, but this is of little help to the poor aspirant, who struggles in the mire of **maya** and delusion, looking for some way through.

The point is, that this process of struggling and futility on the part of the aspirant is a very necessary and important stage. In the first instance, knowledge of a non-dual reality is conceptual and theoretical. He may have convinced himself intellectually that it must be true; but this "conviction" remains at a superficial level and is only skin-deep. However, to **realize** it - make it real - he must have some experience of it. Conceptual knowledge may be inadequate, but it is at least a start. It is when an aspirant has exhausted the possibilities of dualism, realized its limitations, that a direct, intuitive insight into reality can arise. The mind is exhausted, stilled, and ceases its agitation.

Under these circumstances a direct in-seeing may arise. This is probably the "aim" behind the **koan** method of the Rinzai school of Zen, whereby the student is given a selected **koan** or apparent enigma, and told to return to the Master when he has solved it. It may be that the crucial element here is the induction of stillness or receptivity through the exhaustion of the intellect in its futile attempts to "solve" the koan. In the system of **raja yoga** one of the practices consists of achieving mental concentration or one-pointedness, by suppressing thoughts as they arise. Now, anyone who has attempted this practice knows how difficult this really is. The very act of attempted suppression increases rather than decreases thought activity, which like all good clowns loves an audience. Realizing this by bitter experience, the practitioner then acquires the knack of ignoring rather than suppressing thoughts. It has been held that as little as twelve seconds of real concentration - that is, without any thought activity - is enough to induce Samadhi. However, "induce" is probably the wrong word here; it would probably be more accurate to say that **Samadhi** breaks through. Even then, we make **Samadhi** sound too dynamic! Rather, perception is now direct and immediate, the obscuring cacophony of mentation having ceased.

This is the crucial necessity, simply to see and experience reality as it really is, rather than via a conditioned, conceptual framework. It sounds simple, and indeed **is** simple - but our conception of "enlightenment" is often that it is a serious, complicated, hard-won matter. Goodness knows what preconceptions we have, what goal or goals we are aiming at, but - overboard with them all! Only in the utter absence of preconceptions can the direct insight occur, can **Prajna** arise. This is the supreme insight, the supreme perception. If this direct seeing is what is meant by enlightenment, then enlightenment is indeed the natural state of consciousness, as opposed to the conceptually restricted state that we have come to accept as normal. Enlightenment in the sense of something happening to an entity is wrong. The correct term is **awakening** - awakening to a reality that is ever present and ever ours, were we but to know it.

"Enlightenment" implies that there is an individual to be enlightened, and furthermore that this is a special, abnormal state. "Awakening" may also give rise to the concept of an individual to be awakened; but it does at least have the advantage of implying that the individual wakes up, as if from a dream - which is exactly what does happen. It is awakening from the dream of living, from the dream or illusion of individuality; awakening to find out, to re-discover that there is only an undifferentiated reality, and that is all that an individual - or rather, **apparent** individual - was, is, and shall be. There is no goal to attain, nothing to achieve, nowhere to go. There is only ever now, and I.

Stated in these terms, it all sounds so incredibly simple. Yet to the aspirant it seems hopeless. In the final analysis there is no goal to achieve, and indeed to conceptualize a goal only takes us further away from the direct insight. It cannot be experienced by trying. However, we cannot seek deliberately to "not try!" It would not help anyway, since to "not try" is only the opposite pole of to "try," and hence as dualistic as any other concept. If this direct insight is reality - seeing as it really is, unmediated by interpretation - then it is a state of pure naturalness that we are in-seeing. In that case, it is spontaneous, non-affective. Hence, all that is needed is to be **natural**. This is of course easier said than done when our idea of naturalness is so much askew. All that is necessary is that we re-discover our original, inherent spontaneity and be natural, be ourselves.

This spontaneity equates with the True Will, although the Thelemic notion as commonly presented is open to misinterpretation here. The True Will is universal, not individual. The universe, which is reality, behaves in the only way it can - spontaneously. "I" am not an individual, but an aspect of the universe; in fact, "I" am the universe, and all that "I" do is an expression of my True Will - indeed, **is** that True Will. The True Will is the only will, and any others are apparent or illusory only. How can

we reach this True Will? Basically, by ceasing to conceptualize, by relaxing and being **as we are**, because in reality there is no other way to be. We cannot deliberately be spontaneous, or seek to be spontaneous. All that is necessary is to relax and let go - let go of conceptions, of illusions. Then it happens, and there is **only** spontaneity.

Actually, everything that happens is spontaneous, without exception. Reality is always here and now. There is only ever here and now, which is the True Will of the universe. It is a common notion that we have free will, and an equally common notion that all is predetermined, predestined. Both are wrong, and are opposite poles of a conceptual duality. The notion of free will necessitates an individual to exercise it, and in reality, there are no individuals. Similar considerations apply to predestination. Both ideas are dependent upon the notion of time, which itself is merely a conceptual measure of movement. How the notion of free will persists is a mystery, since there is no way for this hypothesis to be tested. Such a testing would necessitate repeating exactly a set of circumstances and seeing if it were possible to choose to act differently. Even within the framework of a moving current of time, such an experiment would be impossible. The same considerations apply to the concept of predestination. Both concepts are wide of the mark, as concepts invariably are.

It is this knowledge, that there is neither predestination nor free will that provides a direct route for the aspirant. All that happens is spontaneous, or in Thelemic jargon True Will, and the only problem lies in worrying that it is not so! Once he ceases to be concerned about whether or not he is behaving "correctly" he can relax, and this is an important stage. It is only upon relaxing, or letting go of concepts, that direct in-seeing can take place. Therefore, we return again to the same point, that at the problem lies in the disparity between reality and our conception of it. Of course, this statement itself sets up a conceptual duality, and is therefore false; but it is the only way that we can indicate the problem within the framework of dualistic language structure. Once again: reality, being non-dual, cannot be expressed dualistically. That is why direct insight is so important. That is also why, in traditions such as Ch'an or Zen, conceptualizing is spurned in favor of direct action; it is to point towards a reality which is not only beyond words and concepts, but positively obscured by them. In response to questions about Zen and the "nature of reality," Masters would give irrational answers, attack the questioner, smash a vase, or demonstrate in some other way the importance of the here-and-now and as-it-is. Such acts cut short thinking and conceptualizing, and point directly. Intellectually they are baffling, but that is because intellect can only be a distraction from this direct insight.

The "path" from duality to non-duality is a purely pragmatic one. Concepts, symbols and logic may well be used along the way. However, their sole usefulness lies in whether or not they point towards the non-dual; there can be no question as to whether or not they are right, true, or anything of that sort. Being concepts, they cannot possibly be true; but if they begin to point the way out of the maze of a conceptual, dualistic and conditioned way of looking at "the world" then they have been useful. In this sense all doctrines, traditions and so forth are inherently false if taken as true, but should rather be seen as stepping stones to **direct perception** of a non-dual reality.

The goal is no goal, and the way is no way. The thing is no thing, and the seeker is no seeker. The reality that can be spoken of is not reality, since reality is beyond words. All our categorizations are false, because they are **our** concepts or labels and not the reality itself. Reality is void of concepts, void of division, void of anything. Direct insight into reality **is itself** that reality - there is no division into knower and known, seer and seen, perceiver and perceived. This direct insight is really **all that there is**, and the rest is conceptual overlay.

"There is neither creation nor destruction,
Neither destiny nor free will,
Neither path nor achievement;
This is the final truth."
Sri Ramana Maharshi.