

The Evolution of Tantra Maya

“Brahma alone is the guru.” This saying from the Upanishads represents a very universal conception of the deity. Brahma literally means that which is great and makes others great. In other words, Brahma is the Consciousness of the Macrocosm, of the entire universe. The guru is none other than the Supreme Consciousness and cannot be tainted by partiality nor prejudices nor any relative projection of a messiah or human guru. What is, simply is. If the Supreme Consciousness can create this entire universe, then surely there is an unmediated, direct way to communicate with me, a little microcosm in this Macrocosm. “Am I a secluded figure, in the vast, a little ameagre? No no no no I am not alone, the great is with me.”

And one could imagine that such a Macrocosmic deity is not a petty god of a certain country or class or society of exclusive human beings that deserve his mercy. The tiny little human microcosmic mind with its prejudices and attachments finally understands that “god” is not to be found through any finite form, material nor mental. The sacred books and messiahs and Buddhas were just approximations of a an inner, mystical truth. Only those who dare question the root of their being free of these appendages could possibly find the root of their being free of all relative conditioning. Non-dualism, or Advaita, is the idea that ultimately the consciousness of the individual microcosm and the Macrocosm are fundamentally the same. This is not to say that my consciousness has become the consciousness of the universe, that the ego becomes god. Rather, my consciousness has been taken into, accepted, transformed, digested, and finally assimilated into the living, working consciousness of the Macrocosm or Brahma. The microcosm is no longer a separate entity creating negative reactions and contaminating the world while fleeing from one empty dream to the next. The illumined microcosm is a mental cell unified with other mental cells that form a Macrocosm, a collective body of minds. Here, one can’t bring attachments, prejudices, nor any other petty ego control issue. The moment they arise, the Macrocosm knocks you off of your feet. It takes much time and evolution and trial and error to find a flow of unity into the Macrocosm. One must unlearn the socially-conditioned and indoctrinated ego along with all of its hereditary mental and biological instincts in order to learn the ways of Brahma.

Only those born with developed intuitive faculties can understand these truths without following teachers or paths. Life just somehow teaches these inner lessons. I suspect that these minds are “primed” with this knowledge from birth and that it was probably learned earlier. Plato saw all knowledge as something that has already been learned. What we experience here in the finite world are recollections of truths already known. Genius, according to this view, is nothing more than having at one’s disposal what has already been learned. Spiritual orientation is innately developed in some just as art or music or mathematics is innately developed in others.

The idea of a human guru or a spiritual teacher is to help one understand these

fundamental cardinal truths of non-dualism, or advaita. A guru is one who has walked that path and is capable of showing it to others. However, most of the time, a concept of guru is but an opiate for a desperate personality separated from the life of the universe due to its ignorance and egoism. Belief is mostly desperate compulsion and the idea of a guru is often a 2-edged sword. Normally, when people speak to you about gurus they want to sell you on some idea. They often want others to bandy together with them under some omnipotent messiah, guru, and their religion or institution. They don't really want to have their own experiences but prefer just to adopt the ideas and traditions of others to find security and refuge. The more absolute the idea, the more effective is the opiate and the more placated is the compulsion of the fearful and separate little ego to grasp on to some form of meaning

If one works through these limited ideas of a guru, then perhaps one can really understand something of another human being that is wise and compassionate and only has your well-being in mind.

When I first arrived at the Indian ashram I met a yogi who told me some very useful secrets. He immediately took me into his confidence. He looked at me intensely and I felt like I was being scanned. The first thing he told me was a tip on how to transmute sexual energies. I had never heard a monk talk about things so openly, yet with such intelligence and purity. Far from being perverse or hypocritical fantasies of a celibate monk, it was the most practical insight into desire that I had heard of in my life. As a young single man I greatly appreciated his insights. The second important thing he told me is that some day the order will probably end up killing their own saints. He laughed heartily but he was serious. It was inconceivable to me at the time. Furthermore, it seemed like heresy because everybody else was only talking how great the order was and how the guru left all of his power and grace in this organization! Now, 20 years later, I see what he meant.

Later, on another visit, he told me how yogis can leave their bodies and travel through the inner dimensions of time and space. He said it was another reality in which there exist not these relative factors of time and space. It was a Dreamland that was even more real than physical reality, a kind of astral repository of all human experience and memory-past, present and future. He said that you could know whatever you needed to know and meet whoever you needed to meet on this plane of reality. I was eager to visit this Hall of the Immortals. He told me how to leave my body and at what time of night I could do it. I left the conversation with a desire to see if I could somehow know something of the teacher of these great men that I was meeting and was inspired by. Later that night I followed the prescribed technique. Nothing happened at that moment. Later I slept and then it started to work. I awoke completely with a holy jolt of spiritual lightning in my spine. I could feel the kundalini rising. I could feel it swishing through the cerebral spinal fluid that was concentrating inside the brain. When it entered inside the head there was only light and sound, every color was within white and every sound within Om. All through the night there was a whirling vortex of energy moving around the crown of my head. It had no form, just sound and color. I was

entirely awake but the more the kundalini rose the more I entered into a very conscious state of trance. It was more real than anything I had ever experienced. Rather than a world with forms and mass, all was very fine and soothing vibration. I understood how the crown chakra and the pineal gland were the microcosmic receptor and channel to enter into the formless, infinite Macrocosm. Everything made sense as pure idea. There was no fear or uncertainty of this unknown reality. All was bliss and I felt quite free and pure. I realized that my body was lying on my bed in a trance but that my consciousness was very clearly in the Present without names and forms. Every once in a while I would see the form of the guru and the whole vibrational scene would turn into something more like a dream, only much more real and lucid. I thought "this is a dream", but I knew it was a very special sort of dream. I still to this day recall it just as clear as a "waking" state of consciousness.

I wrote about such experiences not to teach them but to affirm that these phenomenon are real and that there are human systems of practice that can teach methods to attain such experiences. People have asked me how they can have such experiences. I would never want the responsibility of teaching such extremely advanced techniques to others and risk dangerous errors. However, they could do what I did just before I was taught the technique mentioned in the essay. I believe that there are certain prerequisites for such experiences and they do not come haphazardly. And to show that Tantra is an intuitive science and that these experiences are replicable, I must say a little of how it can be done.

One must first understand Yama and Niyama and then take tantric initiation. After much practice one may awaken the kundalini above the Manipura chakra (the navel) into the Anahata (the spiritual heart). I am not speaking of a one-time experience or an experience induced by the power plants. One must sustain the kundalini at anahata during meditation every day for one month. You will be constantly hungry and nothing will fill your appetite. Your mind will be mad with divine intoxication and eating will be painful but necessary in order to continue the transmutation. You will most likely become very lean and burn almost all fat from your body. All memories both good and bad of your previous existence will be purified in the fire of kundalini.

The guru will come to you regularly in dreams. He will show you the shadow of your existence so that you may let go of it. Not for punishment but for purgation will your guru come as divine terror. Once again, after that first experience mentioned in the essay, my consciousness again left my body and I went into Dreamland. He came to me with a hooded executioner and ordered him to run a sword through my navel. He did. It was more real than a dream. I was terrified until I felt there was no fear, only bliss. I could no longer feel the navel of my subtle body nor the astral world of name and form. There was no longer a guru to chase after. There was only light. I was in the cosmic "air" element of pure idea. I remained there even out of this mysterious sleep.

Everybody will consider you mad and it is likely that the remnants of your ego will be crushed and utterly humiliated. "Are you a family man with children? Are you

ready to go through hell?" Moving slowly but surely is not always such a bad thing. First love the world and everybody in it while purifying the mind and the body. Let your Atman be a witness to a fully-lived life and complete human purpose. Any remaining suffering burns the seeds of samskara and allows the entrance of more bliss into your mind. Suffering blossoms into divine love through serving others. One abandons even oneself in perfect sweetness. It is only in this pure devotion that one should try to launch from this world and into the next. It is only in this state that one gets the grace necessary for this.

To this day I am still trying to realize the significance of these detailed conversations with the guru apparition. Perhaps it wasn't absolutely necessary for him to appear as a human to another human in a state of lucid dream, but it was a very personal and affective touch from something or someone very sublime. As the years pass by these revelations become even clearer and life makes more sense. There was only so much I could understand as a little spiritual fledgling in my early twenties. They were experiences that by their very nature need a full life-time to be realized. Although I have never preached or tried to convince others about the divinity of the guru, I have never ever doubted this influence in my life. For so many years I didn't even speak of him. It was a subtle struggle of reconciling form with formlessness, and the idea that the guru archetype may actually appear with a human form. I always considered the latter as a relative possibility and never wanted my experiences to be some kind of "proof" for the ego to make fixed ideas about the infinite. This is a subtle error that causes great damage to an otherwise pure ideology, whether it is one's personal set of ideas or the ideology of a spiritual society. If mystery, subtlety, and free speculation are substituted by concreteness and conformity, then only dogma will remain. Human beings armed with exclusive ideas always end up creating trouble for themselves and others. I always try to refer to the guru's philosophical ideas that the Supreme Consciousness is infinite and formless. With those who tried to impose the absolute form of the guru, I only saw religion in the making and soon learned that there was no sense arguing these matters. Over the years I have taught formless meditation with an entirely different system to others without referring to the guru yet many of my students continue to have similar profound experiences and dreams of the guru. It is something that only continues to grow silently inside of me and others. The guru himself only said that he was, is, and will remain a mystery. However, the philosophy he left is very clear, rational and lucid. I hope others find something special in his works that I am sharing. They were compiled as books, but all of them are based on talks that he gave over several decades to thousands of people.

The tantric meditation techniques were very effective in awakening the kundalini, the latent, divine energy that resides in the base of the spinal column. It is awakened through mental and spiritual concentration. As it ascends the spinal column the subtle function of the glands and organs is developed and the mind gradually tunes itself into finer states of spiritual consciousness. The result of this subtle bio-psychological development is the state of samadhi- union with the infinite consciousness. In samadhi the breath stops, the heart becomes very slow, thoughts cease, and the mind experiences a state of blissful realization about

one's inner life and purpose in this universe.

I began to enter the breathless state of samadhi very regularly after my visit to the ashram. Although very intense, the practices gave the mind and body the maximum amount of transformation biologically, psychologically, and spiritually possible. However, nobody ever effectively taught me how to bring the kundalini back down. For years I was like a machine working at accelerated capacity. Sometimes I would go into trances while driving and my friend would have to grab the wheel. I would sometimes swoon and fall down while in a spiritual mood. My body once leaped 2 feet into the air when the kundalini abruptly awakened while I was sitting in the lotus posture. I cannot jump anywhere near that high in lotus if I try with my best effort and even when using my knees to bounce. This constant rising of the kundalini in me effected others as well, mostly for the good, but also negatively as well.

I was immediately rejected by many monastics within the order after people knew I was having these experiences. I was told on several occasions by several monastics that I wanted those high samadhi states of realization, then I was in the wrong organization. At first I thought this was absurd. I had only done the practices that they had taught me. Samadhi, spiritual trance, is supposed to happen when the kundalini awakens after sincere practice. It would probably have been alright with them if they had had these experiences. Many talked about my experiences much more than I ever did within their gossip circles. They finally admitted my experiences were real, but said that I would die before age 40 because of their intensity.

I left the shelter of a spiritual society without knowing how to bring the kundalini back down, or at least to not be so intense and to remember that this process will probably kill me if it doesn't calm down. My renunciation of this society was a great blessing, afterall. I realized that people liked me again, despite that I had these strange phenomenon occurring within me. I always felt liked and accepted for most of my existence and I feel that this social acceptance gave me the confidence to be okay with myself and begin to explore new territories of inner being. I now feel more at home in a hardware store than in a closed-minded spiritual society.

My meditation experiences came back with even more intensity and originality. I gradually developed my own system of practice. Throughout these years I never stopped having dreams of the guru in which he always told me very interesting clues. He never gave anything away, but rather just guided me towards the understanding of spiritual practice. I realized that I didn't even need to meditate anymore but that the guru continued to give me experiences that would deepen my understanding of meditation. It has been a great adventure.

During this time, I became friends with a Mayan yogi from Campeche, Quetzal. On our first meetings he shared his insights about the Tree Tantra. He always sat in meditation under the ceiba tree. It reminded me of how the guru said that it is good to meditate under the neem tree. Also, recall how the Buddha attained

nirvana under the Bodhi tree.

Trees hold our precious earth together to prevent floods. They give us fire for wood and building shelters. Some give us fruits and food from their leaves. They work ceaselessly to convert all of the carbon we mindlessly dump into the atmosphere only to give us oxygen to live. Although it is commonly known that the leaves, fruit, root and bark of many trees have medicinal properties, their mystical properties are less known. I believe the medicinal and mystical trees are more conscious than most human beings on this planet at this time.

In this Mayan meditation one takes the tree as a symbol for meditation while at the same time taking actual shelter under the tree and participating with its shield of electromagnetic energy while meditating. According to Mayan mystics “nothing evil can happen while under the ceiba.” The upward force growing out of the earth helps awaken the kundalini while the downward force of converting air into mass and developing deep roots into the earth helps bring the kundalini back down. Mind must fly upward toward the spirit but also must return to the earth, at least for as long as one is on this earth. Just like the Indian Yogis, Quetzal said that a yogi completes his spiritual practice by bringing the kundalini back down, from the crown and back down into the spiritual heart. This gives a base for the mind mid-way along the spinal column. One can be joyfully engaged in existence here and remain in a subtle state of being while at the same time keep oneself grounded and in the body. Like the great ceiba tree, one extends high into the heavens while also rooting oneself deep into the earth. Unchecked kundalini force will eventually liberate you but it can kill your body if not careful. One gets attached to spiritual bliss and experiences but must know how to balance them out. It is better to save that intensity for when it is really time to leave all work and thereby the physical body, and never before then. Like the Upanishad says, “Desire to live 100 years while working in joyful unity with Brahma.”

I have come to such conclusions not through comfortable living, but through austerity, not through faith, but through experience. I have never had much in this life and the more I live, the less I seem to have. Whatever I haven't renounced willingly ends up being taken from me anyhow. Such is the path of contemplation. This is happiness and freedom.

Tantra Maya, like Tantra and Taoism, was developed by people who possessed almost nothing and lived in the forests or mountains. I continually find this as a source of inspiration and hope that others can see that there is a great potential to find practical forms of spirituality that aren't products of the historical dialectic, that weren't created for the convenience of empire, or for the comfort of the ruling class, or, in modern times, the pseudo-spiritual market. I don't ask that we all become ascetics like the yogis and taoists, but if they can find bliss with almost nothing, then perhaps those of us who are more “comfortable” can begin to understand what these mystics are speaking about.

Tantra Maya is a synthesis between the ancient spiritual practices of the Maya and the classical tantric meditation system of India. Tantra is derived from 2 Sanskrit

words, “ta”, which means dullness, and “tra”, which signifies expansion. Tantra is therefore “expansion from dullness.” It is the rational and ethical spiritual practice of using yoga and meditation to expand one’s spiritual potential. “Tantra Maya” has a dual meaning. One may interpret “maya” as the spiritual practices of the Mayan people. These practices have been transmitted through mayan lineages for centuries. While writing about Tantra Maya, I interpret “maya” according to the Sanskrit definition: the divine mystery of how the infinite being hides itself in the finite realm through each and every being only to eventually desire a return to a state of essential oneness with the infinite consciousness. Tantra Maya is therefore the advanced and experimental study of Tantra as a universal intuitive science as well as a system of Mayan meditation. Over the years I have developed some basic practices of meditation and yoga as a synthesis of these two lineages. In my books I have tried to explain the depths of these tantric philosophies in terms of modern, humanistic psychology.

The Tantra Maya healing and meditation practices are remarkably similar to the oriental practices of Tantra Yoga. Like Tantra Yoga of India, Tantra Maya was developed in the jungle by Mayan mystics and healers who lived close to nature. Many of the exercises and meditation postures are named after animals. Both systems are practical sciences in that the practitioner follow certain disciplines and meditate to understand and verify the theoretical knowledge offered by these systems.

The practice of Tantra Maya also involves healing, herbology, and astronomy. They were all one science integrated science. I learned some meditation techniques necessary to merely begin to understand mayan astronomy, which is an intuitive science that requires direct, mystical experience. This requires one to unify one’s little microcosmic existence into the Macrocosm, the universe as a whole. This type of mystical experience was very different than what I had previously understood as mysticism. I suppose my ideas were more classical. I always liked the Upanishads, Taoism, and contemplatives like Meister Eckhart, Plotinus and Ramana Maharshi. They represented the peak spiritual knowledge in my opinion. Tantra Maya is a very elevated form of nature mysticism. Its purpose is to understand the pure subjectivity of the inner self, like in classical mysticism, yet at the same time develop a deep connection with the natural creation. One contemplates the with spirit within for self-realization while one connects to the subtle realms of nature to work with and serve the living, vibrant Macrocosm.

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