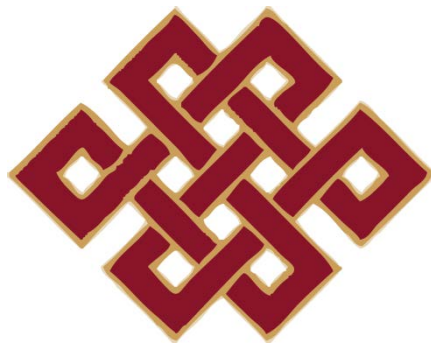


The Emerging Noetic Revolution: Unifying Our Two Knowledge Paradigms

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Introduction: Two Paradigms in One

For no light matter is at stake. The question concerns the very way that human life is to be lived.

—Plato (*The Republic, Book I*)

On the cusp of the 3rd century CE two great scholar-masters—Nagarjuna in the East and Plotinus in the West—began the noetic nondual knowledge revolution for our species that is just now re-emerging as the new Noetic Revolution of the 21st century. (“Nondual” is subject/object unity, *advaya*/not two/not one; nondual wisdom is *noēsis/noetic* knowledge with no *essential* subject/object, matter/spirit separation.)

As the developmental dialectic of humanity’s emotional, spiritual and ethical evolution proceeds, and the ontological estrangement of the present Modern worldview of absolutist, substantialist Scientific Materialism and the nihilism of its Postmodern reaction recedes, this incipient global noetic reformation in religion, science and culture has gently reintroduced to humankind an interior, integral and transpersonal knowledge paradigm that subsumes and integrates the two apparently competing paradigms that are objective Science and subjective Spirit/spirituality.

The knowledge inherent in this emerging noetic paradigm is discoverable in part through the contemplative injunctions of the subjective, qualitative, esoteric and nondual knowledge paths of our Premodern wisdom traditions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Orphism, Neoplatonism—and it is discoverable in part through an understanding of the profoundly pragmatic truths of our objective, quantitative, exoteric Modern and Postmodern scientific paradigm. Both of these ostensibly incommensurable knowledge paradigms (Kuhn 1970) are an intrinsic part of the human knowledge equation (knowledge, morals and governance). This all toward discovering or uncovering inherent meaning, even ultimate meaning in our lives.

What is the meaning of life in this constant presence of our death? What are the causes of human happiness? Why do we refuse to be happy? What shall we do with this precious life we’re given? The big questions ask of our origin, our identity and our destiny. Such ultimate questions orient us toward the rediscovery and recovery of the ineffable mystery of both relative and ultimate meaning and happiness for one who considers them. We shall herein consider some of them.

Two Truths in One

Truth is one; many are its names.

—*Rig Veda*

Some of our Premodern primordial wisdom traditions teach of the profound knowledge/wisdom dialectic of the “two fundamental truths”—our two ways of being here—the social/informational interobjective, and cultural, linguistic intersubjective worlds of Relative Truth (*samvriti satya*/form) of arising and descending finite conventional relative spacetime reality; and then the perfectly subjective Ultimate Truth (*paramartha satya*/

emptiness), the trans-conceptual infinite primordial nondual ultimate reality ground that transcends, yet embraces objective/subjective spacetime reality, and in which, broadly construed, this all arises, descends and appears for our experience (involution). This trans-rational, non-logocentric ultimate ground of the vast space of the unbounded whole (*mahabindu*) of reality itself is non-propositional and non-prescriptive. That is, it is conceptually ineffable (*medpa*), and we cannot derive conceptually based ethical principles from it. It transcends and includes our linguistic, ethical, cultural concept/belief systems about it. Well then, how do we know it? And what good is it? That is the urgent pragmatic question of being here in form which shall herein be our ultimate concern.

What then shall we do with this precious life we've been given? Our wisdom traditions have told it in the “myth of the eternal return”: our lives are an opportunity and a choice to ascend and return (evolution) to this basal “groundless ground,” not as a spacetime located self or ego-I, but as the essential intrinsic luminosity of our human awareness, the light of the mind, the very nature of mind. That is to say, on this view, *that* is who we actually are. Herein lies great benefit for beings. Thus our human condition is this: we must live in and balance these two worlds, these two faces of our nature—relative objective, and ultimate subjective—at once! Heady wine, indeed.

So the perennial dilemma for science, religion/spirituality, and culture is the unification of this invidious *apparent* duality, the relationship of our objective finite material existence—body and mind—to perfectly subjective all-embracing nondual Spirit, by whatever name, infinite ground in which, or in whom everything arises and participates. Such is the “problem” of soteriology, the individual and thus collective challenge of human psycho-spiritual awakening/liberation/enlightenment (*bodhi*, *moksa*). The resolution of this perennial conundrum is our moment to moment, fully present Orphic participation in the unbounded whole shebang.

I shall herein suggest that the rigorous cognitive coupling of our conceptual objective, scientific understanding, with the cultural deep background trans-conceptual subjective realization of this momentous principle of the indivisible unity and coalescent dimensional interdependence of these two seemingly incommensurable paradigms—these perennial Two Truths—is the inherent treasure of mind, our heart's desire, and both origin and aim of all of our objective and subjective happiness seeking strategies. Such an understanding may be viewed as a centrist or middle way view between conceptual relative-conventional “scientific” truth, and trans-conceptual contemplative, ultimate “spiritual” truth.

To this purpose I shall enlist, however cursorily, for ultimate non-sectarian soteriological as well as relative polemical and pedagogical ends, the profound intertextual epistemological dialectics—both conceptual critical analysis, and contemplative mindfulness and insight practice—of 2000 years of the great centrist Nalanda Buddhist middle way *Prasangika Madhyamaka* philosophy of Nagarjuna, Chandrakirti and Tsongkhapa, and their luminous successors, Longchen Rabjam (Longchenpa) and Ju Mipham. We shall as well, visit the nondual wisdom of the Great Mahayana Zen master Dōgen with his profound instruction on “Being-Time.”

With this causal dialectal Buddhist Mahayana sutra foundation we will then glimpse the acausal non-dialectical tantric view (inner tantras) of the directly present immanent unity

of objective material *form* (energy/matter/appearance), and ultimate perfectly subjective *emptiness*, the nonlocal, nondual sphere of *Dzogchen*, the Great Perfection that is both pinnacle and base of Vajrayana Buddhist view and practice. Thus shall we engage this inherently vexed (to concept mind) profundity of the perennial duality that is our ostensibly separate Two Truths, namely, objective form/matter/energy and subjective emptiness/spirit as they arise from their causal spacious matrix ground (*dharmadhatu*), remembering all the while *Madhyamaka* Buddhist nondual wisdom that “form is emptiness, emptiness is form.” Knowing subject and perceived object, while appearing separate, are “always already” a prior ontological, even spiritual unity. Both the praxis and potential result—full *bodhi* of enlightenment—are always here now fully present remembrance of this great nondual truth that is the trans-rational vast unbounded whole (*mahabindu*), this “one truth” invariant throughout all the human consciousness changes of our exoteric objective and esoteric subjective experience, that is to say, our mind. So it is told by the masters and *mahasiddhas* of our Premodern wisdom traditions. How shall we do this? That is the epistemic rub, and our great opportunity, as we shall see.

We shall then, all too briefly glimpse, to the same purpose, an important bit of 20th century intellectual history, namely, an urgent Postmodern non-nihilist, non-idealist, “ontological relativity” (we create our conventional realities through perceptual imputation and conceptual designation) as it arises in Relativistic Quantum Field Theory—QED/QCD—of the Standard Model of particles and forces of recent physics and cosmology (Boaz 2012, Ch. II A).

In this connection we shall engage the logical and empirical possibility, or impossibility, of a physical “Theory of Everything” (TOE). It is here that I shall challenge—as have many others—the separative, destructive ideology of the prevailing deep cultural background epistemic authority of Modernist mechanistic, determinist, functionalist Scientific Materialism. We shall here very briefly visit the Postmodern, post-foundational truths of the pragmatic and perspectival ontological relativity of Bohr, Gödel, Quine, Derrida, Bell, Kuhn, the Neopragmatists, and the pragmatic, panpsychic Neodualists, including a pragmatic middle way Buddhist *Prasangika Madhyamaka* anti-essentialist Realism, grounded in the nondual ontology of *Dzogchen*, The Great Perfection (Boaz 2013, *Being the Whole*). A radical, speculative epistemically ambitious program, to be sure.

An Emerging Noetic Methodology

There is a continuum of cosmic consciousness...and no account of the universe can be final which leaves these other forms of consciousness quite disregarded.

—William James

A robust, integral noetic science of matter, mind and spirit must utilize the phenomenological doublet of both objective third person exterior exoteric quantitative Science, and first person subjective interior esoteric qualitative spirit/value methodologies. Such a noetic approach is required if we are to guide our evolution—this ontic processional of preconscious, conscious, and supraconscious experience—individually and thereby collectively through the

ascending life stages of human psychological, emotional and spiritual development. Conventionally speaking, the causal endpoint of this evolutionary process is nothing less than the awakening/liberation/enlightenment of the individuals of our species; which is to say, in due course, and by grace, the long deferred nativity of *homo gnostica*, a bright new species. Risky conjecture indeed.

I have here and elsewhere referred to this evolutionary reformation in religion, science and culture as the emerging Noetic Revolution of the 21st century. This evolutionary paradigmatic shift from the 2400 year old foundationalist fundamentalism of the rationalist Platonic/Cartesian “scientific” realist/materialist paradigm to an inchoate new integral noetic scientific and cultural paradigm, is the primary motif of this all too brief present inquiry.

Hence, such an integral, noetic science requires the perennial cognitive dialectic (*pramana*) of both objective reason (*vikalpa, anumana*), and subjective contemplative yogic direct perception (*pratyaksa, kensho, satori*) of, and meditation (*bhavana*) upon our indwelling inherent nondual primordial awareness wisdom (innate *gnosis, sahajajnana, yeshe*). Such a research program represents 10,000 years of cognitive evolution of our species’ contemplative primordial awareness wisdom. We ignore (*avidya*) it at great individual and collective peril.

As suggested above, these two intertextual complementary knowledge paradigms—these perennial “Two Truths”, objective relative and subjective ultimate—together enhance the path to that recognition and realization of our “supreme identity” (*cittadhatu*) with the primordial, perfectly subjective basal ultimate reality ground, by its many names, in which all descending spacetime relative things and beings arise and participate. Here, no data of experience shall be methodologically taboo.

On the accord of our Premodern primordial wisdom traditions, this recognition, then realization of the compassionate wisdom of emptiness—and its spontaneous effortless actualization in our everyday lifeworld as kind compassionate conduct (love)—represents, through cause and effect (karma), our “relative,” but also “ultimate” individual and collective meaning potential. “What you are is what you have been. What you will be is what you do now” (Shakyamuni Buddha). Our understanding and realization of this is the ultimate great happiness (*mahasuka, paramananda, eudaemonia, beatitudo*), the happiness that cannot be lost. Here, the deconstructive effort of our hapless, adventitious, future-directed happiness seeking strategies (*dunzi*) is utterly surrendered to the theme of our always present indwelling wisdom nature, by whatever name. Seeking happiness as an antidote to suffering is a kind of suffering.

Let us now briefly but intensively engage our two ostensibly incommensurable knowledge paradigms—objective and subjective, relative and ultimate—our two ways of being here. Are they really separate realities?

Being Here: Toward a Post-Quantum Centrist Noetic Ontology

There are many, many ways for the teaching to arise.

—Chögyal Namkhai Norbu

Who is it, this primordial awareness being in human form? Being (*Ontos, Sein, Bhava*) is the alpha and omega of meaning in religion (*religio/yoga/zygon/union*), and philosophy (the unity of *philo/love* and *sophia/wisdom*), that is to say, of our human ultimate concern.

The truth-functional binary equation—A or not-A, is or is not, *sat* or *asat*, *eka* or *shunya*, one or zero, existence or non-existence, form or emptiness—expresses the syntactic cognitively contingent bivalence or duality of these perennial Two Truths—ultimate and relative—that constitute semantic and pragmatic meaning for us, our being here in anthropic spacetime. Yes, we live in these two dimensions at once. Balancing these two faces of being is our existential human predicament. But are these realms ultimately separate? Why should we care?

In Heisenberg's uncertainty relations of the Quantum Field Theory (QFT) this implicit ultimate nonduality of the relative dualistically arising “productions” or manifestations of the ultimate ground or source of reality is expressed through the non-bifurcated superposition state—both “is” and “is not”—of the quantum information bits (qubits/*vasana*) that constitute the elementary wave/particles (or strings, loops or branes) arising from recent cosmology's unified quantum vacuum.

This “zero point energy” of physics' quantum vacuum potential is analogous to, but not reducible to Buddhist *alaya*, the *relative* substrate ground with its *alaya-vijnana* (*bhavanga, namkha*) substrate consciousness. *Alaya-vijnana* is said to be the subjective space of emptiness (*shunyata*) into which the contents of mind descend in deep sleep, and at the moment of death, and from which all of the subjective and objective appearances or productions of mind—human consciousness—arise. This *alaya* consciousness is not however, on the accord of the masters of the Vajrayana teachings, the perfect subjectivity of the subtlest or “highest” state of human consciousness that recognizes, in due course, then realizes (*bodhi, kensho/satori, moksa*) the unbounded whole (*mahabindu*) that is reality-being-itself.

In the Vajrayana, this perfectly subjective “absolute space of phenomena” is the basal primordial awareness wisdom consciousness (*dharmadhatujnana*) ground (*kadag, gzhi*) that is always, to practitioner and non-practitioner alike, fully present (*vidya, rigpa*) as the nondual, unbroken, unbounded whole in which (or in whom) this all arises. Professor Anne Carolyn Klein (Rigzin Drolma) reveals the primordial truth of the matter:

Unbounded wholeness is how and what reality is... Open awareness (*rigpa*), fully present to that state of wholeness, is the knowing of it... Open awareness is uniquely authentic (*tshad ma*) for it alone is fully aware of its own nature as unbounded wholeness (Klein 2006 pp. 4, 7).

This Tibetan Buddhist view is preceded in historical, cultural space and time by the Hindu “Akashic Record” (*manakasha*) which is the physical and quasi-physical *aetheric* cosmos vacuum matrix, analogous to all-embracing Pythagorean *kosmos* that subsumes the physical,

material, mental and “spiritual” (body, mind, spirit) objective and subjective spacetime cosmos, with its many universes, in a prior ontological and epistemological unity. These then are the “two voices” or “two truths”—relative and ultimate, form and emptiness—that are subsumed in the notion of the one truth, “one taste” that is the interdependent objective/subjective nondual unbounded whole of matter, mind and spirit.

Lest we interpret this view as merely the new, refreshing panpsychic proto-idealist Neo-dualism of recent consciousness studies in the Philosophy of Mind—Chalmers, Clark, Strawson, Nagel, Jackson (Boaz 2013, “The Problem and Opportunity of Consciousness”)—let us again recall that the epistemic dualism of these two truths is ultimately subsumed in the ontic nondual “one truth that is invariant across all cognitive frames of reference” (Wallace 2007). How shall we understand this?

We have seen that this here now “always already” present presence of the “one truth”—consciousness-reality-being-itself—that embraces the ontic duality of the two truths, relative and ultimate, is our human ultimate soteriological (liberation, enlightenment) concern. And, lest we presume that we can grasp *that (tat)* through our various conceptual, causal, material and spiritual seeking strategies, perish the thought. We cannot *become that*. We can only *be that*. To be *that*, or not to be *that*? That is the question. “This cannot be taught” (Shakumuni Buddha). Yet, the practice of the contemplative injunctions of the masters (*kalyanamitra*)—those who know—“opens the door” to this great nondual primordial awareness wisdom (*gnosis*, *jnana*, *yeshe*) that flesh is heir to.

Now, back to quantum and post-quantum reality. For the “consciousness causes collapse” interpretations of the quantum theory (Quantum Field Theory, QFT, with Feynman’s Quantum Electrodynamics, QED), at the collapse of the quantum wave function during a measurement (or a perception)—the vexing “quantum measurement problem”—quantum uncertainty dissolves, along with the *indeterminate* wave nature of light. Now, the acausal *subjective* superposition of the nondual being state that is *both A* and not-*A* (the Law of Connection), both being and non-being, both one and zero, collapses into the *determinate* particle nature of light that is the apparent causal *objective* duality of *either A* or not-*A* (the Law of Excluded Middle), of *either* being or non-being. The European Logical Intuitionists notwithstanding, Western logic has entirely ignored (*avidya*, primary dualistic judgment) this unifying Eastern Law of Connection (Boaz 2012, “Post-Quantum Logic: East Meets West,” p. 72).

What’s going on here? At the collapse of Schrödinger’s quantum wave function (the state vector reduction) at the instant of a quantum measurement by an observer, or an observer’s instruments, or by any sentient perception—that is to say a moment of *consciousness*—is an aperture for the arising of objective quantum qubits (*vasana*) of appearing physical/mental *form*, via the quasi-physical quantum vacuum zero point energy potential (analogous to Buddhist *alaya*) from its nondual trans-physical perfectly subjective basal emptiness/*dharmadhatu* source-ground. Form/appearance, and emptiness/reality are “not one, not two; but nondual” (Boaz 2013 Ch. II, A, B).

Astonishingly, this cognitive aperture for the arising of form is also a moment-to-moment opening, an opportunity for the ascent and return of a perceiving consciousness to its

emptiness ground. Everything that arises and appears in human experience, attractive or aversive, is an opening into this vast expanse of the trans-conceptual, uncontrived “primordial purity” (*kadag*) of its nondual base (*ghzi*). Indeed, paradoxically, it is our aversive, negative afflictive emotions (desire, fear/anger/aggression, avarice, pride) that drive and motivate the freeing practice (*sadhana*) that is their very liberation from the ignorance that is human suffering. Perhaps then we might focus our attention a bit more upon the deep blue sky background of everything. The foreground shall spontaneously arise therein. Thus do we accomplish both at once, moment by moment.

Such non-judgmental cognitive fluency is, conventionally construed, the diametric opposite of *avidya*, primary and secondary ignorance (subject/object dualism and pursuant reification of a permanent objective reality). Such cognition requires, as with all such “enterprises of great pitch and moment,” a commitment to a little trans-rational mindfulness/insight practice (*sheshin*) in being fully present to the primordial whole shebang. Here we strike a centrist middle way balance between the absolutist, substantialist, materialist ontology of permanent, objectively existent “form,” and a nihilist idealist ontology of subjective “emptiness.” “Form is emptiness; emptiness is form.” Conventionally they are different; ultimately they are the same (nondual). Hence, from the epistemology you choose arises the ontology you deserve (karma). Beautiful trans-conceptual cognitive paradox. Can we relate to the ensuing cognitive dissonance?

So, the ontology of relative, “scientific” monistic Physicalism/Materialism necessarily refers us beyond or within, to that ontologically prior ultimate ground or whole—by whatever name—that includes and subsumes it, and in which the dimension of physical/mental spacetime reality arises and partakes. Such an ontology exceeds the syntactic ambulations of the binary truth-functional logic of Aristotle and his Modernist logical heirs, Frege, Russell, and even the brilliant ontological relativity of Quine and Rorty (Boaz 2012, “Toward a Post-Quantum Logic: West Meets East”). Indeed, it utterly transcends the limited capacity (*medpa*) of human concept-mind. This is the dimension of the “logic of the non-conceptual” (Klein). This ultimate unbroken whole—the very nature of mind (*citatta, sems nyid*)—embraces and is altogether greater than the sum of its parts, and our conceptual idols of it (cf. Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum* on the “idols of the mind”). Yet, astoundingly, this great whole is relative-conventionally instantiated in our human consciousness as the particulars of everyday spacetime reality. Such a centrist ontology thus bestows upon us the ultimately unified Two Truths of our conventionally split objective scientific, and subjective spiritual paradigms. Well then, “who is it” that unifies these two truths of our being here in this beautiful brightness of space and time?

Being Time: Toward Paradigm Unification

Things don't happen in time; time exists because things happen.

—Jay Garfield

Dōgen-Zenji, perhaps Japan's greatest Zen patriarch, founder of the Soto School, called this unbidden, but not unwelcome relative-conventional arising of the experience of physical and mental form in relative human consciousness from the ultimate, vast, spacious consciousness expanse of our nondual non-logocentric, emptiness ground of being, “a being-time moment flashing into existence...” This matrix ground, or source of arising form is the unbounded whole of his nondual *Uji* or “Being-Time” (Garfield 2011, Dōgen/Cleary 1986).

Dōgen's brilliant analysis of the nature of time is extremely subtle and multi-dimensional for it includes the timeless (*turiya*) variables of past, present and future in both its conventional conceptual exoteric, and its trans-rational esoteric voices. In contrast, the Modern physics understanding of time is limited to an exoteric, mechanistic physicalist/materialist view, i.e. the future-directed thermodynamic arrow of time. (Actually, the mathematics of Boltzmann's thermodynamic arrow of time do not preclude time's arrow from moving “back to the future” into the past. Science fact becomes science fiction.)

Moreover, Dōgen's view expresses the importance of a deep understanding of the nature of being in time to human psycho-spiritual development and happiness (both relative and ultimate), and therefore to the causal evolution of the consciousness of our species. Indeed, this is his, and our ultimate concern, whether or not we think about it conventionally.

For Dōgen, Being-Time is here now presence of the ever-present unity of “the three times” — past, present, future. Therefore, there is no endpoint that is the final goal of human enlightenment, our ultimate happiness. Being-Time reality is merely, only our here now passionate, compassionate activity of lifeworld practice; everything that we think and do. This is the secret of human happiness. This is the final, ultimate realization. How shall we understand this?

For Dōgen, the present exists for us only in relation to our past and future. Being-Time (*Uji*) is a simultaneous cognitive array of all three. Thus we live in a single vanishing moment now. Yet, this precious moment now derives both its relative and ultimate meaning from our intersubjective cognitive context of a past and a future. This moment now is utterly essential because all our past and future are interdependently (*pratitya samutpada, tendrel nyingpo*), causally enfolded within it. Yes, we live in the moment, but not only in the moment. To live only in the moment now, without awareness of past and future, is to “make our life meaningless.” Not to live in the moment now is “to lose reality itself” (Garfield 2011 p. 73 ff.). This indeed is a middle way between living in a fearful hopeful future, and an egoistically idealized, or a sad regrettable past. All of this is fully present now, when we listen to the profound spacious silence that now and always embraces our all too human mind.

This then is a middle way between our dichotomous “either/or” judgments of the absolute “yes,” and the nihilistic “no” of all of our dualistic relative-conventional thinking. Such “being here now” might be seen as Dr. Herbert Benson's “relaxation response” writ large.

As to the *Madhyamaka* balance between the *View* of emptiness/*dharmakaya* and the compassionate practice of the *Conduct* (ethics), Vajrayana master Padmasambhava teaches, “Keep your (ultimate) view as high as the sky, your (relative) deeds as fine as barley flour... Descend with the view while ascending with the conduct... Practice these two as a unity.” He then cautions us not “to lose the view in the conduct, nor the conduct in the view.” Tulku Urgyen explains, “If you lose the view in the conduct, you will never be free. If you lose the conduct in the view, you ignore the difference between good and evil and fall into black diffusion” (*As It Is*, 2000).

For Buddhist *Madhyamaka*, the radical “crazy wisdom” of psycho-spiritual awakening/enlightenment/liberation—full *bodhi*—is the continuity of human primordial awareness wisdom (gnosis, *jnana*, *yeshe*) that hears and sees, and fully engages appearing reality “just as it is” now; just as the “primordial purity” (*kadag*) of our spontaneous, uncontrived, pre-conceptual perception presents it, before we *think* about it. *So there is no need to deny, avoid, or transcend this chaos of relative-conventional reality. There is nothing out there, or in here, that is better, or more real, or more beautiful, or more blissful. No need to change anything* (wu-wei, surrender, *pistis*, *faith*, spontaneous wisdom activity). Our always present, peaceful, unelaborated and unadorned reality, just as it arises now, will suffice. This meaning is bestowed upon us—is us—only by fully engaging *this* crazy world, as Buddha told, “just as it is.” “Rest your weary mind and let it be as it is; all things are perfect exactly as they are.” Thus do we “make the goal the path.”

As Nagarjuna reminds us, these two worlds of relative *samsara* and ultimate *nirvana* are ultimately (although not relative-conventionally) identical. From the nondual, trans-conceptual view of ultimate truth, appearance and reality are the same (*samata*). From the *Prajnaparamita* of the Buddha's *Heart Sutra*: “Form is emptiness; emptiness is form. Form is not other than emptiness; emptiness is not other than form.” (H. H. The Dalai Lama, *The Essence of the Heart Sutra*, 2005, is a profound introduction to this seminal Buddhist view of emptiness).

This then is the “correct” view. To assume or pretend that phenomenal physical/mental form and its emptiness base are inherently separate is the dualistic relative-conventional delusion (*avidya*) in which we “lose reality itself.” As to the View, Meditation and Fruition/Result, on the accord of H. H. The Dalai Lama, the cognitive immediacy of this Mahayana view is at root the subtlest or “highest” view that is the Middle Way of *Prasangika Madhyamaka*, which, he reminds us, is the very foundation of the compassionate nondual Vajrayana teaching that is *Dzogchen*. And *Dzog* (completion) *chen* (great), *Essence Mahamudra*, and *Definitive Madhyamaka* (not to mention nondual *Saijojo* Zen) are, according to Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche, the same as to the view and fruition (buddhahood). The practices differ a bit. How then do we recognize, realize and actualize in our dualistic everyday lifeworld compassionate conduct (*bodhicitta*) this sameness (*samata*) that is the unity of form/matter and emptiness/spirit?

Intellectual understanding is not enough. It is through the continuity of mindfulness (shamatha) and insight (vipashyana) practice that we gradually, then suddenly surrender (wu-wei, pistis) our conceptual estrangement—our selffull psychophysical contraction from being itself—and awaken to the always already perfectly present intersubjective interdependent (pratitya samutpada), impermanent (anitya), and selfless (anatman) nature of reality-being-itself, just as it is now, ontological-

ly prior to the habitual massmind cultural separative contrivances of our dualistic concepts and beliefs about it.

Such a recognition, then realization is a gradual emotional, devotional (*ishta, bhakti*) process of concept/belief deconstruction and surrender of self/ego-I that then facilitates a spontaneous, “brief moments, many times” relaxing into the always “primordially present” trans-empirical spacious, basal emptiness ground (*dharmakaya, dharmata, cittata, kadag*, etc.). And as Dōgen points out, *prior to these dualistic conceptual elaborations and superimpositions (vikshepa) upon this nondual pristine reality, we all do this, all the time, with every perception!* Wonder of wonders, we are all “primordially awakened” (*vidya/rigpa*) to this always “already accomplished” (Garab Dorje) innate and perfect clearlight mind. “Who is it”? *That* is who we actually are! That is our “supreme identity” (*cittadhatu*). And the practice of the path is the knowledge vector that recognizes, then realizes it in our everyday lifeworld, now. “The only difference between a Buddha and an ordinary person is that one realizes it, the other does not” (Chán master Hui Neng). Ultimate human happiness, not to mention our relative everyday happiness, requires that we understand and know the truth of this matter.

“The clearlight mind which lies dormant in human beings, is the great hope of human-kind” (H. H. The Dalai Lama). Yet, this clearlight mind is adventitiously cloaked (*vikshepa*) by our current dualistic materialist preconceived deep background sociocultural concepts and beliefs, and the ignorance (*avidya/marigpa/ajnana*) that results therefrom. *Do we not limit ourselves most by our attachment to (shenpa), and defense of our present closely held concept/belief systems?*

This epistemic vector that is mindfulness and insight practice reminds us—moment to moment, when we listen to the silence, then see—of this ever present miracle of being. Then we become distracted by thinking, and the fear/anger contained therein. Then we surrender, and remember again, “brief moments many times,” until the non-essential continuity of this inherently (*sahaja*) present zen/dzogchen state—the mindstream of all the buddhas and mahasiddhas (*rigzin*) of our wisdom traditions—is fully active, even in the banal, difficult, beautiful asymmetry of our everyday lifeworld. Is not this ontic result Hamlet’s “consummation devoutly to be wished”?

Hence, the profundity of Dōgen’s “Being-Time” may be understood as the conceptually ineffable (*medpa*) but not contemplatively ineffable non-propositional, non-prescriptive luminosity that is our indwelling intrinsic presence of clearlight awareness. It is such primordial innate gnosis (*sahajajnana, chos ying yeshe*) that is the basal emptiness source or ground of all of our experience of this interdependently arising (*pratitya samutpada*) play (*lila*) of spacetime reality. Yes, that is the “always already” present presence that we are now. Such a conceptual view and practice shall ultimately facilitate—gradually and suddenly, sooner and later—the trans-conceptual realization of this great nondual primordial truth. Such is our happiness desideratum “wish fulfilling gem.”

On this view, the vast primordial unbounded whole, nonlocal, nondual consciousness-reality-being itself, is the one truth (*aletheia*) pragmatically revealing—to both conceptual and contemplative cognition—the ultimate *kosmic* continuum that is the interdependent arising of phenomenal physical/mental form. Once again, form/appearance participates (*plays/lila*) in

this adventitious adventure that is relative cosmic spacetime as it continuously arises and descends from its trans-rational *kosmic* reality emptiness source, ground or base, by whatever name or concept. “Just open the door.”

Here then, each relative spacetime particular human experience is at once a non-Platonic instantiation of its nondual, mythopoetic, universal or ultimate ground, as we have seen. There is no *essential* difference. The *apparent* difference between conceptual and contemplative cognition is that our subtle, spontaneous meditative contemplative cognition (*yogi pratyaksa*) directly recognizes this truth. Conceptual/belief cognition sees, if we're lucky, only the concept of this. Once again, our nondual wisdom traditions have told it: this auspicious relative-conventional understanding shall, in due course and by grace, result in the individual and collective ultimate realization of our species' inherent primordial awareness wisdom (*gnosis, jnana, yeshe*).

Moreover, to the degree of one's individual realization, this “wisdom of emptiness” spontaneously expresses itself as effortless wise compassionate conduct toward sentient beings in the drama of our everyday lifeworld. And through such compassionate activity the wisdom of emptiness is realized. For Dōgen, and the Mahayana *Madhyamaka* these two—emptiness and compassion—are an ultimate unity, yet conventionally different. The affective or emotional result of this wisdom of kindness is the exoteric relative happiness that is esoterically ultimate happiness itself. So it is told by Dōgen, and by the nondual teaching of our primordial wisdom traditions.

But let us here remember Dōgen's profound caution regarding the subtle attraction—for those of us cognitively so inclined—of conceptual epistemic and gnoseological dialectics: “Cease to concern yourself with the dialectics of Being, and instead look into your own mind” (*Fukan Zazenji*). Yet, such dualistic dialectics offer a little stabilization of our view, and “opens the door” to a perspicuous inclusive nondual understanding. As Padmasambhava told, we accomplish ultimate truth (liberation) by way of relative truth (practice of the path). These two are a prior ontic unity. Thus we proceed.

Dōgen's great insight then, is that prior to the imposition and intervention of conceptual cognition, ordinary direct perception is the luminous primordially pure cognition of our inherent (sahaja), blissful pristine original clearlight mind nature. And this is inherently always, already fully present in the perceptual apparatus of the human central and peripheral nervous systems. Does this mean that we “should” eschew (as some exoteric interpretations of zen hold) conceptual analysis of this great process? No. “Analytic meditation” is part of the process. Guluk School founder Lama Tsongkhapa asks, how can we practice the path to awakening without a conceptual understanding of what it is that we are practicing? Both objective conceptual and subjective contemplative understanding are requisite conventional voices of knowing this vast unbounded whole that we are.

Thus is this gift of form directly given (*jin lab, grace*) from its emptiness ground, absent and free of adventitious conceptual/belief imputation and designation. Then we may, or we may not, choose to conceptually and symbolically unpack what is given to perception with Dōgen's great insight as told in the Buddha's *Heart Sutra*: “Form is not other than emptiness;

emptiness is not other than form.” The remembrance that we are not separate from That is an auspicious beginning. The moment-to-moment remembrance and activity of that is happiness itself.

Is there then, a hermeneutically fluent, pragmatic, pluralistic but not ethically relativist, causal, top-down middle way between the knowledge paradigms that are the dualistic bottom-up incompleteness of objective Scientific Realism/Materialism (Scientism), and subjective bright *mystisch* that is nondual Spirit?

Yes. We've seen that the pragmatic, pluralist, ecumenical (*rimé*) centrist view of Buddhist *Prasangika Madhyamaka* epistemology, the “epistemology of presence” (Klein), offers a middle way between the epistemic extremes of Western objectivist scientific materialist existential absolutism (eternalism, substantialism) and Eastern subjectivist idealist solipsism and nihilism. And we have seen further that *Prasangika* is the epistemic foundation of the monistic ontology of unbounded wholeness (*mahabindu*) that is *Vajrayana Nyingma Dzogchen*, the Great Perfection. Devotion (*bhakti*) to this whole is the ongoing practice.

This auspicious noetic coming to meet of East and West provides a promising cognitive architecture, and an inchoate, ontologically relative, concept/theory-dependent (our reality is dependent upon our conceptual theoretical “web of belief”), interdependent model for such a rational noetic reconstruction. This then provides a pluralistic epistemic basis for our emerging noetic revolution in science, exoteric religion and esoteric spirituality, and culture.

Such a middle way view or narrative, or meta-narrative, offers a contemplative recognition of the prior paradigmatic “Two Truths” unity of our relative really real but not intrinsically real dualistic objective matter (form), with its nondual base that is ultimate subjective spirit (emptiness/openness/*dharmakaya*, etc.). And this is not other than the grand desideratum of objective–subjective paradigmatic unification; and perhaps, even a non-materialist, non-essentialist noetic Theory of Everything, if not a physicalist/materialist TOE (Boaz 2012, Chapter II).

Further, as we have seen, this *Madhyamaka* Two Truths epistemology offers the phenomenological gift of a non-foundational, non-absolutist, pragmatic relative-conventional Realism. We're not just illusory. We're really real! There's a real world out there, and in here, in which we can practice our understanding of this great process of realization of who we actually are. The current scientific/physics paradigm—especially with the recent demise of 2400 years of Platonic Foundational Realism and the impact of this upon the prevailing Modern Cartesian Rationalism and Postmodern Scientific Materialism/Realism—offers no such outcome; although this is changing through the impact of middle way *Madhyamaka* Buddhism on neuroscience, and the emerging Science of Consciousness (Wallace 2012, Begley 2006). However, Alan Wallace cautions that there is presently

a fundamental incompatibility between scientific and Buddhist views of the mind... The scientific principles of the conservation of mass and energy implied that it was impossible for a nonphysical process to exert influence in the physical world... This resulted in a materialistic view of hu-

mans as nothing more than biologically programmed robots whose behavior is entirely determined by physical causes. This view is fundamentally incompatible with the Buddhist views of causality, karma, and dependent origination (Wallace 2012, p. 25, 27).

Acausal quantum indeterminacy at the micro level of reality is relative-conventionally incompatible with the Middle Way Buddhist view that all phenomena arise in dependence (interdependence) on prior physical and non-physical causes and conditions. The middle way Mahayana Buddhist view, that non-physical causes have physical effects (karma, rebirth, praxis), when exoterically construed, seems to contradict the waning dogma of mechanistic Scientific Materialism (the proto-religion of Scientism). Perhaps the radical noetic empiricism (James, *Madhyamaka*, H. H. The Dalai Lama's secular synthesis of Modernity and traditional Vajrayana Buddhism) that is now abroad in the brave new cognitive world of the emerging Noetic Revolution will further this urgent dialogue between Buddhism and Science. In such an integral knowledge paradigm all human experience—third person objective or first person subjective—shall be proper data for scientific research programs. Here, no human experience shall be methodologically taboo.

For now, Buddhism lacks a hard physical science. Science lacks a unified nondual view and a soteriology. Perhaps, as Alan Wallace suggests, we should view Science and Spirituality—in this case epistemic and ontic *Prasangika Madhyamaka* and *Dzogchen* spirituality, both secular and non-secular—not as different paradigms, but as complementary views. The objective Science view and the subjective Spirituality view each contributes to a subtler understanding of the great, non-logocentric/trans-rational unbounded whole that is nondual ultimate reality-being-itself, our “supreme identity.” In such wisdom lies the great potential for relative material and mental, as well as ultimate spiritual paradigmatic unification. It is good to remember that objective and subjective, relative and ultimate cognition, are a prior ontological unity.

Conclusion: Who Is It?

Who is it that shines through the mind and abides at the heart
of all beings, always liberated and fully awake?

—David Paul Boaz

As to paradigmatic unification of Science and Spirit, “All dharmas are ultimate reality” (Shakamuni Buddha). The dimension of spacetime Relative-Conventional Truth (*samvriti satya*), with its many seemingly separate conceptual “concealer truths”—all of these dharmas—are, in the absence of a discursive separate self ego-I, merely ultimate reality (*paramartha satya*), the all-embracing dimension of “Ultimate Truth.” There is a relative-conventional difference. There is no ultimate difference. Ultimately, as wave mechanics quantum pioneer Irwin Schrödinger expressed, “subject and object are only one.” Subject and object are one and the same (*samata*) nondual all-embracing cognitive contemplative, trans-conceptual one truth. Who is it? Wonder of wonders, *Tat Tvam Ami*, That I Am! “It is already accomplished.” Yet, as Dōgen told, *shashaku jushaku*, “continue in error,” until you fully know the truth of it. Practice is the vector that makes it so.

But the greatest wonder, as told by our primordial wisdom tradition's masters and *mahasiddhas* of the three times—past, present and future—is that we may glimpse the immediate numinous presence of this primordial wisdom truth, not in some future time after years, or lifetimes of purifying practice, but here and now, “on this very seat,” at the human spiritual heart (*hridayam*). Paradoxically, practice under the guidance of a qualified master (*kalyanamitra*) is the relative-conventional vehicle that provides the liberating continuity of such glimpses. So for now, “just open the door.”

Recall, echoing Shakyamuni Buddha's nondual wisdom of emptiness as expressed in his *Heart Sutra*—“All dharmas are emptiness...there is no path, no wisdom, no enlightenment and no non-enlightenment...” —there is only present non-conceptual *Prajnaparamita*, primordial wisdom (*dharmadhatujnana*) unity of the three times. So there is no ignorance. Thus there is no fear, or false hope. Thus do we accept our body-mind impermanence, and tolerate the cognitive dissonance inherent in balancing these pragmatically useful two knowledge paradigms, relative science, and ultimate spirit. For example, there can be no false hope of future happiness. Why? Because our future has not arisen. So there is nothing to seek. There exists only our compassionate practice now, our conduct today, each moment here now. Thus do we “make the path the goal.”

Just so, the perennial conventional dualism of these paradigmatic Two Truths—objective form and subjective emptiness—represents the continuum of ontological dialectic between the absolutist/substantialist Realism/Materialism of Western Science, and the nihilism of the various brands of absolute and transcendental Idealism of Eastern (and Western) ontology and spirituality. The pragmatic middle way of *Prasangika Madhyamaka* emptiness/openness represents the profound and delicate relative balance between these perennial two truths as they causally, dependently arise unseparate from their ultimate “groundless ground.”

Hence, through both conceptual and trans-conceptual contemplative practice, we must negate any inherent or *intrinsic* existence in arising objective and subjective form. But, as Lama Tsongkhapa reminds us (Newland 2009), we must know and correctly identify the negandum, for if we negate too much we depart the *Madhyamaka* middle way and fall into a dark nihilism (*ucchedavada*) where we lose the motivation to practice the compassionate ethical conduct inherent in the wisdom of emptiness. Conversely, if we negate too little we fall from the middle way into the opposite extreme of permanence (substantialism, absolutism, eternalism), reifying then clinging to self, and to arising phenomena resulting in a perennial failure of recognition, then realization of the wisdom of emptiness.

Once more, the Buddha told it in the nondual wisdom of his *Heart Sutra*: “Form is emptiness; emptiness is form...” There is a relative-conventional difference. There is no ultimate difference. And this is the difference that makes all the difference.

There is here as well, an auspicious, productive pragmatic conventional methodological dialectical tension between orthodoxy and heresy, between rationalism and empiricism, between empiricism and Realism, between Realism and anti-Realism in both Science and Spirituality.

We have now seen that the invidious split between knowing subject and perceived object—between objective and subjective knowing—is utterly deracinated in the prior unity of radically empirical, liberating, trans-rational, post-transcendental, post-materialist, non-logocentric, ultimate “great emptiness” (*mahashunyata*). This openness/emptiness ground of human consciousness is not other than the vast open unbounded wholeness expanse of *dharmadhatu*, nonlocal, nondual consciousness-reality-being-itself, just as it arises and appears now, to our ordinary direct perception. Let us here again remember that emptiness, as with form, is itself empty of any shred of intrinsic existence. “All emptiness is emptiness of something.” Indeed, to concept-mind, a most amazing paradox.

Buddhist emptiness then, is not an existent thing, entity, or some vast ultimate substrate of arising spacetime reality. Emptiness is merely the nondual ultimate nature of our dualistic confusion as to all of our objective and subjective realities. H. H. The Dalai Lama has termed this relationship the “emptiness of emptiness.” And we are that “self of selflessness” of this vast spacious matrix (*dharmadhatu*) of openness/emptiness (*mahashunyata*). *Yet, astonishingly, this profound negation that is emptiness is full of the light that fills the worlds, and the luminous things of this, our really real world.* Who is it? *That I am.* Is there not a sublime beauty in it?

This great truth of the compassionate wisdom of emptiness is then, the profoundly simple trans-conceptual indwelling presence (*vidya, rigpa*) at the Heart (*hridayam*) of the nondual one truth, the always here now present truth that is invariant across all our cognitive reference frames: science and spirit; objective and subjective; preconscious, conscious and supraconscious; egocentric, ethnocentric, worldcentric, and theocentric; exoteric, esoteric, innermost esoteric and nondual; the “yes” and the “no” of our experience, altogether now. Great joy!

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