

# THE PERFECT TRADITION

*An Introduction to The Gnosticon*

*by Carolyn Lee, PhD*

There is a dimension of existence that is off the edge of the mind. Words can only gesture paradoxically toward it. And yet the most urgent human need is to plumb this dimension, to get to the source of things, to know Reality with a capital “R”, in order to make sense of the chaos of experience. This fundamental enquiry was conceived by Adi Da Samraj, during His youth, in visual terms:

*From My early years, I would have a visual impression of a group of people sitting around a massive boulder-like stone in a room. There were no windows, no features to the room at all, no reason to be looking at the room itself. I would be sitting with others, in chairs, around this stone—turned directly at the stone, simply persisting in that situation. There was the sense that eventually everything would be known—meaning that Realization would be the case—based on the starkness of that scene. It was about the transcending of the “objective” by simply looking at What Is—simply the room itself, or the great stone, the mere event of conditional awareness.*

—March 1 and 4, 2006

The primal circumstance of contemplating what is is native to the human being. But who can “explain” what is? Who can answer the conundrum of the stone? What is the stone? Why is there a stone at all? Why does anything arise? What is the Source of all of this happening?

During His childhood, and on into His years at Columbia University, Adi Da Samraj was possessed with the question: “What is consciousness?” By “consciousness” He meant that very sense of existence, or awareness of simply being—that which is constant in us, whatever the events and changes of life. In the modern scientific view, consciousness is the by-product of an electro-chemical

process originating in the brain, and is, therefore, dependent on the survival of the body. According to this opinion, consciousness, which seems to be our most fundamental condition, disappears at death. This is the message imparted—even officially—by the institutions of modern “civilization”. Avatar Adi Da could never accept this message, because He had a greater, tacit knowledge, which had been self-evident to Him from His Birth.

Adi Da Samraj was born in New York in 1939 into an ordinary lower-middle-class family—but He was not in an ordinary state. As He describes in His Spiritual Autobiography, *The Knee of Listening*, He enjoyed in infancy an unbroken Condition of Radiant, Blissful Being, which, from childhood, He called the “Bright”. But He discovered in His earliest years that this sublime Reality was not obvious to others. And so, in a great Impulse to embrace the human condition completely—and, thus, to Illumine it for all—Avatar Adi Da spontaneously relinquished that Native Awareness of Reality. From the age of two, He submitted to participate in the human dilemma, the presumption that one is a separate mortal entity in the midst of a bewildering and threatening world. Nevertheless, the “Bright” persisted as an undercurrent of Truth that kept driving Him to the root of things—until all obstructions fell away, and the “Bright” was Re-Awakened in Him completely. From that point, He turned about to Teach others.

From time to time in human history, great Sages have appeared who have, to one degree or another, agreed to instruct devotees. Such a one does not teach from the position of an “I” speaking to a “you”. A truly great Sage speaks as the Very Condition, the Radiant Ocean of Being, That is Reality. From the beginning of His lifetime, Adi Da Samraj showed the signs of such a One. He tirelessly worked to show that the Ultimate Reality is not a “blank absolute”, nor is the Ultimate Reality the “Creator-God” (making the world, and implicated in the human drama). Rather, the Very One Who Is, is by Nature moved to Liberate—to set beings free of identification with the sticky web of illusions that makes up the usual life. The Reality-Teaching of Adi Da Samraj is a great gift to all who need to understand the human event in the light of Ultimate Truth, beyond the winds of doctrine and the competing philosophies that have made and unmade the cultures of humankind.

## The Genesis of *The Gnosticon*

This book, *The Gnosticon*, was conceived by Adi Da Samraj at the end of 2005, but its history goes back more than thirty years. In the early 1970s, Adi Da Samraj recommended to His devotees that they establish a publishing house, making available His own Teaching and also some classic texts of traditional Spirituality. The first of the traditional publications was *The Heart of the Ribhu Gita*, a text in the Advaitic tradition of Transcendental Wisdom, which Adi Da Samraj had seen in *The Mountain Path*, the magazine associated with Ramana Maharshi's Ashram. The rights to publish were obtained, and Adi Da Samraj introduced the book Himself.

In November 2005, He looked again at *The Heart of the Ribhu Gita*, and was moved to make His own rendering, or “interpretive translation”, of the text—in order to elucidate (and thereby honor) its full meaning. He was not intending to re-write the text from the Disposition of His own Realization, but, rather, to draw out the real intention of Ribhu (or the Sage who otherwise generated the text), as only another Realizer can.

Having completed the work, Avatar Adi Da Himself read the text to His devotees in an occasion broadcast live via the Internet, and commented upon it further, indicating that He was interested in rendering other principal texts from the traditions of the great Non-dualist Sages in a similar manner. By “Sage”, He means one who is Identified with Consciousness Itself, rather than being identified with body and mind. Thus, a Sage is one who is established in the Knowledge of Reality at the root, Realizing What Is—rather than seeking for any form of mystical experience (no matter how profound such experience may appear to be).

In the following weeks, Adi Da Samraj gave His attention to other great teachings from the tradition of Advaita Vedanta and some from the Buddhist tradition, all of which He also read to His devotees. In each case, He was bringing the essence of the instruction to the fore, with an elegance and Illumined understanding that left His devotees full of praise and amazement. Texts whose meanings were only partially (or cryptically) expressed even in the original—let alone in translation—were suddenly shining forth, like rough gems cut by an expert hand.



Avatar Adi Da Samraj Reciting His Rendering of the *Ribhu Gīta*  
at Walk About Joy (near Tat Sundaram Hermitage), December 11, 2005

Such was the original kernel of *The Gnosticon*—an anthology of these masterful “translations”, together with Discourses about the traditional texts, given by Adi Da Samraj at the time He read them to His devotees. In the course of 2006, Avatar Adi Da transformed the nature of the book by adding many of His own Teachings relative to “Perfect Knowledge” of Reality—such as “Eleutherios” and “The Teaching Manual of Perfect Summaries”—as well as Essays on “radical devotion” and right life. In order to present these Reality-Teachings in their full context as the apex of human wisdom, Adi Da Samraj also introduced at the beginning of the book Essays He wrote over the years about the more preliminary stages of human understanding, including commentaries on popular “God”-religion. Avatar Adi Da’s final work on *The Gnosticon* (only months before His passing in November 2008) included the addition of the seminal Essays “Atma Nadi Shakti Yoga” and “The Boundless Self-Confession”—which brought the entire text into the domain of His own Avataric Revelation of the Indivisible (Transcendental Spiritual) Nature of Reality and the process He has Given for Realizing It.<sup>3</sup>

## The Great Reality-Teaching Transmitted in Living Relationship

The traditional teachings in this book were transmitted orally, even for many years, before anything was written down. Likewise, there is, in general, little reliable historical information about the Realizers whose teachings gave rise to these texts, and the original circumstances in which the teachings were transmitted have faded into the mists of time. The Upanishadic tradition (going back thousands of years in India) is one of coming to a Realizer in the forest, or some secluded place, where he or she might consent to impart a teaching, which is duly remembered and passed on. At the same time, as Avatar Adi Da points out in this book, the forest hermitage was not the only place of instruction. There was also an ancient tradition of dharmic debate between teachers of different schools—often taking place in the presence of a ruler and his court.

Whatever the life-context of these great teachings, we today confront them primarily as literary artifacts. Their origins are inaccessible. While the words of the Masters continue in some form, the Masters themselves, and their living play of instruction, have disappeared. And from the divorce between the teacher and the teaching—which inevitably tends to occur over time—have sprung endless revisions, dilutions, and distortions of the wisdom of all Realizers. The story of the Sage Ribhu and his devotee Nidagha, which is told in this book (pp. 423–24), is a parable for the truth that there is no direct Realization of Reality apart from the relationship to the Master and the Master’s Spiritual help and skillful means.

Such is the immense Grace of the Avatic Appearance, in our time, of His Divine Presence Avatar Adi Da Samraj. His own Reality-Teachings have been given by Him word for word, and have arisen in a contemporary “Upanishadic” circumstance—the situation of devotees gathered at His Feet in one of His Hermitages or Sanctuaries. And, because of modern technologies of recording and archiving, His direct Instruction, in audio, video, and written forms, will always remain available exactly as He gave it. Moments of His Instruction, like the occasion described below, occurred countless times in different ways with different individual devotees.

One evening in 1996, Adi Da Samraj was seated in a small room surrounded by a group of devotees. He was humorously, compassionately, and lovingly engaging one devotee, Daniel Bouwmeester, in a dialogue—pressing Daniel to inspect the root of the conventional references “us” and “I”.

*DANIEL: A number of us had questions tonight.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: “A number of us”—just what do you mean by that, Daniel?*

*DANIEL: Individuals. Us.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Are you talking about a real experience of yours—that you are one of something there can be a number of?*

*DANIEL: Oh, yes.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What is that experience?*

*DANIEL: Well, it is a sense that “there is me”, and then “there are others”.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Nonsense! Yes, and what are “they”?*

*DANIEL: As You have said, there are presumed “others” who are similar to or even the same as myself.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: I mean, what is that? What are you referring to?*

*DANIEL: Generally, other bodies, other entities, but also individuals.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Yes, but you declared yourself to be virtually identical to all these others.*

*DANIEL: Something similar. “Us” is just a language convention.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: So what exactly are you referring to? You cannot just refer to “they are all bodies” because you said you are one of those, and you do not refer to your own body from without. So when you say “I”, you mean something different than they mean when they say “you”.*

*DANIEL: Yes.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ:* Well, what is that? Is that what you were referring to when you said “us”? Were you really speaking about yourself, or just using language?

*DANIEL:* Using language was one part of it, but when You asked me who are the “us”, there is just a presumption that there is another person, a physical body.

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ:* As a convention of speech, yes. But do you mean altogether what you are saying, or are you just using conventions? I mean, are you actually referring to a something when you say “I”?

*DANIEL:* No. When I refer to the “I”, no.

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ:* Well, what are you referring to when you say “I”?

*DANIEL:* The totality of my sense of myself, and also all my experiences as well.

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ:* But who is the “me” behind the “my”? Is there a “someone” other than all those experiences that are remembered?

*DANIEL:* Yes, yes. I guess it is a sense of essential self—myself. It even seems to be not really definable.

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ:* Right now you are referring to it as an “it”. But is there a “someone” other than all those thoughts and memories and such?

*DANIEL:* Yes.

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ:* So what is that?

*DANIEL:* It is basically just a feeling, a thoughtless feeling.

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ:* Yes, yes. You are a thoughtless feeling. It is so, isn't it?

*DANIEL:* Yes.

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: But if you just attach yourself to the conventional mind, you think you are referring to what people can observe, or expressions on your face or something “other”—things that are objective to them. But when you examine what you are really referring to as “I”, it is a thoughtless feeling, as you say. It does not have any mind or body. All experiences of mind and body are objects to it.*

*The being is, as you say, experientially a thoughtless feeling. Therefore, if you simply feel yourself as such, as you are, what can you say about it? Is there anything else to be said about it, other than “it is a thoughtless feeling”?*

*DANIEL: It also feels radiant. There is a sense of radiance, but it is not limited by the body. It is not limited by thought or any of the other objects associated with the body.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Do you feel that every being here represented by their bodies is a different thoughtless feeling than you are?*

*DANIEL: I don’t know if I can answer that.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: What do you feel about it? If you did not just look at them and focus on them as individuals or think about them, but are just here among them—so-called “them”—do you feel yourself to be a separate thoughtless feeling? Or the same thoughtless feeling that all could refer to?*

*DANIEL: The same—because when I want to limit it, it seems to be greater than that.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: But as soon as you start using the faculties to perceive everyone, not only do you see lots of bodies and suggest separate persons but you begin to create a whole complex of associations and presumptions based on that. In other words, you abandon the position of the thoughtless feeling, and your knowing is all about these perceptual and conceptual complexes, which are otherwise simply Witnessed by you.*

*If you are to maintain that thoughtless feeling-being, unagitated, how would you live differently—since presently all of your thoughts and feelings and actions and perceptions are a kind of*



*invention that is dissociated from your actual being? You are talking all the time about something that is not Truth.*

*To be true, you would have to remain established in the Native State of Being and Radiate from That in the form of life.*

*DANIEL: This is What we have all been drawn to in You, Beloved Master. It is a fundamental reason why we all came here.*

*AVATAR ADI DA SAMRAJ: Tcha.<sup>4</sup> You must become relaxed from your agitated, contracted identification with the body-mind and its play, and become capable of simply Standing in the Native Position. Then all that Radiates from that Position informs the body-mind, informs the life, and you do not lose Reality in order to be alive. So “thoughtless feeling” is a simple way of describing what is Realized—Self-Existing, Self-Radiant, Non-conditional. Everything is Divinely Self-Recognizable in Reality—no longer the lie, the invented life made by dissociation from the Native State, but everything seen in Truth, in and As the Divine Self-Condition, Unobstructed Light, Unobstructed Consciousness, One with all, Transcending all, in a flash of no time whatsoever.*

To recover What Is, forgetting the separate “I”, even for a moment, is more than a matter of following the thread of meaning in this dialogue. When one is Graced to sit at the Feet of a Master, one is stepped out of the common world and entered into the sphere of the Master’s Radiance, the “field” of his or her innate Transmission of the state of Realization. The Words of Adi Da Samraj, as His devotees can confess, carry a potency that is vastly beyond the verbal meaning, a force that activates fundamental transformations in the being. This potency is not restricted to hearing Him speak. He invests Himself Spiritually in all of His writing, also, and that Transmission of His Person can be received through reading any of His books.

## The Hidden Structure of the Body-Mind

The effort to console, or “save”, or transform, or even dissolve the apparent “I”—which we all presume to be—is a major preoccupation of religion. In fact, as Avatar Adi Da argues in *The Gnosticon*, this search, in all its variant forms, is basically the entirety of religion. And He goes further, bringing the extraordinary insight that the kind of religion (or even rejection of religion) that one chooses depends on what dimension of the “I” one is focused in.

In the ancient oriental view, the “I” is more than the body, and more than merely “body and soul”. Rather, the human being is a complex psycho-physical structure composed of a hierarchy of layers (or sheaths).<sup>5</sup> In the simplest understanding, this esoteric anatomy is composed of three fundamental dimensions—which Adi Da Samraj defines as “gross, subtle, and causal”, or “outer, inner, and root”.

The gross (or outer) dimension corresponds to the physical level of experience and the waking state.

The subtle (or inner) dimension includes everything to do with mind, emotion, and energy—including the domain of dreaming and psychic experience, as well as the range of supernormal experience that is commonly called “mystical”.

The causal (or root) dimension refers to the depth where the “I”-“other” sense originates, thereby “causing”, or generating, the worlds of subtle and gross experience that extend from that root presumption of separate “identity”.

As Adi Da Samraj makes clear in the opening Essays of *The Gnosticon*, popular (or exoteric) religion is strictly an outer, waking-state affair, motivated by the concerns of physical existence. Whatever its particular characteristics of doctrine and practice in any time and place, exoteric religion is a search for consolation and salvation through belief in some kind of “Creator-God” or patron-deity, and an adherence to a moral code of behavior that promotes social order.

The esoteric traditions, accounting for a small minority of humanity’s religious endeavors, conduct a more refined and inward form of seeking. They aspire to transcend the common myths and Awaken directly to What is Ultimate. They all speak, in

one way or another, of Realizing the Ultimate Source-Condition of the impermanent arising world. But this intention has various meanings and implications, depending on the orientation of the particular tradition. In summary, there is not only a fundamental difference between the exoteric religions and the esoteric traditions, but real differences exist between the esoteric schools themselves.

Avatar Adi Da's revelation in *The Gnosticon*, and throughout His writings, is that these differences correspond with the esoteric anatomy just described (with its gross, subtle, and causal dimensions). Esoteric practitioners are focused either in the subtle dimension, which is the realm of the various mystical and Yogic traditions, or in the causal dimension, which is the domain of the Sages, the Realizers who are exclusively invested in knowing the Transcendental Reality. Thus, the esoteric traditions of humankind have been polarized around these two different orientations—the orientation to subtle energy and light as the means and nature of Realization, on the one hand, and the urge to Realize Consciousness, by excluding attention to all objects, on the other.

### The Seven Stages of Life

When Avatar Adi Da's Communication about Reality begins to penetrate human culture, He will become associated globally with what He has described as "the seven stages of life". These stages (described in detail on pp. 44–82) constitute a fully-developed "map" of the progressive developmental potential of the human being, based on its total structure—gross, subtle, and causal—and also of the most perfect Divine potential that is beyond gross, subtle, and causal.

The various stages of life are illustrated not only in the individual case, but also in the cultural evidence of history. Adi Da Samraj refers to the vast and varied process of humanity's wisdom-search as the "Great Tradition", and explains how it can be understood in terms of six stages of life—with the inherent potential for the Realization of the seventh (or most ultimate) stage of life. His paradigm of the stages of life represents an esoteric science that belongs to the future of humankind.

In a conversation with His devotees, Adi Da Samraj speaks here of the great shift that must occur before the ordinary human being—still struggling to adapt in the foundation stages of psycho-physical development (the first three stages of life)—can take the leap into the fourth stage of life, characterized by a life of devotional communion with the Divine Spirit (however the Divine is conceived or experienced).

*The first three stages of life are associated with the most basic physical, emotional-sexual, and mental functions to which you have adapted. The transition to the fourth stage of life requires a realistic confrontation with your limitations in the first three stages of life. You must go through the inevitable and natural crisis of this transition, and that is a profound matter. If it were not profound, most difficult, and something that people in general are not prepared for, human beings all over the world would have entered the fourth stage of life by now. This crisis of transition is the most profound and unwelcome change that confronts humanity. That change has been unwelcome for thousands of years.*

—October 4, 1985

In terms of the underlying structure of the gross, subtle, and causal dimensions, the transition to the fourth stage of life is, as Adi Da Samraj indicates, the most critical transition, because it involves an opening of the body-mind to the dimension of Spiritual Energy, which transforms the beliefs and observances of merely exoteric religion into real surrender to the Divine and potential mystical experience.

In the fifth stage of life, the fundamental “point of view” is no longer that of the waking state, but, rather, a persistent concentration in the subtle-energy centers in and above the head, in order to enter into states of ascended bliss—possibly including the experience of subtle lights, visions, sounds, and tastes.

The sixth stage of life goes to the causal root. The effort of sixth stage practitioners is to abide as the Formless Reality (or Consciousness) that is intuited in the depth of meditative contemplation, and to discount (or turn away from) all experience (gross and subtle), in order to find and stay in touch with that Root-Reality.

## The Final Esoteric Secret

Avatar Adi Da's discovery of the "seven stages" paradigm was not a product of merely philosophical enquiry but a tacit (or wordless) clarity that arose during His youthful quest to recover the "Bright". The tradition with which He was most directly associated during that time was Kundalini Yoga. His first Spiritual Master was Rudi (Swami Rudrananda), who worked in New York. Later, in India, Avatar Adi Da's Gurus included some of the greatest Siddhas (or Master-Yogis and Spiritual Transmitters) of modern times—including Swami Muktananda, Rang Avadhoot, and Bhagavan Nityananda (who was then no longer in the body). The principle of their teaching was "Shakti"—the Spirit-Power transmitted from Master to devotee, which awakens the chakras (or energy-vortices in the spinal line) from base of the body to the crown of the head.

While Adi Da Samraj freely experienced all the potential of Kundalini Yoga during His association with these Masters, He was never satisfied that the mystical experiences and exalted states (or samadhis)—no matter how dramatic or apparently profound—amounted to Ultimate Enlightenment. Throughout His youth, in fact, He experienced breakthroughs of the "Bright" that established Him in an utterly free disposition relative to all the traditional forms of esoteric practice. Thus, He brought a unique intelligence to whatever arose to His experience. After His Re-Awakening to the "Bright" in 1970,<sup>6</sup> the esoteric anatomy underpinning His entire Spiritual adventure was obvious to Him. Eventually, that anatomy was systematically described by Him in terms of seven stages of life.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Avatar Adi Da's account of His quest to recover the "Bright" is His description of a previously unknown esoteric process in which, first, fixation in the chakra system (exemplifying the fifth stage of life) is transcended, and, then, fixation in the causal dimension (associated with the sixth stage of life) is transcended, and, finally, the Ultimate Form of Being (characterizing the seventh stage of life) is Realized.

The following passages, selected from *The Knee of Listening*, illustrate the developments in this process. The first passage—from Avatar Adi Da's recounting of His myriad experiences in the mode

of Kundalini Yoga—describes a classic vision of the ascending process associated with the fifth stage of life. This vision occurred while Adi Da Samraj was on retreat in Swami Muktananda's company in Mumbai in 1969.

*I saw the muladhar appear below me as a Siva-lingam.<sup>7</sup> Then I appeared below, my hands tied to the lingam in a gesture of prayer, pointing above. I rose up with the lingam into the sabasrar and experienced the perfect, Infinite, Unmoved Sat-Chit-Ananda—the Pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss of the Indian Godhead, my own Ultimate Self-Nature as the Divine Being of all the world's scriptures.*

The next passage describes an event in February 1970, when Adi Da was living a reclusive life in an apartment in New York City:

*For several nights, I was awakened again and again with sharp lateral pains in my head. They felt like deep incisions in my skull and brain, as if I were undergoing a surgical operation. During the day following the last of these experiences, I realized a marvelous relief. I saw that what appeared as the sabasrar (the terminal chakra and primary lotus in the crown of the head) had been severed. The sabasrar had fallen off like a blossom. The Shakti—which had previously appeared as a polarized Energy that moved up and down through the various chakras (or functional centers), producing various effects—was now released from the chakra form. There was no more polarized Force. Indeed, there was no structure whatsoever—no up or down, no chakras. . . .*

*Previously, all the universes seemed built and dependent upon that foundation structure of descending and ascending Energy—such that the nature and value of any given experience was determined by the level of the chakra in which the humanly-born conscious awareness was functioning. . . . But now I saw that Reality (and Real Consciousness) was not in the least determined by any form apart from Itself. Consciousness had shown Its inherent Freedom and Priority in relation to the chakra form. It had shown Itself to be senior to that entire structure, Prior to every kind of manifestation or modification of cosmic Energy (or Shakti).*

From the “point of view” of the first six (or developmental) stages of life, Adi Da Samraj was now passing through a process associated with the sixth stage of life. But the esoteric anatomy behind this profound spontaneous shift into the Transcendental dimension of Consciousness became fully clear to Him only after His Re-Awakening to the “Bright” seven months later (in September, 1970). Soon after that Great Event (described in detail in *The Knee of Listening*), He wrote:

*I realized that, in the context of natural appearances, I am Communicated through a specific center in the body. Relative to the body, I appear to reside in the heart—but to the right side of the chest. I press upon a point approximately two inches to the right of the center of the chest. This is the seat of Reality and Real Consciousness.*

Around this time, Adi Da Samraj began to recollect, and further investigate, sayings of Ramana Maharshi in which Ramana Maharshi indicates that the doorway to the Transcendental Self in the human being is located at a psycho-physical locus in the right side of the chest. The traditions of Transcendental Realization (notably Advaita Vedanta and classical Buddhism) do not, in general, associate Realization with any psycho-physical locus—perhaps because the entire effort of the sixth-stage Realizer is to ignore psycho-physical experience and to dwell in the “cave” of Consciousness alone. Thus, the association between the causal dimension and the right side of the heart has scarcely been acknowledged in the Great Tradition.

In January 1971, in Los Angeles, the nature of Avatar Adi Da’s unique Yogic process was fully clarified. He had a revelatory experience of the structure of the “Bright” as It manifests in the context of the body-mind. He later identified this form as the “Atma Nadi”, or “Channel of Transcendental Spiritual Nectar”, alluded to in a few traditional sources (including remarks of Ramana Maharshi), but without any evidence of an experiential awareness of its structure. Adi Da Samraj writes in *The Knee of Listening*:

*That morning (as I sat in meditation with two of my devotees), my body suddenly jolted and twisted strongly on its spinal axis as*

*the “Bright” Divine Transcendental Spiritual Current moved up from my heart, via the right side, to the crown of my head, and above—even into the most ascended Matrix of the “Bright” Divine Transcendental Spiritual Power, infinitely above the body and the cosmic domain. In the instant of that ascent, there was a loud cracking sound (also heard by the others in the room), as if my neck had been broken. And, in that instant in which the Atma Nadi showed Its “regenerated” Form in me, I (as had no one else before me) directly observed Its Shape. It is an S-Shaped Form, beginning in the right side of the bodily apparent heart (but including the entire heart region), then ascending in a curve along the front side of the upper chest, then passing backwards (through the throat), then curving upwards again (but via the back of the skull), finally curving toward the crown of the head (and, from thence, to the Matrix of Light infinitely above the crown of the head). Therefore, it is this Ultimate (or truly “regenerated”) Form (or Most Ultimate Realization) of the Atma Nadi—this “regenerated” Circuit and Current of Spiritual Love-Bliss, Which passes in an S-Shaped double-curve, front to back, from the heart (on the right side) to the crown of the head and to the Matrix of Light infinitely above the crown of the head—that I declare to be the perfect Form, the Form of Truth, the Form of Reality, the Form of the Heart. I call that “regenerated” Form (experienced in the living context of the total body-mind) “the ‘Bright’”. Even from birth, I have Known the “Bright”. It has, ever since my birth, been the guiding and revealing foundation of my life. And the “Bright” (in Its Totality) is the most ultimate Realization and revelation of my “Brightly”-born life.*

### No “Argument” Between Consciousness and Energy

The regeneration of this Ultimate Form in the case of Adi Da Samraj is momentous beyond comprehension. What His Realization reveals is the unique structure that resolves what one could call the traditional esoteric “argument” between the “Consciousness point of view” and the “Energy point of view”. The Sages, drawn to the causal root, declare the pristine depth of Consciousness to be the only Truth. The Yogic Realizers, turned up toward the sahasrar,



regard the force of Spiritual Energy to be the means of Realization. But the existence of a connection between the right side of the heart and the sahasrar has never been comprehended or Realized. That connection is the fully Awakened Atma Nadi—the living Current that inherently Stands between the right side of the heart and the Matrix of Light Above. This Realization is beyond both the fifth stage of life and the sixth stage of life. Atma Nadi is the esoteric structure of a further stage of life—the seventh stage of life, a Realization that has never before been described. In the seventh stage of life, Reality is Self-Revealed as both Consciousness and Energy, or Conscious Light—the “Bright”. And that Realization is Non-conditional, requiring no effort or intention to maintain. In the words of Adi Da Samraj, it is “Open Eyes”—the “Perfect Knowledge” of Reality.

Such is the Realization of the Divine Avataric Master, Adi Da Samraj, and such is the nature of His Transcendental Spiritual Transmission.

### The Necessity to Prepare for the Ultimate Practice

In approaching the “Reality-Teachings” in this book—both the traditional texts and Avatar Adi Da’s own Teachings—one cannot merely start presuming the Ultimate Position that they describe, any more than an infant can suddenly decide to become an adult. This point is made in all the traditional texts in this book, and by Adi Da Samraj Himself: A preparatory process of growth must be embraced by those who aspire to practice the Ultimate Teaching.

One morning, while discussing with a devotee various scholarly issues relating to the traditional texts, Adi Da Samraj made this point:

*The Work I have done in The Gnosticon is an effort to make the traditions speak plain, completely apart from all other kinds of concerns, including scholarly conventions and purposes. This book is about approaching these texts entirely on the presumption that Truth is the matter of importance—because that is the mode, or disposition, of the texts themselves. These texts have to do with the ultimate matter of Truth—which is, therefore, beyond action, beyond all purposiveness.*

*The texts I have selected in this book have no direct concern for social morality, and so forth. Nonetheless, they invariably mention that this is an Ultimate Teaching, only for those who have developed up to a point, and that there are preliminaries required. It is presumed that one who is receiving these Teachings must have brought the body-mind under control, have disciplined it, purified it. As such a practitioner, you are mature enough to receive the Ultimate Teaching, because you are free enough in your energy and attention to examine the Great Matter and realize It to be true. You do not need any argument other than the Truth Itself. All of that has become unnecessary because of your state of preparedness.*

*The enterprises of social morality are largely in the domain of the common social order of the first three stages of life, the common world. Conventional religion is largely a political and social institution that exists to bring about an idealization of human behavior, to bring people to function in a manner that is expected socially. It is not about Realization. It is about social morality.*

*Having sufficiently gone through that school, and the schools beyond that—the esoteric kind of training that purifies and balances and straightens—then there is the Ultimate Teaching. That is the context in which all the ancient Reality-Teachings appeared. It is always in a context beyond the active life.*

*These texts are not a general message to everybody: “Stop all of your activity and just contemplate.” This Teaching is only uttered to uniquely prepared individuals. Otherwise, the message is as it is given in the temples. That is the message that is upheld by these texts and traditions that are about Ultimate Realization. These were not presumed to be common messages for everybody.*

*Nowadays, it is presumed that everything must be a message for everybody. And, along with that, comes the presumption that it has to be adapted to everybody in some sense—in other words, you have to eliminate demands. This is part of what I have had to Work intensively to counter. The Ultimate Teaching can be given to everyone, but there are requirements. The traditional position was that the Ultimate Teaching should not be given to everyone, because there are requirements.*

—February 1, 2006

At this point, Adi Da Samraj laughed. And He concluded, “It is essentially the same position. It is just a different time and place.”

The preparation for practicing Ultimate Teachings is necessarily a process of calming and bringing to order the otherwise casually wandering energies of body and mind. What was prized traditionally as a sign of true preparation was the virtue of whole bodily equanimity, the deep calm that results from the purifying disciplines required by one’s Spiritual Master.

One of the Sages represented in this book is Shankara (ca. 800 CE), who systematized the teachings of the Upanishads into what became the Advaitic, or “non-dual”, tradition of Vedanta. Shankara is highly praised by Adi Da Samraj as the individual in the Great Tradition who most fully acknowledged and insisted upon the entire range of preliminary practices for anyone who aspires to the non-dual Truth:

*Shankara’s teachings embrace the totality of the tradition of Hinduism, which was the tradition within which he was active. He covers modes of discipline and approach that correspond to what I call the stages of life. He accounts for devotional practice (or Bhakti Yoga), the practice of selfless service (or Karma Yoga), the practice of mystical disciplines (or Raja Yoga), and the practice of disciplines relating to Spiritual Energy (such as Kundalini Yoga, and so on)—as well as the practice of Abiding as Consciousness Itself (or Jnana Yoga), which he regarded as the ultimate mode of practice. He also accounts for formal renunciation (or sannyas) as being the mode of life-discipline associated with Ultimate Realization. He was not teaching in any mode that was dissociated from the Yogic traditions (such as the Kundalini tradition). He simply understood those traditions as preliminary to the ultimate process.*

*So do I. I have My own language relative to all that. The particularities and details of My own Teaching are unique. But nevertheless, they coincide with Shankara’s tradition of understanding.*

—April 21, 2005

However, both historically and in the present day, there are those who claim that such preparation is not necessary, and that all one needs to do to become a Jnani (a “knower” of Truth) is to

enquire into the root of “I”, or ponder the great non-dual statements of the Upanishads, or engage some such philosophical or contemplative practice. But, Adi Da Samraj repeatedly emphasizes in *The GnosticON*—in unison with the genuine tradition of the Sages—that, without profound preparation, such efforts are fruitless and deluded:

*There are modes or schools or tendencies in the Indian tradition which attribute a kind of exclusiveness to Jnana—seeming to indicate that nothing but Jnana is the Truth, or acceptable, and (thus) discounting the necessity for preliminary sadhana. But that is a misplaced doctrine. And no such statement is to be found in Shankara’s writings.*

—October 22, 2005

A relatively recent expression of the traditional wisdom that preliminary practice is necessary is found in an exchange between Swami Vivekananda and a householder devotee, Haripada Mitra:

*“Swamiji, will you kindly chalk out the path that I should follow?” Swamiji replied, “First, try to bring the mind under control, no matter what the process is. Everything else will follow as a matter of course. And knowledge—the non-dualistic realization—is very hard to attain. Know that to be the highest human goal. But before one reaches there, one has to make a long preparation and a prolonged effort. The company of holy men and dispassion are the means to it. There is no other way.”<sup>8</sup>*

### Discriminating Between Dualism and Non-Dualism

What has been understood traditionally as “non-dual” Realization is not always what Shankara (and the other Sages represented in *The GnosticON*) meant by “non-dual”. Shankara’s “point of view” is clear in the following quotation from *Viveka-Chudamani*, one of the principal treatises traditionally attributed to him:

*Give up identification with (the physical body and its) family, clan, name, form, and stage of life. These are based on nothing better than a rotting corpse. Give up also the attributes of the subtle body,*

*such as the feeling that one does acts and enjoys individual experiences. Realize your true nature as undifferentiated unbroken bliss.<sup>9</sup>*

Shankara is indicating here that true Realization is beyond both the gross and the subtle dimensions. In his understanding, there is no “one” left in the Realized state, but only the One Reality. In contrast, other traditions and texts speak of a dualistic Realization—the continuance of a conscious distinction between the individual self and the Absolute, even in the experience of union, expressed through such typical phrasings as “the self and world are, themselves, Divine”, indicating that there is some “one” (or a “self”) that is presumed to “survive” in the Realized state.

In His Instruction on how to apply the tool of the seven stages of life to understanding the traditions, Adi Da Samraj points to just such differences as this. In Avatar Adi Da’s seven stages paradigm, Shankara represents the sixth stage “point of view”, while the “point of view” that “the self and the world are, themselves, Divine” is describing a Realization of the fifth stage type. As Avatar Adi Da points out, that fifth stage “point of view” is not, in fact, non-dual—even though it may seem to be so, and is sometimes claimed to be so.

Adi Da Samraj found Himself at the crux of this debate in His last dialogue with Swami Muktananda. After His Re-Awakening to the “Bright”, Avatar Adi Da looked for any traditional parallels or indicators by which to understand His Realization. But, apart from the previously mentioned references made by Ramana Maharshi, He found none. And so, when Swami Muktananda visited California toward the end of 1970, Adi Da Samraj was moved to communicate to His Guru what had occurred in His case, to see if Swami Muktananda would confirm its validity. On that occasion, He found Swami Muktananda unwilling to engage the subject directly, and so, in 1973, after He had begun to Teach, Adi Da Samraj made a pilgrimage to India with the intention of asking for a formal audience with Swami Muktananda in which to settle the matter.

On August 7, 1973, at Ganeshpuri, Avatar Adi Da approached Swami Muktananda in the presence of a few people, including Professor Jain (the translator), and Amma—two of Swami Muktananda’s



Adi Da Samraj with Swami Muktananda, India 1973

principal devotees. Adi Da Samraj bowed and offered a gift at the feet of His Guru (a finely-made pith helmet). Then Professor Jain read the questions, submitted by Adi Da Samraj the previous day, presenting Adi Da’s descriptions of the heart on the right as the locus of Ultimate Realization, and of the esoteric structural connection between the heart and the sahasrar (in the form of Atma Nadi).

In his responses, Swami Muktananda remained firm in the traditional “point of view” of the Yogis—that all the forms of esoteric practice, including Jnana Yoga (or the Yoga of Transcendental Knowledge, as opposed to subtle experience), lead to the same goal, which is at the sahasrar, the absolute seat of Realization. “The Divinity dwelling in the sahasrar is the Supreme Divinity,” he said. At the same time, Swami Muktananda reiterated his own understanding of Enlightenment as a vision at the ajna chakra—the “blue pearl”, which he understood to be the “bindu”, or “point of origin”, from which all thoughts and forms arise as an endless emanation of the Divine. “The mind”, he said, “is nothing but the Lord.”

This “point of view”, as Adi Da Samraj points out, is not an expression of non-duality either as the sixth stage Realizers, such as Shankara, express it, or as Avatar Adi Da Himself expresses it,

in terms of the seventh stage of life. In the fifth stage “point of view” there are two realities—the world and the Divine, but the world is deemed to be made of the same “stuff” as the Divine. The sixth stage traditions insist that Reality is only Transcendental—the Very Divine Self, or Nirvana—and that the world is mere illusion, not real, not in fact existing. This is the fundamental philosophy of non-dualism as declared in the traditional texts in this book—both the Advaitic texts and the Buddhist texts.

Adi Da Samraj identifies this basic sixth stage understanding and Realization as the pinnacle of the Great Tradition. However, as He has Revealed, the seventh stage of life is the supreme unfolding of Truth. The fact that conditions appear to exist ceases to be an issue that must be resolved—either by declaring conditions to be “Divine” (in the fifth stage manner) or by seeking to turn away from conditions and affirm the exclusive Reality of Consciousness (in the sixth stage manner).

When Adi Da Samraj Re-Awakened to the “Bright”, He experienced the utter dissolution of all dilemma relative to conditions. In the seventh stage of life, there is no need to account for the worlds of experience. Rather, Atma Nadi radiates boundlessly to Infinity and there is no inwardness whatsoever, no “difference” between “outer” and “inner” and “root”. The gross, subtle, and causal structure is seen to be just the functional psycho-physical design of the human body-mind, and even of all of conditional existence. Beyond the entire esoteric anatomy, beyond the apparent structure even of Atma Nadi, there is Only the “Bright”, the One Reality and Truth—the Indivisible Oneness of Consciousness and Energy (or Light), Which Avatar Adi Da calls “Conscious Light”—in and as Which all conditions arise and pass as mere modifications of Itself. Thus, in the seventh stage of life, there is the most profound recognition of the status of conditions, or, in the words of Adi Da Samraj, there is the “Divine Self-Recognition” of all that appears.

Adi Da Samraj speaks here of this complete non-dual Truth, which was the subject of His difference with Swami Muktananda:

*Divine Self-Realization is Freedom from the duality of the conditionally manifested illusion of a world independent of That Which Is One.*

*To Realize That Which Is One is to Divinely Self-Recognize that which is apparently two, and, ultimately, to Outshine it.*

*This was the Argument I presented to Swami (Baba) Muktananda.*

*He used arguments associated with the tradition of Kashmir Shaivism: “You yourself are Siva, or the Divine Principle, and everything is the Divine Principle”—meaning everything in and as itself is the Divine Principle. On the basis of such a view, “playing” in the “world” could be justified. Being attracted to this, that, and the other thing—and even defining subtle “objects” as being the Truth—was the sign of His philosophy.*

*What I was Arguing is that there is Only the One to be Realized, Prior to all conditions. If That is most perfectly Realized, then conditions are Divinely Self-Recognized. To say that conditions are (in and of themselves) Divine is not the Divine Self-Recognition That I Declare. In the Divine Self-Recognition I Declare, conditions are transcended and (ultimately) Outshined.*

*In the understanding Baba Muktananda declared, using the language of Kashmir Shaivism, “objects” are presumed to be Divine. And, thus, “objects” remain motivators. Therefore, Baba Muktananda justified the field of “two”, not the field of One.*

*My exchange with Baba Muktananda was a profound philosophical confrontation that had to do with Truth. He stood for His traditional position, and I had no choice but to stand for My Divine Avataric Position.*

*That Conversation was a profoundly serious matter, which I undertook formally. It was a very traditional exchange, in fact—ultimately, it was a confrontation of Teachers.*

*The traditions are filled with these kinds of debates, and the occasion on which I addressed questions to Baba Muktananda should be appreciated as a great confrontation in those terms. It was about a very fundamental and profound issue that cuts to the core of popular illusions.*

*The Reality-Way of Adidam that I have Revealed is a unique Way. It has unique characteristics as a philosophical presentation relative to the matter of Reality and Truth. My relationship with Baba Muktananda is one of the means to illustrate the distinction.*

—January 15, 2005



Swami Muktananda made it plain that he understood the “confrontation” represented by his dialogue with Avatar Adi Da as an instance of the long-standing “argument” between the school of Kashmir Saivism (with which Swami Muktananda was associated) and that of Advaita Vedanta. He did not accept the primacy of what he perceived to be Advaitic propositions. There was nothing more to be said between Avatar Adi Da and Swami Muktananda. Nevertheless, Avatar Adi Da would always love and honor Swami Muktananda, and always praise and speak of him as a Great Being of extraordinary Yogic Realization.

Another of the traditional arguments—to which Adi Da Samraj refers extensively in *The Gnosticon*—is the debate between Advaita Vedanta and Buddhism. His insight into the philosophical, historical, and cultural roots of their differences—and into their inherent underlying unity (illuminated in His renderings of their great texts)—is an unparalleled contribution to the understanding of how non-dualism has been interpreted and practiced in the Great Tradition.

### The “Radical” Understanding of the ego

Going beyond dualism in real practice, rather than as mere philosophy, is a great matter. It means transcending the dual structure of conventional awareness—the sense of “self” and “other”, or the “I” over against “everything else”—in a process of ego-dissolution. Oriental culture, on the whole, takes a negative view of the body and of physical, or gross, existence. Thus, there is a tendency to dissociate from conditions and to idealize the ascetical life as a way to minimize or eliminate the ego and “get to” What is Beyond. But, as Adi Da Samraj has always pointed out, asceticism—in and of itself—does not lead to the dissolution of the ego, because it is, ultimately, an attempt by the ego to eliminate the ego! To really transcend the ego-“I” (or the very sense of existence as a separate self) requires a “radical” approach.

On April 25, 1972, the evening that He began His formal Teaching-Work, Adi Da Samraj expounded His own “radical” understanding of what the ego-“I” is, as opposed to the traditional understanding.

*Ramana Maharshi advised seekers to find out who it is that asks the question, thinks the thought, and so on. But that “who” is, in Reality, not an “entity”. When Ramana Maharshi spoke, He used the symbolic language of Advaita Vedanta. . . . The imagery of this traditional description of the process of Realizing Truth deals in statics, “things”-in-space. Therefore, in that traditional description, there is the ego—the objectified, solidified self.*

*But I speak in terms of process, or movement. I speak in terms of concepts of experience with which the modern mind is more familiar—and which more accurately reflect the actual nature of conditionally manifested reality. Thus, I do not speak of the ego as an “object” within a conceptual universe of objects. The concept of the “static ego” is no longer very useful—and, indeed, it is false and misleading.*

*Therefore, what has traditionally been called “the ego” is rightly understood to be an activity. And “radical” self-understanding is that direct seeing of the fundamental (and always present) activity that is suffering, ignorance, distraction, motivation, and dilemma. When that activity is most perfectly understood, then there is Spontaneous and Non-conditional Realization of That Which had previously been excluded from conscious awareness—That Which Is Always Already the Case.*

—My “Bright” Word

The activity of the ego, as Adi Da Samraj explained that night—and always continued to emphasize—is what He calls “self-contraction”, a recoil in the entire psycho-physical being. From this ego-act stem all our notions about reality. We see an apparent world of separate beings and things from a point of awareness that we call “I”. This is the world we presume to live in, the world we think is real. But it is real only from a limited “point of view”. And it is not a “free” world. It is a world fraught with the bondage of frenetic seeking—the never-ending search to overcome the core ego-stress that is our fundamental (and self-created) suffering.

Such is the root not only of the searches of ordinary life, but of the religious and Spiritual quest as well. In the words of Adi Da Samraj, there are, in fact, “three egos”, or the same activity of self-contraction operating at each level of the human mechanism—

gross, subtle, and causal. The ego-search at the gross level is the wandering in all the possibilities of the waking body-mind. The same search at the subtle level is the pursuit of mystical experience and Spiritual goals. The causal level of the search is the effort to get beyond all experience and all sense of “I” through one or another technique.

During His junior year at Columbia University, Adi Da Samraj had a sudden, profound experience that revealed to Him this depth structure of self-contraction and the Condition that is Prior to it. The context for this experience was a bold experiment that Adi Da Samraj had been engaging for the previous two years. Out of utter despair at finding Truth in any traditional source, and certainly not in the university environment in which He was living, He had chosen an extreme course. On the streets of New York City and in every kind of circumstance, He had abandoned Himself to the gamut of experience, unrestrained by social taboos, in the certainty that Truth, or God, or Reality would be revealed through the intensity of His search. He writes in *The Knee of Listening*:

*On this extraordinary night, I sat at my desk late into the night. I had exhausted my seeking, such that I felt there were no more books to read, no possible kinds of ordinary experience that could exceed what I had already embraced. There seemed no outstanding sources for any new excursion, no remaining and conclusive possibilities. I was drawn into the interior tension of my mind that held all of that seeking—every impulse and alternative, every motive in the form of my desiring. I contemplated it as a whole, a dramatic singleness, and it moved me into a profound shape of life-feeling, such that all the vital centers in my body and mind appeared like a long funnel of contracted planes that led on to an infinitely regressed and invisible image. I observed this deep sensation of conflict and endlessly multiplied contradictions, such that I was surrendered to its very shape, as if to experience it perfectly and to be it.*

*Then, quite suddenly, in a moment, I experienced a total revolution in my body-mind, and (altogether) in my humanly-born conscious awareness. An absolute sense of understanding opened and arose at the extreme end of all this sudden contemplation. And*

*all of the motions of me that moved down into that depth appeared to reverse their direction at some unfathomable point. The rising impulse caused me to stand, and I felt a surge of Force draw up out of my depths and expand, Filling my entire body and every level of my humanly-born conscious awareness with wave on wave of the most Beautiful and Joyous Energy.*

*I felt absolutely mad, but the madness was not of a desperate kind. There was no seeking and no dilemma within it, no question—no unfulfilled motive, not a single object or presence outside myself.*

*I could not contain the Energy in my small room. I ran out of the building and through the streets. I thought, if I could only find someone to talk to, to communicate to about this “Thing”. The Energy in my body was overwhelming, and there was an ecstasy in every cell that was almost intolerable in its Pressure, Light, and Force.*

*It took me many years to understand that revolution in my living being. . . . It marked the rising in me of fundamental and Non-conditional Life, and it, in its moment, removed every shadow of dilemma and ignorance from the mind, on every level, and all its effects in the body.*

While the experience itself passed, a knowledge arose from it, which Adi Da Samraj calls “radical self-understanding”:

*I saw that the Truth or Reality was a matter of the absence of all contradictions, of every trace of conflict, opposition, division, or desperate motivation within. Where there is no seeking, no contradiction, there is only the Non-conditional Knowledge and Power that is Reality. This was the first aspect of that sudden Clarity.*

*In this State beyond all contradiction, I also saw that Freedom and Joy is not attained, that It is not dependent on any form, object, idea, progress, or experience.*

—*The Knee of Listening*

The Columbia experience took place in 1960, when Adi Da Samraj was only twenty years old. And so, even before He approached His Gurus, He had understood the ego as self-contraction, and seen the worlds of seeking that it generates. He had made the “radical” discovery that the very search for Truth is the

obstruction to Realizing Truth, because seeking is always based on the presumption and activity of separation from That Which Exists.

In His youth, Avatar Adi Da threw Himself without reserve into the process required to re-Awaken as the “Bright”. His time with His Gurus was a total Submission to them, as His Masters, in order to learn and perfectly combine with the esoteric Realizations (and associated methods) they offered. But all the while, “radical self-understanding” was His steady foundation, until the Realization of the “Bright” that was coincident with His Birth emerged again in its fullness.

Adi Da Samraj sometimes refers to the first six stages of life as the “psycho-biography” of the ego, because these stages represent all the potential that the apparent persona can experience or achieve, by “playing” its structural mechanism—gross, subtle, and causal. In the midst of that vast range of possibility, however, the fundamental ego-activity, the motivated search, remains the same. At the causal depth, all that is left is the root-ego, the core sense of separateness, just the awareness of “I” and “other”, and the effort to resolve that last duality.

As Avatar Adi Da has always Taught, human beings in the general case simply want to fulfill their ego-search, at whatever level of reality they are focused—gross, subtle, or causal. The disposition of “radical self-understanding” is to transcend the root “clench” in consciousness that is generating the search at every level.

The youthful Adi Da Samraj constantly returned to His intensive investigation of the question: “What is consciousness?” But nothing He experienced in the company of His Teachers could answer this question. He knew intuitively that the Truth lay in the mysterious coincidence between the Transcendental Reality and the apparent world. The answer came, in the end, through the force of His own “radical” understanding of the ego—which enabled Him to transcend all the partial messages of Truth delivered through the psycho-physics of the body-mind and to Re-Awaken to the “Bright”, the Intrinsically egoless Condition, beyond all seeking and all “difference”.

## The Perfect Tradition

In 1980, two devotees of Adi Da Samraj visited Chogyam Trungpa (a well-known Tibetan teacher, then working in America). They showed him video footage of Adi Da Samraj sitting in silent Darshan and speaking to devotees. After receiving the presentation, Chogyam Trungpa expressed his respect for the authenticity of Adi Da Samraj, and made the comment: “It is tremendously difficult to begin a new tradition.”

In fact, when Adi Da Samraj began to Teach, it was not His intention to found a new tradition. Part of His purpose in requesting the formal interview with Swami Muktananda in 1973 was to determine whether He could establish His own Ashram and impart His Revelation of the “Bright” in association with, and continuous with, the Siddha-Lineage represented by Bhagavan Nityananda and Swami Muktananda. He was already acknowledged by Swami Muktananda as a sannyasin within that Lineage.

But this was shown not to be possible. And, so, it became clear to Adi Da that He would be required to create His own Way, from the ground up. Thus, He began to develop His Spiritual Work as a new and independent tradition—with all the sacred, cooperative, creative, organizational, cultural, and dharmic dimensions that such a profound undertaking requires. A Spiritual tradition is not merely a teaching and a series of practices, but a way of life that covers all modes of experience and aspiration. It is the highest cultural endeavor, which ordinarily develops organically over a very long period of time. The practices of the fifth and sixth stage type that are now engaged in the West did not originate there. They came out of the ancient Eastern cultures, transported and transmuted into a Western context by the efforts of individual teachers and the publication of traditional texts.

Thus, there is no precedent for the effort that Adi Da Samraj made to establish, in His lifetime, the Reality-Way of “Perfect Knowledge” (or the Reality-Way of Adidam) as a new tradition—a total culture of life and practice that includes and serves the process of Realization from the beginner’s level to the ultimate stages, or “Perfect Practice”, of the Way. At the same time, His

Reality-Way of “Perfect Knowledge”, does not, as He says here, appear “in a vacuum”:

*There is an authoritative source-tradition within the Great Tradition, with which the Reality-Way of Adidam is continuous, and which, therefore, provides a basis for understanding the Reality-Way of Adidam. The uniqueness of the Reality-Way I have Revealed and Given does not exist in a vacuum. The Reality-Way of Adidam is, ultimately, the Perfect Tradition, but there is a dimension at the heights of all the Transcendentalist (or sixth stage) schools within the Great Tradition that is compatible with Adidam—although lacking the final stage of Most Perfect Divine Self-Realization, or the seventh stage of life.*

*The previous modes of Perfect Teaching—exemplified in the traditions of Advaita Vedanta and Buddhism<sup>10</sup>—were not Perfect in the most ultimate sense that I Describe as the seventh stage of life. They were Perfect in the preliminary sense. They were precursors—but they did not achieve the Most Perfect Realization, and they do not carry the Most Perfect Revelation and Teaching. The sixth stage teachings are based in the causal dimension, which means they are yet psycho-physically based. This does not at all mean that they are to be ignored, but simply makes it plain where their views come from, and how, ultimately, the seventh stage Realization goes beyond all of that.*

*The Reality-Way of Adidam that I have Revealed and Given covers all the stages of life. It is not just a Transcendentalist Way. It covers the entire process of human possibility and Realization from the beginning—everything gross, everything subtle, everything of a causal nature. And these dimensions are not merely exploited for the sake of developing those possibilities, but “covered” in the sense that you must go beyond them, and there are disciplines that relate to all the potential kinds of experience.*

*Thus, the Reality-Way of Adidam exists with reference to the Great Tradition, but it is a universal Teaching, not an Eastern teaching.*

—April 21, 2005, and March 3, 2006

The special relationship of the Reality-Way of Adidam to Advaita Vedanta and Buddhism is clear in this book. There is much in Avatar Adi Da's renderings of these principal traditional texts that could come directly out of His own Teaching. And, as He indicates, these traditional texts point to a right and true comprehension and Realization of Reality. Some statements and passages are entirely resonant with the Disposition of the seventh stage of life—that there is no “difference” between Consciousness and the arising world. But, for the reasons explained earlier, these texts taken as a whole do not show the signs of a complete understanding and experience of that Most Ultimate Awakening.

The Reality-Way of Adidam combines and transcends the two different orientations represented by Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta—the emphasis (in Buddhism) on discriminating what is merely conditional, or “not-self”, and the emphasis (in Advaita Vedanta) on directly identifying with the Absolute Reality, or Transcendental Self. Adi Da Samraj has called His devotees to find their impulse to transcend the ego based on a “dual sensitivity”—a sensitivity to what is merely conditional and passing, on the one hand, and to What is Non-conditional, Transcendental, Inherently Spiritual, and Self-Evidently Divine, on the other.

The means of this dual sensitivity is not “mindfulness” (in the Buddhist sense) or an effort to locate the Ultimate Reality beyond objects (in the Advaitic sense). The means of practice and of Realization in the Reality-Way of Adidam is Adi Da Samraj Himself and His direct Transmission of the “Bright”, the Conscious Light That Is Reality.

In the Reality-Way of Adidam, the devotional relationship to Adi Da Samraj is the circumstance in which He Grants His great Transmission of the “Bright”. It is not possible—as He repeatedly states in this book—to simply “work toward” the “Perfect Knowledge” of Reality, or, otherwise, merely declare It to be so. That “Knowledge” must be Given, directly Transmitted, from the Source. Avatar Adi Da is always Radiating His Inherently “Bright” Condition—but, before His devotee can become fully available to His Transcendental Spiritual Transmission, “radical self-understanding” must unlock the self-contracted body-mind,



and let Him in. This most fundamental capability to transcend egoity, moment to moment, is also a Gift of His Grace that awakens on the basis of profound preparation and the Gift of His Transcendental Spiritual Transmission.

Devotional Communion with the Divine Avataric Master, Adi Da Samraj, and the observation, understanding, and transcending of self-contraction are essential to the Way He has Given. This is true from the beginning—until, in the Awakening to the seventh stage of life, the ego is most perfectly understood and transcended. Even so, devotion to Avatar Adi Da does not cease. Rather, devotion to Him is perfected in the seventh stage of life, through utter identification with His “Bright” Divine State. All the various disciplines and practices that Adi Da Samraj gives to purify and bring equanimity to the body-mind are merely supportive to the life of devotional Communion with Him, and never techniques or methods to be applied independently. No method, or technique, can dissolve the fundamental presumption of un-Enlightenment, which Avatar Adi Da has shown to be the presumption of separateness—of “I” and “other”. The interpretation of all experience as “object” to the “I” holds the ego-self in place as the presumed center of existence. In the life of devotional Communion with Avatar Adi Da, this egoic vision is loosened, as a devotee described in a letter after an occasion of sitting with Him in 2006:

*Sometimes, through the Grace of Your Transmission, the world of objects becomes suddenly unfamiliar and disconnected, including sensations in the body-mind. It is as if the organizing principle that makes “sense” of it all has dropped away.*

*Last night after sitting with You, this sensation was especially strong and disorienting. It was as though time had lost any meaning, not just the association between objects. At first, there was just the bare perceptual reality, and then it was interesting to observe how the structure in consciousness that creates familiarity gathered itself together again. And I could feel that that process is the curling in on a presumed center and that that center was the body-mind. It seemed completely arbitrary to make this presumption, but I could not stop it happening. I could only observe how this assemblage of*

*objects and states of knowledge was snapping back into its familiar pattern, like iron filings around a magnet.*

*You show how it is not a matter of trying to stop or resist any of the mechanics of experience, but simply to participate without clinging or avoidance—and locating You, as the Transcendental and Divine Knower of it all.*

The miracle of Adidam—and a primary reason it is rightly described as the “Perfect Tradition”—is that the Transmission and intuition of the seventh stage of life is given from the beginning. Whenever anyone open-heartedly Sights His bodily Form—via a photograph or a video—Adi Da Samraj simply, directly, and profoundly Reveals Reality Itself. This is the root-Realization that the entire Reality-Way of Adidam is about. The mere beholding of Him in quiet, heart-open attentiveness dissolves the edges and opacity of the physical world. An inherent underlying Radiance permeates the view, and everything, including His apparent human Form, Reveals Itself as a fluid Light of infinite Blissful depth. There is a deep relaxation of the knot of “I”, a kind of amazement at the obvious illusion of separateness by which the ordinary life is motivated. Nothing at all has happened, and yet, Reality Itself is Self-Evident and the true nature of the arising world has become obvious. It is literally nothing more than an unnecessary mirage rising and falling in the timeless Ocean of Reality. And Adi Da Samraj is That Reality. He is the Source and the Nature of What Is, Gracefully Appearing through the Agency of a human Form. All of this is shown to be simply so, and the heart breaks at the Wonder of It, and the Love of It, and the sheer sudden Truth of It.

Avatar Adi Da’s Transmission of Reality is the Source of His Way, and, therefore, of its Perfection. Ultimately, Adidam is a Divine Process of “Brightening” that exceeds all precedent and human comprehension. And yet, it is entirely real. Every detail of that Process has been Revealed by Adi Da Samraj not only in His Words, but in the most profound bodily and Transcendental Spiritual Ordeal and Sublime Signs, which His devotees witnessed daily during His Lifetime and continue to observe even now. He showed, in a manner that surpasses all the myths, what was

anciently meant by the term “Avatar”—the Descent into human Form of That Which Is Beyond—the Transcendental Spiritual Divine Condition made visible and alive to human eyes.

### The Urgency of Truth

In the Bhagavad Gita, the appearance of an Avatar is said to coincide with degenerate times and an overwhelming human need for Divine Intervention.

*Whenever a decrease of righteousness exists,  
And there is a rising up of unrighteousness,  
Then I give forth myself  
For the protection of the good. . . .  
For the sake of establishing righteousness,  
I come into being from age to age.<sup>11</sup>*

Few serious people would disagree that we are now living in such a time. The great Wisdom-Teachings of the past have ceased to be the living Truth for most human beings. Rather, a very superficial sense of Reality has replaced the natural participatory awareness of the nature of existence. It is said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing—and that is the present plight of humanity, the so-called “homo sapiens”, or “knowing” beings, among the species on planet Earth. We know enough about the laws of physics and biology to exploit—and potentially destroy—our planet, and yet we remain largely ignorant of What Is, beyond our sensory and mental experience.

Many times over, His Divine Presence Avatar Adi Da Samraj expressed His profound concern about where contemporary human culture is going. As He always pointed out, the modern world has settled for a very narrow slice of the total spectrum of human possibility.

Adi Da’s Message, in all of His writings, is that there is only one force in human affairs that can correct the terrible trajectory of the world today. The “decline and fall” of global civilization is inevitable, unless a greater knowledge of Reality can begin to

affect human culture. Locating this greater knowledge, and bringing it to bear in real human life, both individual and collective, is the most critical issue for all humankind. To convey the urgency of Truth, the Truth about Reality, was the incomparably creative lifetime-effort of Avatar Adi Da Samraj. His offering of *The Gnosticon* is part of that Work. In this extraordinary book, He explains the Great Tradition to itself, illumines its hidden treasures, and Reveals the Perfect Tradition that resolves the great wisdom-search in a Place never fully found before. ■

