

TOWARDS A NEW TANTRIC METAPHYSICS OF CREATION



Peter Wilberg

2007

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Quotation:

Now - and this will seem like a contradiction in terms - there is Non-Being. It is a state, not of nothingness, but a state in which probabilities and possibilities are known and anticipated but blocked from expression.

From *The Seth Material* by Jane Roberts

Mantram:

Anuttara is that ultimate Awareness - to begin with a primordial Awareness of potentiality or Non-Being (*Asat*). It is out of which alone all *actual* beings first come to be or 'be-come'. Each such being is imbued with a primordial Awareness of Being that is the essential 'I' consciousness of *Shiva* and the very Being (*Sat*) of Awareness (*Chit*). Each being is also the expression of that autonomous and dynamic Power of Actualisation - of 'Be-ing' - that is *Shakti*.

Peter Wilberg

Twin Triads:

Two central metaphysical threefolds or triads (*Trika*) are articulated in the metaphysics of The New Yoga:

1. The triad that consist of Awareness of Being (Actuality), Non-Being (Potentiality), and Becoming (Actualisation or 'Be-ing').
2. The triad or Awareness, Experience and, thirdly - Selfhood, Identity or 'I'-ness.
'I'-ness or 'selfhood' is understood as the reflection and expression of awareness in experience - thus also as its *self*-recognition and *self*-expression of awareness - its selfhood or 'I'-ness.

Basic Questions

1. What is 'a being'? An individual 'being' or *jiva* is simply any bounded element or 'unit' of awareness (*chitanu*) or 'consciousness unit' in Seth's terminology). Bodyhood in essence is nothing but boundedness. Therefore any bounded 'Awareness Unit' is also what I have termed elsewhere an 'Awareness Body'.
2. What is 'an experience'? Field awareness experiencing itself through particular differentiated and bounded expressions of it - through 'beings' understood as *chitanu*, *jiva*, 'consciousness units' (Seth) or 'Awareness Units'.

Implicit in this: 'I'-ness or selfhood as a two-way or dialectical *relation*:

1. Awareness as a field *experiencing* itself - and thereby a sense of self - in and through the multiple elements, beings or 'awareness units' (my preferred term) emerging within it.
2. Each element or unit in the field being both something experienced within and by the field as such but also experiencing itself as an expression of that field.

Yet where does it all begin and how does it all come to be? Here I find the account of the metaphysics of creation from *The Seth Material* by Jane Roberts (see Appendix) significant.

The account includes the following statements:

"At first, in your terms, all of probable reality existed as nebulous dreams within the consciousness of *All That Is*. Later, the unspecific nature of those 'dreams' grew more particular and vivid. The dreams became recognisable, one from the other, until they drew the conscious notice of *All That Is*. And with curiosity and yearning, *All That Is* paid more attention to its own dreams. It then purposely gave them more and more detail, and yearned toward this diversity and grew to love that which was not yet separate from itself. It gave consciousness and imagination to personalities while they were still but within Its dreams. They also yearned to be actual. Potential individuals, in your terms, had consciousness before the beginning or any beginning as you know it, then. They clamoured to be released into actuality, and *All That Is*, in unspeakable sympathy, sought within Itself for the means. In its massive imagination, It understood the cosmic multiplication of consciousness that could not occur within that framework. Actuality was necessary if these probabilities were to be given birth. *All That Is* saw then, an infinity of probable, conscious individuals, and foresaw all possible developments, but they were locked within It until It found the means. This was in your terms a primary cosmic dilemma, and one with which It wrestled until *All That Is* was completely involved and enveloped within that cosmic problem."

My tantric interpretation is as follows: The ultimate divine awareness (*Anuttara*) is not only unbounded (and therefore not 'a' being) but is first of all an awareness of Non-Being in its pure form - as a still *undifferentiated* realm of Potentiality. Put in different terms, *Anuttara*, as the Absolute is already itself a *relation* between Awareness (*Chit*) and Non-Being (*Asat*). Where there is relation, there is a boundary state: in this case uniting and distinguishing the Absolute as (a) Pure Awareness (*Chit*) and (b) Non-Being as a plenum of Pure Potentiality/Power (*Shakti*). In this relation Awareness still does not know itself as 'a being'. Yet it is aware of itself as having the character of Being (*Sat*), albeit solely by virtue of its relation to Non-Being (*Asat*), experienced as an infinite inward plenum (*purna*) of Potentiality within it.

Being as such is not the same as 'a being', nor is the pure Awareness of Being the same as a differentiated sense of selfhood or 'I'-ness. In the *Tantraloka*, as interpreted by SenSharma in *The Philosophy of Sadhana*

(see extract in Appendix 2) the stage of primordial Selfhood or 'I'-ness (*Ahamta*) of *Shiva* is called *Purna Aham*, *Purna Ahamta* or *Purnahamta* - in my terms a pure Awareness of Being (experienced as 'light') but one embracing and rooted in an Awareness of the 'dark' fullness or *purna* (Greek *pleroma*) of immanent potentiality or Non-Being. *Shiva* emerges from *Anuttara*, the ultimate reality, through a primordial act of Negation (*Nigraha*) whereby its all-embracing or *transcendental* fullness of Self-Being - *Purnahamata* - is withdrawn. This is what first opens or clears a primordial space (*Akasha*) in which the manifest universe (*Vishva*) that is *immanent* in Non-Being as *Shakti* can manifest as *Shiva's* Other - as *Idam* or all that is *experienced* in awareness.

The Primary Cleavage:

Anuttara, as the Ultimate Awareness, embraces both Being and Non-Being - for the latter too, consists of Potentialities of Awareness, no matter how undifferentiated. This *cleavage* of Awareness into Awareness of Being and Non-Being within *Anuttara* is the first 'step' (in our false temporal terms) towards its primordial Selfhood or 'I'-ness. The cleavage takes the form of a dynamic boundary between Awareness of Being and Awareness of Non-Being - the latter being an awareness of something wholly *Other-than-Being* and *Other-than-Self*. This is *Idam* - the universe (*Vishva*) immanent in Non-Being as *Shakti* - which is both the divine Other of *Shiva* and the negative of that pure Awareness of Being (*Aham*) which is but the *Shiva* side of the Primary Cleavage of *Anuttara* - the cleavage itself being the essence of *Shiva-Shakti*. From the very 'beginning' then, Selfhood has a relational character, in the 'first' place as a relation between Selfhood itself (as an undifferentiated Awareness of Being or *Sat*) and its opposite. This Otherness is Awareness of that realm of pure Potentiality that is 'Non-Being' - in tantric terms the womb of Great Mother Goddess or *Mahadevi* that is the source of all power or *Shakti*. In what way did 'God', *Shiva* or 'All That Is' (Seth) evolve from this primordial cleavage within *Anuttara* - and in such a way as to manifest the entire universe and all realities, including all the countless units of awareness that constitute 'beings' in contrast to Being or Non-Being? 'First of all' or 'to 'begin with' (the terms being bracketed because creation is continuous and instantaneous) *Anuttara* - the ultimate, primordial and divine-universal awareness - is not properly describable as 'All That IS' for 'at first' nothing specific yet IS but rather its opposite - 'No-Thingness' or Non-Being. Yet as Seth teaches, Non-Being is not an empty void but a *plenum* or *pleroma* (Skt *purna*) of potential 'consciousnesses' (Units of Awareness) yearning to be released as Actualities - as 'beings'. The Primary Cleavage is the boundary state of Actualisation through which the Potentialities of Awareness darkly latent or potential in Non-Being, are constantly differentiating, multiplying and at the same time Coming-to-Be as beings, as bounded Awareness Units. This type of understanding was already implicit in the dialectical unfoldment of the opening trinity of Hegel's Science of Logic: Being, Non-Being and Becoming - leading to 'Determinate' being(s).

The Primary Cosmic Dilemma:

So much then, for the Primary Cleavage, but how does this help us understand the 'primary cosmic dilemma' of 'All That Is' described by Seth?

"Did All That Is solve the dilemma through realising that it did not own or possess its dreams? In realising this did All That Is understand that it was also dreamt or expressed - that there was indeed something beyond itself? In letting go of its delusion that it owned or possessed its dreams, did All That Is realise that it was just 'Shiva', and not the Ultimate [Anuttara] ? Did it realise that it was the expression or language of Anuttara, and that its own language was its dreams? In that moment, did All That Is become the Trika? Anuttara, Shiva, Shakti? And in that moment, did All That Is learn how to express itself, set free its dreams and realise its own freedom through realising that it also was an expression?"
Andrew Gara

The validity of what is suggested by these questions is confirmed by a hint given by Seth himself:

"It is conceivable then that It [All That Is] has evolved in your terms so long ago that It has forgotten Its origin ..."

Seth's description of 'All That Is' has all the characteristics of 'a' *being*, just as people tend to think of Shiva as a being. In contrast, the *Tantraloka* acknowledges the ultimate (*Anuttara*) as something more primordial than 'Shiva' as a God-being – more primordial even than *Shiva-Shakti*. *Shiva-Shakti* can be understood as the Primary Cleavage as such within Anuttara – the cleavage between Awareness of Being and of Not-Being - but with the proviso that the cleavage itself is understood as a dynamic boundary state of Actualisation or Becoming – the dynamic *relation* that is the essential 'non-duality' of *Shiva* 'and' *Shakti*.

All Actual *beings* or Awareness Units can be understood as continuing to share the Primary Dilemma by virtue of bearing within them their own 'Primary Cleavage' - their own *internal* awareness of and relation to Non-Being as a realm of Potentialities. Yet if they take these potentials as their own (the bondage of 'ownness' or *Anavalamala*) it cannot release them into Actuality. They can only do so by becoming aware of themselves as part of the Awareness Field of a larger Awareness Unit, and – ultimately - as part of the Ultimate Awareness Field itself.

Becoming Gods:

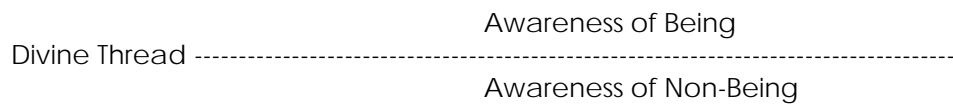
Anavamala – can also be understood as generalized state of contracted awareness defining any 'being' as any *boundary* field or unit of awareness which does not yet experience *itself* as part of a large field or unit surrounding its boundary. On the other hand, those beings who can or do experience themselves as internal expressions, boundaries and embodiments of a larger awareness field - up to and including the Ultimate Awareness Field itself - cease to be 'beings' in the ordinary sense. They cease to experience themselves as beings 'possessing' awareness of a sort they can look out or in with. Instead they are aware of their own experience, self, and Being as an expression of Awareness. They have become what I will now term *Awareness Beings* rather than

mere beings 'with' a limited awareness. What Seth describes as 'psychic gestalts' or 'entities' – up to and including 'All That Is' as a "primary gestalt" – are such Awareness Beings. Others call them 'higher beings', 'higher intelligences' or 'higher consciousnesses'. The other word for them is *gods*. Or what is the same thing - *devas* and *devis* – for the common root of the Latin *deus* and Greek *theos* is the Indo-European *div* – to shine or radiate. They are 'beings' whose whole existence consists in radiating the pure light of awareness and emanating and expressing its pure power. As such they are indeed creators, sustainers and transformers of entire universes or dimensions of reality, physical and non-physical. In tantric terms, they are beings who liberation (*Moksha*) or 'enlightenment' has enabled them to *become* 'Shivas' or become 'Buddhas' - to become *Devas* or 'Shining Ones' - 'gods'. These form part of another triad or *Trika* in The New Yoga: Awareness/Beings/Awareness Beings.

The Divine Thread:

In meditating the 'I'-ness or self-being of beings, as opposed to the primordial self-being, self or 'I'-ness of the Divine that is nothing but a pure Awareness of Being (*Chit-Sat*), the image of the universe as a string of beads on a thread or thread took on a clearer dimension of metaphysical meaning. The Primary Cleavage can be visualised as this 'Divine Thread' – an infinite line or boundary distinguishing and uniting a realm of Awareness above it (Awareness of Being) and below it (Awareness of Non-Being).

Diagram 1



I then visualised the line itself as a boundary state of actualization giving rise to bounded Units of Awareness or 'beings' represented by circles - each of which is a bounded Awareness which circumscribes both an upper realm of Being (Actuality) and a lower realm of Non-Being (Potentiality). The result – an image of beads on a string or thread.

Diagram 2

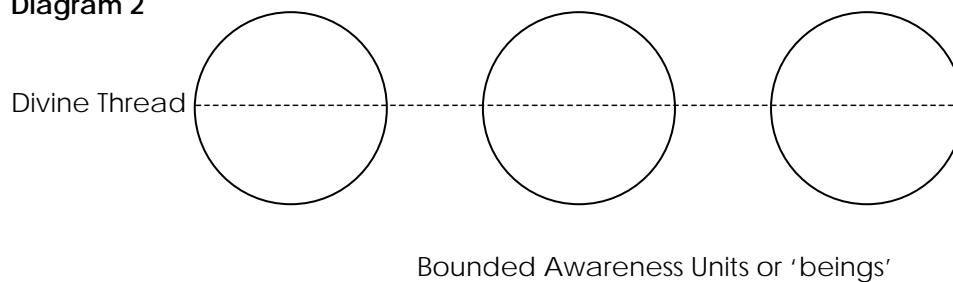


Diagram 3

Each part of the cleavage line circumscribed by a given Unit of Awareness is in turn a point of manifestation or Actualization of other internal Units of Awareness – represented by circles within each circle.

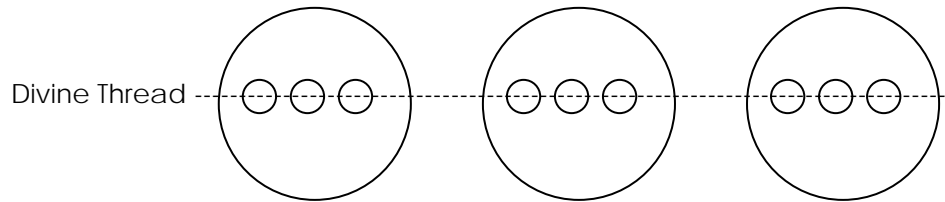
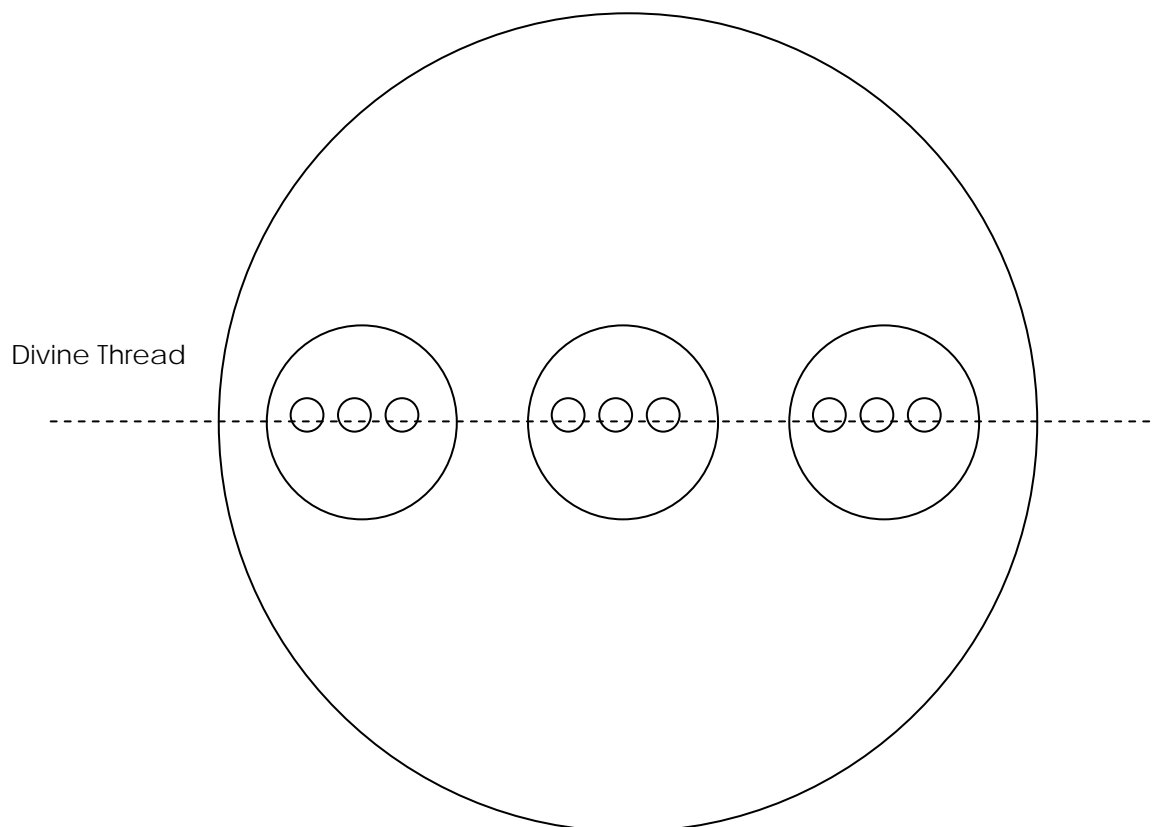


Diagram 4

Similarly, any group of beings or bounded Awareness Units is itself a sub-unit within the boundaries of a larger Unit.



The point however, is that *no* being as a bounded Unit of Awareness, at any level, can release its inner potentials into manifestation as other beings or Units – external to itself – as long as it takes 'its' boundary – its body – as simply *containing* them internally as its 'own' (*Anavamala*). To

release the potentials it 'contains' within its boundaries into independent self-actualisation it must, on the contrary and as you suggested, experience 'its' boundary as contained as well as containing - as something itself internal to and 'expressed' from within a broader field of awareness - one that is ultimately unbounded and embraces all beings, actual and potential. There is no ultimate infinite circle. There is only an infinite cleavage line of inseparable distinction. The fact that an infinite circle is an infinite line - and vice versa - is what gives the Ultimate or 'Non-higher' (*Anuttara*) the dual character of Awareness and Being, yet not 'a' being, since there is no 'larger' circle possible that would give it that character. On the other hand, the beings that arise *within* the ultimate may experience this ultimate either as an infinite line of Awareness unbounded on both sides or as having the character of an infinite bounding and *containing* circle and in this sense also a supreme 'being'.

Anuttara and Shiva-Shakti:

It is because the *field* of awareness above and below the cleavage line and *within and around* all bounded Units of Awareness is an essentially singular and unbounded field that it itself deserves the name of the Non-Higher or Unsurpassable - *Anuttara*. The cleavage line as such is *Anuttara* as the boundary line uniting *Shiva* and *Shakti* - the infinite hyphen in *Shiva-Shakti*. Those 'higher' Awareness Beings which experience themselves as expressions of the unbounded Awareness Field, which know their own boundaries as contained as well as containing - can, like all beings, identity with the Anuttara simply by being that boundary. For as I have written before, any boundary as such, line or circle, is not itself anything essentially bounded - thus to be one's bodily boundary is to become unbounded, and to no longer experience oneself as a being but as 'be-ing', a constant coming-to-be or process of actualization.

Higher Beings in the Tantraloka of Abhinavagupta:

In the sections of his *Tantraloka* drawn from by SenSharma, Abhinavagupta describes many orders and sub-orders of beings. The highest are called *Shuddha Pramatas* - translated as 'pure experiencers' but in my terms what I call 'Awareness Beings'. The highest of these *Pramatas* are called both *Shiva* and *Shivas*, being plural and yet essentially singular - a plurality of *Shivas* knowing themselves as singular - as *Shiva*. According to SenSharma: "All of the *Shuddha Pramatas* are said to possess bodies made of the *Bindu* - "divine Shakti in potentialised form." Moreover "They are incapable of participating in worldly activity in the absence of a *physical* body made from *material* elements." [my stress]. This accords with the nature of what Seth calls 'entities' or 'pyramid psychic gestalts' - not least that particular one above and beyond him which Jane Robert calls 'Seth 2'. For in its own words, "We gave you the patterns, intricate, involved and blessed, from which you form the reality of each physical thing you know ... The entire webwork was initiated by us." "Webwork" of course is another meaning of *tantra* as such - with its root meaning of a weave or spider-like 'web' of threads (*tantu*). In my experience, the highest, least physical of such Awareness Beings are those Awareness Powers which create and sustain the seemingly 'lowest', most basic building blocks and elementary forms of matter. Their physical form is that of cosmic phenomena such as nebulae and galaxies, stars and planets. They manifest - and thus were

worshipped – as ‘elemental’ phenomena’ such as fire, wind and water, of ‘heavenly’ phenomena such as stars and constellations, Sun and Moon. And, paradoxically they can communicate wordlessly through religious artifacts, icons or ‘idols’ made of the most seemingly ‘insentient’ elemental materials such as stone, wood and metal.

In my own experience of worship (*Puja*) as *Murti Darshan* – ‘idol meditation’ – I have seen how the best crafted of such solid idols are capable, through the higher awareness out of which they were lovingly crafted, of revealing and becoming receiver-transmitters of the least physical or higher consciousnesses – in particular for *Shuddha Pramatas* or *Shiva(s)* of the highest order of awareness. For through their physical, manifestation and embodiment in *Shiva Murti*, the immense concentrated power or *Shakti* of these Shivas can be experienced as continuously and vibrantly manifesting in the form of every perceived object and sensory phenomenon in our environment, vibrating as the very ‘airness of awareness’ in the space around bodies - and as pervading and clearing the spaces with every atom cell of our body – exciting them from the point of power or *Bindu* at the core of every atom or molecule of air or ‘solid’ matter.

Thus it is that the most solidly material of god-images or *Murtis* can not be understood merely as works of religious ‘art’ but can be crafted into powerful *artifacts of awareness* - capable of embodying and transmitting the awesome intent (*Iccha*), knowledge (*Jnana*) and action (*Kriya*) that are the powers or *Shaktis* of the highest order of *Shuddha Pramatas* - the *Shiva(s)*. That is why *Murti Darshan* – sitting in the presence of a powerful *Murti* - can become an almost instantaneous source of initiation, allowing one to *receive* an active impartation of higher awareness, vitality and wisdom from the *Murti*, to communicate with it as a materialization of Higher Awareness Beings, and to know it as it knows itself and knows us - experiencing both one’s own body and that of the *Murti* as an expression of the infinite field, space or ‘clearing’ that is the Ultimate Awareness itself – *Anuttara*.

Appendix 1

From *The Seth Material* by Jane Roberts:

Now - and this will seem like a contradiction in terms – *there is nonbeing*. It is a state, not of nothingness, but a state in which probabilities and possibilities are known and anticipated but blocked from expression. Dimly, through what you would call history, hardly remembered, there was such a state. It was a state of agony in which the powers of creativity and existence were known, but the ways to produce them were not. This is the lesson that *All That Is* had to learn, and that could not be taught. This is the agony from which creativity originally was drawn, and its reflection is still seen ... At first, in your terms, all of probable reality existed as nebulous dreams within the consciousness of *All That Is*. Later, the unspecific nature of those 'dreams' grew more particular and vivid. The dreams became recognisable, one from the other, until they drew the conscious notice of *All That Is*. And with curiosity and yearning, *All That Is* paid more attention to its own dreams. It then purposely gave them more and more detail, and yearned toward this diversity and grew to love that which was not yet separate from itself. It gave consciousness and imagination to personalities while they were still but within Its dreams. They also yearned to be actual. Potential individuals, in your terms, had consciousness before the beginning or any beginning as you know it, then. They clamoured to be released into actuality, and *All That Is*, in unspeakable sympathy, sought within Itself for the means. In its massive imagination, It understood the cosmic multiplication of consciousness that could not occur within that framework. Actuality was necessary if these probabilities were to be given birth. *All That Is* saw then, an infinity of probable, conscious individuals, and foresaw all possible developments, but they were locked within It until It found the means. This was in your terms a primary cosmic dilemma, and one with which It wrestled until All That Is was completely involved and enveloped within that cosmic problem. Had it not solved it, All That Is would have faced insanity, and there would have been, literally, a reality without reason and a world run wild. The pressure came from two sources: from the conscious but still probable individual selves who found themselves alive in a God's dream, and from the God who yearned to release them. On the hand, you could say that the pressure existed simply on the part of God, since the creation existed within Its dream, but such tremendous power resides in such primary pyramid gestalts that even their dreams are endowed with vitality and reality. This then, is the dilemma of any primary pyramid gestalt: It creates reality. It also recognised within each consciousness the massive potential that existed. The means, then, came to It. It realised It must release the creatures and probabilities from within Its dreams. To do so would give them actuality. However it also meant 'losing' a portion of Its own consciousness, for it was within that portion that they were held in bondage. *All That Is* had to let go. While it thought of these individuals as Its creations, It held them as a part of Itself and refused them actuality. To let them go was to 'lose' that portion of Itself that had created them. Already It could scarcely keep up with the myriad probabilities that began to emerge from each separate consciousness. With love and longing It let go of that portion of Itself, and they were free. All That Is therefore, 'lost' a portion of itself in that creative endeavour, *All That Is* loves all that It has created down to the least, for it realises the dearness and uniqueness of each consciousness which has been wrest from such a state and at such a price. It is triumphant and

joyful at each development taken by each consciousness, for this is an added triumph against that first state, and It revels and takes joy in the slightest creative act of each of Its issues. It, of Itself, and from that state, has given life to infinities of possibilities. From Its agony, It found the way to burst forth in freedom through expression and in doing so gave existence to individualised consciousness. Therefore It is rightfully jubilant. Yet all individuals remember their source, and now dream of *All That Is* as *All That Is* once dreamed of them ... The motivating force is still *All That Is*, but individuality is no illusion ... you create for the same reason, and within you is the memory of that primal agony – that urge to create and free all probable consciousness into actuality.

Appendix 2

From *The Philosophy of Sadhana* by Deba Brata Sen Sharma:

"The Supreme Lord then makes the '*Idam*' appear in the background of 'void' (*Akasha*) created by his self-limitation or self-negation ... In the beginning, the self-experience as *Ahamta* prevails over the self-experience as *Idamta*, the latter being indistinct. But the latter does not remain so for long; it gradually develops and grows distinct, until at last it reaches a stage where both [*Aham* and *Idam*] appear as perfectly balanced. In the next moment, what had emerged from *Ahamta* as *Idam* is made to disappear completely by the Supreme Lord. It is withdrawn [back] and absorbed in the *Ahamta* ... The original self-limitation, which has started with *nigraha* ... must also end before the cycle of functions close. Hence it is said that *anugraha* ['grace'] which puts an end to self-limitation, is the final function which completes the cycle."

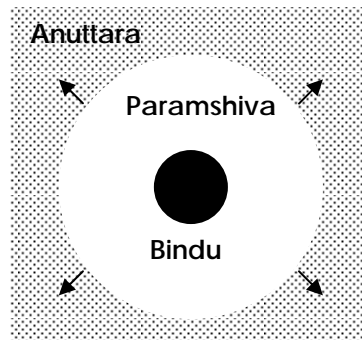
"The negation, or precisely speaking, the suppression of the supermost experience does not, however, mean that *Parama Shiva* self-experience becomes a total void (*shunya*), or that he ceases to have any kind of self-experience. It only means that he no longer experiences himself as *purnahamta*, the transcendent aspect of his nature (*vishvottima*) having ... gone into the background. In its place he has the experience of himself as *Aham*, which is the same in every respect as the *purnahamta*, minus its [full] *vishvottima* character."

Note to Appendix 2:

The term *Parama Shiva* or *Paramshiva* is paradoxical, capable of being taken referring to the supreme or 'highest' Shiva and at the same time that which is higher than or 'beyond' (*para-*) Shiva. These two senses of *Paramshiva* are two sides of the same coin - for *Paramshiva* is only *Parama Shiva* – the 'highest' Shiva - by virtue of knowing himself both as an *expression* of and *as* that ultimate reality (*Anuttara*) higher than or beyond himself. In Tantric terms, the emergence of *Shiva* is the internal negation (*Nigraha*) or withdrawal (*Tiridhana*) of his transcendent aspect (*Visvottirna*) as *Paramshiva* - as *Anuttara* itself. This withdrawal makes space (*Akasha*) for the universal coming into presence of his *immanent* aspect – the potential beings hitherto concealed as pure power or *Shakti* in the darkness of Non-Being. Creation thus has the essential character of a withdrawal-into-presence of the Divine Awareness. The withdrawal or self-limitation does not have the character of an inward, centripetal

contraction however, but rather an outward or centrifugal one – like the widening of an eye towards its periphery which expands the field of the iris and brings its central pupil into focus. This is the meaning of *Unmesa* – the ‘opening out’ of the eye of *Shiva* that corresponds, paradoxically, to his self-limitation or withdrawal, opening a space within *Anuttara* for the power of universal manifestation, centred in the *Bindu* that is *Shakti*. It is also a model for all Units of Awareness - each comparable to a bubble or ‘vacuole’ in a pure space of awareness with a central ‘zero-point’ (*Bindu*) of material manifestation.

The Eye of Shiva:



Bibliography:

Jane Roberts *The Seth Material*

Deba Brata Sen Sharma *The Philosophy of Sadhana*

Note:

The ideas first formulated in this essay, are explored also in Peter Wilberg's essays on *Trika* (2007) and on *Awareness, Paramshiva and The Dreaming* (2008).

They have also since been refined and incorporated in his book entitled:

EVENT HORIZON – Terror, Tantra and the Ultimate Metaphysics of Awareness
New Yoga Publications 2009