



# The Paradox of Self-Surrender in the Different Traditions

by

Murshid Samuel L. Lewis  
(Sufi Ahmed Murad Chisti)

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SRI Secretariat  
PO Box 51118  
Eugene OR 97405  
USA

telephone: (541) 345-5223  
e-mail: [ruhaniat@mail.com](mailto:ruhaniat@mail.com)

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The word “self” does not appear in the Hebrew Bible. A discussion of **nephesh** will be offered in detail below.

The Hebrew Scriptures called **tenach** were originally examined from four distinct levels: literal, anagogical, figurative and esoteric. The first of these can hardly be discussed in any short paper. The figurative may be interpreted as symbolic-mythological, and the esoteric as experienced-mythological.

Uncritical acceptance of Champollion has befogged general understanding of the relationship between Mosaic “revelation” and the mysteries of Egypt and India. Gerald Massey, who was not particularly known as a linguist, protested against this. Seyfarth offered a different key to the hieroglyphics, based on some discoveries in Italy but he was regarded as being misled. In more recent times Rabbi A. S. Yehuda has, through direct research, shown the close rapport between Berashith and Egyptian teachings, and words.

The Hebrew came out of Egypt; they lived there for some time. They continued to be neighbors of the Egyptians for centuries thereafter. The Ptolemys abetted the translation of the Hebrew Bible and gave the world the Septuagint version. Originally this was not held in high regard by the Jews; they had, indeed, a totally different translation into the Greek (the **Onkelos** version); and their Targums exhibited great changes in the meanings of words during the course of history.

The dramatic discovery of Champollion also concealed the fine work of two of his compatriots, Court de Gébelin and Fabre D’Olivet. They sought to restore the inner meanings of the Mosaic text and held that it was basically Egyptian. Later Fabre D’Olivet discovered verbal parallels, even down to the letter, with Puranic Literature. All of this is more or less in harmony with kabbalistic traditions.

Another difficulty that we have to overcome is the retention of certain words as if they were proper names, or discrete personalities. There is no basic reason for it and of often hides the keys to **myths** (howsoever we regard them). The theosophical movement has protested against this, and though they have been maligned, their efforts have encouraged scientists to pay more attention to names in connection with the stories embodying them.

Examining Scriptures we immediately discover the variance between popular traditions and a sacred write. Adam and Aishah (or Ayesha)—not Eve (Mavah) were placed in Gan-Eden. Adam may be interpreted as universal mankind, or even as **purushottamo**; (A)ishah is the prototype for all women. It is the feminine of (A)ish, men. Gan-Eden means “enclosure of pleasure”:

“Make them drink of the river of thy pleasure (**eden**)” Ps. 36.8

“After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure (**ednah**)” Gen. 18.12

In the third chapter of Genesis, the villain, **nachash**, enters. We do not translate Adam, we anagorize Ayesha into Eve, but nachash is translated as “serpent.” While philologically nachash may be related to naga and (s)nake, the anagogue or analogue of “serpent” is **saraph** in Hebrew, sometimes called “fiery serpent.” Then the plural, or **seraphim** is made to connote a very high order of angelic beings!

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Nachash actually symbolizes a coil-spring like movement toward a center-of-being. This movement established a false center (non-existent spatially and super-spatially). It is as if a focus of not-being. The movement has its parallel in the actual coiling and uncoiling of snakes. Yet nachash may be almost the same as the Greek **python**. This meant a “serpent,” and we have the pythoess who was active as an oracle in the mysteries:

“Surely there is no enchantment (nachash)” Num. 23.23

“Neither shall ye use enchantment (nachash) Lev. 19.26

“And whereby indeed he divineth (nachash)” Gen. 44.5

The symbolical interpretation established the coiled spring with its false center of centripetally. This becomes the “ego” which in a sense would be both existent and non-existent. We can find it within ourselves. The very form of some organs (e.g. in the abdomen) follow the basic pattern. The ancients regarded the abdomen as the center of **epithemia**, the desire-nature. And nachash is the desire-nature. It haunts us when we are within the Garden-of-pleasure. We wish to obtain and retain the fruits of these pleasures. Thus there is “temptation” and “fall.” When we become involved in pleasures we set into operation a chain of circumstances. These produce actions contrary to what is known as **entropy** in physics and **liberation** in metaphysics.

After being removed from Gan-Eden, Adam and Eve gave birth to Cain (acquisition) and Abel (transitoriness). Cain also means a centering. It indicates all tendencies to create a self-center and draw things to it. Abel, on the contrary, means a letting-go, a surrender. In this world Cain “kills” Abel, otherwise there would be no form and no formation. Abel cannot possibly “live” in worlds-of-form, nor can he produce progeny. So this “universe” is concerned with the results of a seeming victory of self-centering over self-surrender.

In his “Cain,” Byron suggests a relationship between Cain and Nachash. It is to be noted that symbolically both represent the self-centering, centripetal activity of consciousness in whatever form.

The flood-sage is another myth which should be examined. As soon as we get away from any geological and local-geographical phenomena (although these may have occurred), we find some remarkable correspondences. Here we should take into account that Hindu-speaking peoples appeared in the Levant:

1. **Mitanni**, which are undoubtedly the Midianim of the Bible and our Midianites. Jithro, the father-in-law and **guru** of Moses, was one of them. Kabbalistic tradition refers to him as a Hindu.
2. Kassites, the Greek **Kassoi**, Hebrew **Cushim** or **Cashdim**. Whence our “Chaldeans.”

Both the flood-sage and the book of Jonah have much in common with the Matsya- and other Puranas. And Noah (Nuch) easily becomes assimilable with Vishnu. Noah means “the repose of nature”:

“And the ark rested (nuch) in the seventh month.” Gen. 8.4.

“When the spirit rested (nuch) open them.” Num. 11.25

“The Lord hath given your brethren rest (nuch) Josh. 1.15

It is strange that the Hebrew **mayim**, literally “waters” or “seas,” greatly resembles a plural of maya. In addition their hieroglyphic and mythological significance is much the same. And in the mysticism of sound of both Hebraic and Sanskrit esotericisms, the sound of **m** has identical meanings. The inner interpretation of the flood shows definitely a samsaric-nirvanic pattern. The philosophy of the Kabbalah greatly bears this out.

Noah had three sons and they should be considered symbolically:

**Shem:** The radiating, life-giving, non-self-centered continuous energy endowed with all qualities which operate as if from an infinite source to finite ends.

**Japheth:** The active, balancing movement of whatsoever nature.

**Ham:** The establishment of a center of heat or fire by absorption from the outside.

These may be symbolized:

**Shem**, by the radiating sun

**Japheth**, by scales or an arrow in movement

**Ham**, by “hell-fire.”

The Hebrew Bible also presents Canaan (Chanahan) as a son of Ham. This word is a strengthening of the term **Cain**. It represents the self-centering activity on the material plane. We thus have a flood-sage in which the universal waters of maya (as mayim) encompass the universe, while Noah, the savior, rides high on them and is not touched thereby. The whole is emblematic of the relation of samsara to nirvana. But our immediate concern is to see how self-hood is involved. This is easily ascertained in the examination of the terms **Shem**, **Japheth** and **Ham**.

Symbolically they correspond rather closely to the Sanskrit **Sattva**, **Rajas** and **Tamas**. The latter word parallels the Chaldean **Tiamat** and the Hebrew **Tehem**. Both these terms, along with **Ham**, indicate a centering-of-darkness, or an abyss, or a fire-producing phenomenon. The essential difference between the Hebrew and Indian myths is that the former includes **Canaan**, the son of Ham who definitely represents **egoism**. The Indians have coined a number of words: jiva, aham, ahan-kara, pudgala, etc., all of which look suspiciously self-centering. There is one difference—and it may someday be resolved—that the Indians have often associated these movements with prakriti, Nature; whereas the Hebrews seem to have regarded them as movements in consciousness.

Using a loose interpretation, Hebrew symbology gives us universality, action and self-centeredness as the three basic “gunas” while the Hindus offer universality, action and lethargy as gunas. The Jewish people, on the whole, seem to have avoided lethargy, though perhaps they are guilty of basic egocentricity. The Indians, “fearing” lethargy, have nevertheless preferred it to egoism.

The same symbology appears in Egypt, the land of Kham (centering darkness) and Khebt (pure light). Moses, the water-savior, appeared before the Beni Israel, and delivered them from the land of “Egypt” (Mitzraim).

The kabbalistic interpretation of the Exodus has its parallels in universal mythology and also in Indian lore. Pharaoh, representing the ego, holds a whole people in captivity. In the Ramayana Ravana holds Sita in captivity. Moses leads the people to liberation, while Rama rescues his consort.

Unfortunately, even the most hide-bound “fundamentalists” have ignored the text of the Hebrew Scripture. They have substituted “Red Sea” for the Semitic **ayin suph** which means “sea of weeds.” As Col. Jarvis demonstrated after World War I, this literally refers to an actual sea-of-weeds, still existent, north of Sinai. Moses divided this sea, whereas Rama crossed his on a chain of mon-keys. In each case, symbolically and esoterically this can be explained as the deliverance of the ego, or of humanity from the “fall” or samsara.

The course by the Hebrews through the desert was a circular one and ultimately they were led by Joshua, the savior, into the Promised Land. It was Joshua who commanded the sun and the moon to stand still, the sun upon the heights, the moon over the valley.

The whole Pesach-cycle has much hidden esoteric symbolism, all around the same basic theme of self-surrender. Thus leaven (**chometz**) signifies egotism. The Talmud is full of incidents and examples which would bear this out. Unfortunately the Jewish habit of coordinating all commentaries on the same theme in one place hides many pure gems amid a mass of speculation, sometimes of a rather low order.

If the Hindu people did not thoroughly examine the significance of self-centering, the Hebrew people did not thoroughly examine the nature of repose. The rise of the temple with its priesthood, the captivities and foreign influences, covered the basic teachings and resulted in the rise of warring sects. And it is interesting to note that even the word for “I” is not used until the Aramaic portions of the Bible (Daniel and Ezra) were written.

When God spoke to Moses He said: **Eyeh Asher Eyeh**. This connotes an eternally continuing existence and can be translated: “Will be that Will be,” or “I was, am, will be,” or even as a variation of the Egyptian: “I am Osiris, who ever was, is and will be.” Osiris—**Asar** in ancient Egyptian, could easily be assimilated to the Hebrew **Asher**. Asher also appears as a proper noun (one of the sons of Jacob (Israel).

I-ness, as we understand it, seems to have been utterly foreign to people who had a tribal or group-consciousness. Anthropological psychologists are beginning to comprehend this today. The Hebrew **nephesh** was what today we should call a “multiordinal term.” It primarily meant the living-breath. And in order to get more light on it, consideration will next be given to the Arabic cognates, **nufs** and **nufus**. **Nufus**, taken alone, means the breath. But when we consider such a phrase as that of Jesus Christ: “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” also being capable of the interpretation, “Blessed are the mild in breath,” we may gain some deeper insight into possible connections between “breath” and “ego.”

The Arabic **nufs** has been interpreted as thing-in-itself, or the thingness-of-a-thing. Metaphysically it comes close to the Hebrew **nachash**. The Sufis have explained it in a gradient from the heaviest to the lightest breath, with equal mystical and psychological emphases:

**Nufs ammara** is the term given to the lowest order or state of ego. In this state a person lives only for material satisfactions. He is, so to speak, in the land of Canaan. He has no particular consideration of others, but is not necessarily opposed to those who do not interfere with him and his efforts at self-satiation.

**Nufs lauwama** indicates one who is still subject to faults, sins and emotional disturbances. He will atone for his acts. He needs guidance and may be helped. In practice this type of person tends to be religious rather than moral.

**Nufs mutmaina** has been translated as “nufs at rest.” It indicates a person who thinks, lives and acts according to moral principle. This is the general goal of humanity at large.

**Nufs salima** indicates the soul that has attained peace, or who has surrendered to God. This is above and beyond the ego-condition although such a one may be recognized by a particular body-mind complex. He is characterized by a peaceful atmosphere which others can feel. He is a master of meditation, or its equivalent. He is able to calm others and is the author of “right action.” This might also be compared to the state of arhat.

**Nufs alima** means the perfect nufs. One acts as if in the manner of God (Akhlaq Allah). Ideas of separation and identification have been removed. This corresponds to the state of the Bodhisattva.

The very term **Islam** means submission to God. Unfortunately this word has also degenerated into a multiordinal word, connoting particular points of view. But whereas the Bible-reader may repeat over and over again: “I will lift up my eyes to the hills,” yet he will not do it. It is very rare indeed if one meets a Christian or a Jew who has ever lifted his eyes to the hills in prayer, or having done so gained strength.

In Islam there are two terms, **nimaz** and **salaat**, either of which may be translated as prayer. The Hebrew prayer, **tephillah**, was essentially one of praise to God. The Islam prayer, **salaat**, is essentially one of surrender to God. Nimaz combines prayer with movements which have psychic and psychological significance. When the eyes are raised, when they are lowered, when the arms or head are raised or lowered, the prayer is as if man had several bodies or vehicles, all of which are joined in prayer. The placing of the head on the ground is especially a movement of utter ego-surrender.

The Tarikat or esoteric path in Islam has disciplines with the generic name of **ryazat**. Best known of these is **zikr**. Zikr—literally “remembrance”—is the repetition in some form of the phrase **La Illaha El Il Allah**, or some variation, or some derivation thereof. It begins with a clear statement with a verbal significance; it ends in transcendental soundings.

Zikr may be divided into two portions:

- a. **La Illaha**, there is no God, or there is no Being. Negative. Leads to self-effacement, **fana**.
- b. **El Il Allah**, but God. Positive. Leads to eternal life or **baqa**.

Self-control or ego-subversion is offered first. But there is no actual separation between ego-restraint and divine expression. The more the ego-self is put under subjection, the more the divine light **which is always present** is made manifest.

Zikr has many aspects. It may be explained in a monistic, or monistic advaita manner. It can be called or chanted. It has been used to beautify the voice and to refine the nature.

Fana and baqa can be separated only in explanation, not so much in actual experience. When so-called matter was removed from the vacuum tube, Crookes discovered the beta-rays. When the finite is removed, the all-present infinite is clarified before the so-called consciousness.

In Sufism there are three stages in fana: **fana-fi-Sheikh** or effacement in the spiritual teacher; **fana-fi-Rassoul** or effacement in the perfect ideal; and **fana-fi-lillah** or effacement in God. Above these there is a stage called **fana-i-baqa** where effacement and subsistence are unified. It has a correspondence in mathematics where the positive and negative infinities are said to be identical.

There are many other forms of ryazat in Sufism. Some resemble the Buddhist **upaya**. But the teacher-pupil relationship is **not** the same as that in Hinduism. In Sufism teacher and pupil are as one, the teacher regarding the pupil as being himself in a lower stage. He must coordinate and harmonize **himself**; for this he invokes all the hidden wisdom and does not neglect the pupil. It is true that the pupil performs a kind of self-surrender similar to that of many of the Indian schools, but there is, there must be no separation in feeling.

Another important aspect of self-conquest and self-surrender in Sufism is through the breath (nufus). In one aspect the breath is symbolized as the horse which must be brought into control and its spirit tamed. In the Naqshibandi school this is done by concentration upon symbols. Some of these practices parallel those of Tantra and others those of Shingon, but they do not appear to be so complicated. Thus there is the symbol of the circle with the dot in the center which may be interpreted: "Becoming naught one becomes all."

Meditation in Sufism is a passive act. In concentration or **Murakkabah** the mind is both active and passive, creative and destructive and finally is said to achieve mastery. In mushahida the active-agent becomes as if God; this has been called "fearful contemplation." Its psychological aspects are not very different from the higher stages of Kego teaching.

While these practices and exercises tend to refine the breath, there is also an aspect of Sufi mysticism which deals directly with respiration. This is partially explained in Inayat Khan's "The Mysticism of Sound" (in the Academy library). The Sufis have a complete "science of the elements" which, in theory, corresponds to the tattva-sastra of India. They have an operational system of techniques. Except in the Naqshibandi School they do not use any other physiological "centers" than the heart, and even the heart is given a special explanation.

Thus we have the control of the ego through the breath and the control of the breath through the ego. These lead to the life-in-the-heart, the door of which is **tauba**. Tauba corresponds exactly to the Hebrew **shub** and the Greek **metanoia**. Here we come to the junction of the Hebrew, Christian and Islamic religions.

Very little direct explication of actual Sufi methods have been given to the Western world excepting by men who have been disregarded by the great universities now beginning to take interest in the subject. But the greatest weakness of the academicians has been their historical, rather than their metaphysical lack. The destruction wrought by the Emperor Justinian was so vast that its very effectiveness has passed us by. Imagine a Hitler untrammelled, sitting upon a throne and persecuting practically all minorities. There was to be only **one** Christian religion; if the Jews could not be wiped out, then there was to be only **one** type of synagogue. So the mystics, the esotericists, the Gnostics were given to flame, sword and death, and the records destroyed. The few Christian mystics who escaped became the precursors of Sufism. The early Sufis called themselves "Gnostics," not Sufis. Sufism owes far, far more to Gnosticism than to Hinduism and Buddhism. And in passing it is interesting to note that when the Chassids tried to restore mystical dancing in Judaism in the eighteenth

century, the forms closely resembled those of the Mevlevis in Turkey who use the dance as a technique toward God-realization.

Thus we can use Sufism, which has preserved the **gnosis**, as a means to throw more light upon earlier Christianity and Hebraism. For even today **shub** or **shuvo** is the most important element in the Jewish spiritual life. It is climaxed on Yom Kippur, the day of Atonement.

One can see here the difficulty of restoring an ancient Hebrew religion which did not put much emphasis upon the ego or ego-action, and find all the elements of self-surrender in it. The Jubilee was an integral part of the religion of Moses. It inculcated joy, restoration, release. The whole institution of the Jubilee emphasized the evanescence of the herenow. "All flesh is grass."

Those portions of the Hebrew Bible which were written later stress opposition to sacrifices in high places. These sacrifices assumed the right of the individual to commune with God. Priestcraft naturally opposed it; priestcraft established the **Cainic** or self-centered institution of temple-and-ceremonies and deadly commercialism. It was this against which Christ protested. Despite the mission of Jesus Christ, the Scriptures were neither restored nor perfected. But in Islam we have still the institution of sacrifice in high places, part of the ceremonial of the Meccan pilgrimage. (The dying Samaritans have also preserved it.)

The **minyón** was an operative Hebrew community for praying to or praising God. It was composed of one Cohen, one Levite and a total of ten males over to age of thirteen. It became a cell or unit in relations between man and God, and thus the original "church." The "church" is essentially a group, made up of several people (even "two or three gathered"), operating as a unit. Thus it offers another form of self-surrender.

Jesus appeared originally to a small group of Jews. His first words, found in the beatitudes, are recipes for self-effacement. One can quote interminably proper interpretations of the Hebrew **nephesh** and Greek **psyche**. In the light of what has been stated, it may be established that there is **nothing** to indicate a self-centered, operating **monad**, either in the world of time, or beyond the world of time. These things have been read into the Scriptures. Bertrand Russell has characterized the Christians as those who wish to be infinitely long but object to being infinitely fat!

The denial of the self is really the core of the teaching of Jesus Christ. Only it is not a denial into nothingness. The Jewish people could never have understood either the **neti! neti!** nor the **om** of the Hindus. Effacement into emptiness was foreign to them; effacement into fullness was comprehensible. And this was this core of Gnosticism.

Early Christianity was basically operative. As the methods by which self-effacement was attained and the results therefrom are now being gathered, explained and published by Prof. P. Sorokin of Harvard, it is not necessary to repeat them.

In Christianity effacement consists roughly of two methods: (a) The surrender of the lay devotee to the **church**; (b) the higher surrender to systematic disciplines which are presumed to terminate in the beatific vision or other spiritual experience. The church-surrender has overshadowed the direct-experience method and limited it. To the Sufi, Vedantist or Yogin, Christian mysticism seems very disjunct.

Christianity and Judaism have both been marred by dualistic teachings which came to them first through **Pharasaism** (i.e. Persian interpretations) and later through Manichaeism. The full significance of “repentance” and many other terms were lost when translated from Levantine into Western European languages. And they were so institutionalized that all freedom of venture was lost.

As Islam began as a Christian sect, some light may be thrown upon the venture of self-surrender from the Sufic standpoint. The Sufis used love both as a means and as an end and it may be questioned as to whether they are not, in some respects, closer to Jesus Christ than others. The instructions of Jesus to his immediate disciples became part of the institutionalism of the operative mystics, in particular those of the **fakir**. The **fakir** has nothing whatsoever to do with phenomena; it means one who is poor, not only in the wealth-of-things, but even more in the false-wealth-of-ego.

As has been explained, **fana-fi-Rassoul** means effacement in the perfect ideal. The philosopher Jili has explained **insaani-kamal**, the Perfect Man, and identified him with Mohammed. But one may ask, can we not equally become effaced in Jesus Christ? Or any other world messenger?

The Arabic **fana** has been translated by some as **nirvana**. This is unfair. **Fana** is definitely a verbal term and the experiences in it are finite (though perhaps unbounded) at certain stages. There is no absolute loss of a sort of identity, though there is constant change and growth. In **fana-fi-Sheikh** one absorbs the qualities and sometimes the faculties of the teacher; one is more apt to begin to exhibit corresponding qualities which seem to have been latent in himself. In **fana-fi-Rassoul** these take on grand proportions. Thus one might experience something akin to the **miraj** or night-journey of Mohammed.

Then it would seem that one finds himself mirrored in every person. The brotherhood of humanity becomes operative. As Edna St. Vincent Millay has put it: “The world stands out on every side, no wider than the heart is wide.” Thus we find a very valid brotherhood existing in Islam, perhaps much more than in other faiths. But Sufis have not always remained entirely within the folds of institutional Islam. The Bektashi and Mevlevi Orders within the old Turkish Empire seem to have soft spots for Christians; in India there is exchange with various esoteric schools, borrowings and adaptations on both sides and sometimes amalgamation or synthesis. But always the prime motives are self-surrender and spiritual liberation.

In recent times it has been suggested that **fana-fi-Rassoul** could be practiced accepting any Messenger of God as the Ideal. The substitution of Jesus for Mohammed seems to result in the experiencing of some of the recorded facts and factors in the life of the Nazarene. This is especially true of the assumption of burdens of a part or the whole of mankind.

More spectacular, perhaps, is the crucifixion. For this is a double act of surrender, surrender to a process which symbolizes the giving up of self in the highest sense. It may be that “in Adam we all die.” When the body goes through crucifixion, every cell in it is also crucified. Every cell is realized to be “self-existent” and every cell also loses its particular consciousness. One seems to undergo endless pain and at the same time feel endless sympathy and compassion. **Dukha** and **sukha** are not separate.

The acme of self-effacement in Jesus (following the Sufic method) comes in the resurrection. This might mean the complete renewal and revivification of the cells of the body, and of the ele-

ments of the mind, and with it the realization that “only the heart can heal the heart.” Indeed heart takes on another and deeper meaning, a meaning quite in accord with several positive statements found in the Upanishads. Then there is spiritual healing, in a true (semantic) sense of the term.

Jesus himself seems to have stressed the importance of blood, which is also identified with wine—specifically in the **Pistis Sophia**, an esoteric Gnostic scripture.

The practice of self-effacement in Buddha has some curious results. It would seem much more difficult to deal with Sakka, the king of the gods, than with Mara, the tempter. The earlier experiences or stages seem to follow the Theravadin pattern. But as one passes from “samadhi” to “nirvana” one notices the complete realization of all planes of the universe and the wiping out of all **sin** and **pain** therein. Ultimately there is no **self-experience of nirvana**; the terms are contradictory.

Recapitulating at this point. Because the Sufis have retained the basic esoterics of the Mediterranean area (as contrasted with India and the further East), some of its knowledge throws considerable light upon processes of self-surrender in Christianity and Judaism. But the fundamental point to note is that originally there was no question of **self** at all. Paul introduced the idea of all **falling** and **dying** in Adam and this brought emphasis upon the ego. As Christianity developed, the ego became more and more important and with it also one can see the logical fallacies that became incorporated into the teachings.

The rise of Protestantism brought self-salvation and self-sufficiency to the forefront. So much so that this has re-acted against Catholicism and Orthodoxy. While “churchianity” may have many shortcomings, many aspects of it keep egocentricity down. Both Protestantism and Judaism have fostered social forms of egotism, often sheltering it under the euphonious term of **humanism**. But all the Western religions begin, or should begin, with repentance—which is to say, surrender-of-ego-to-heart.

From that point one can show many methods used to turn the heart to God. The weakness is that as self is emphasized there is a false weeping which has little to do with sin, in any sense, and produces emotionalism or hysteria and not change of heart.

Indian methods and Indian teachings also show some strange elements. As has been stated there are many words for egocentric movements in consciousness. The failure to note this among the gunas and the doubt logic and metaphysics of the gunas have only added to **maya**. But from most ancient times there were practices such as tapas and **jap**—later incorporated into yogic systems—which had for their purposes absolute self-control.

Indian society first inculcated the **Brahmacharya** and while it primarily meant the young, the disciplines in it were certainly to keep the ego and all its vicious movements under control. At the other end of the scale was the sannyasin, the one who was utterly free from attachment and this also had, in theory, a remarkable tendency toward effacing egocentricity.

One need not discuss the Yogic systems here; they are many and all of them have been successful in some cases. The practice of repeating **neti, neti** or chanting **om** suggests the importance of a negative development. One can hardly emphasize his ego if he performs such practices. The only danger is that in some instances forms of “spiritual masochism” have manifested.

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In Bhakti one sees the complete absorption of the self in love. There is no doubt of self-surrender here, but there may be some question of its place and practicality in an active social life. So also the danger toward an experience of individual-salvation.

There may be a question as to whether the negative emphasis alone absolves one from egocentricity. He who says "I am not" can be just as close to the ego as he who says "I am." Sufism has answered this dilemma by positing "Thou art" which omits any reference to any "I."

Buddha had another approach. Each of the Three Jewels taken alone, or all taken together provide an arena for freedom. There is still room for several volumes on Gautama the Sakhyia, considered as a Hindu sage, or avatar.

Although there are many who condemn ceremonies as conduits to egoicity, and thus obstacles to spiritual emancipation, the actual ceremonies of many Buddhistic schools have totally different effects from the prayers and ceremonies of other faiths. Try to "think" when a gong is sounded or a block of wood is struck! One might suppose that the attendant noise is an obstacle to meditation; actually it is a much greater obstacle to thought.

The Shingon ceremonies seem to be based on inner mystical sound. These sounds have been described in various books, even of quite different faiths. The Shingon tones may "awaken" some part of one's inner being, or latent faculties. They seem to tend toward a **gradual development**.

Self-effacement, or self-surrender as such reached its highest development in Buddhism under the Patriarch Nagarjuna. But when one unites his teachings with the positive expressions of nirmanakaya, sambhogakaya and dharmakaya, etc., one finds something corresponding to the Christian **resurrections** and the Sufic *baqa*.

The Zen method of striking the gong seems to touch a reality which is indescribable. Try and unite yourself with the tone; try to remain with it or keep it with you. The effect stands out as positive in contrast with the Nichiren ceremony in which a wooden block is struck. Both bring you to a stage of **non-think**. But there is the mastery of thinking and there is the inability to think—which is also found in idiots and paralytics. However, gong, bell and block all remove mind-effort.

The essential difference between the Buddhistic and other traditions is that it formally seeks to subvert the ego, regarding it as nothing but a hindrance to clear sight, or insight (*prajna*).

Recapitulating, we find that the religions and spiritual radiations in general seek to overcome the ego. But Christianity has come to regard the "ego" as good, vital and lasting. This despite the actual teachings of Jesus Christ and the whole tenor of the "Book of Revelations."

The Chinese traditions are a little difficult to handle. For one, what one hears from persons often differs radically from what is found in books, especially books by Western writers. In a true semantic sense Sinaism and Taoism may be identical. Taoism must be distinguished from "Tacism" which is used by Western writers to describe Lao-Tse and Chang-Tse. This is very unfair.

No doubt **Wu-weism** is one of the grandest teachings that has ever been given to humanity. But it has not had much popular appeal. A few years back Dr. Henry Atkinson, who was planning a

world conference of all religions, could not find a single advocate of “pure” “Taoism.” We apply the term “Christianity” to **traditional systems**, we apply the term “Judaism” to **traditional systems**; we even apply the term “Buddhism” to traditional systems. But the naming of Chinese teachings does not follow any such pattern at all.

Superficially the Chinese bride has been a slave; the Chinese grandmother a queen. The basic tradition of this country has been to subvert the individual to the family. The nation was built upon a common **ancestry**, although one is never certain whether this **ancestry** was biological, idealistic or conventional. Its strongest merit has been that it has worked. We have given the name of “Confucianism” to it. This “Confucianism” has many differences from the Confucian philosophy offered by Chinese sages. And so long as this dichotomy exists it is very difficult to be sure just what traditions are.

There is a tremendous difference between a “tradition” in which one has lived and a “tradition” which one has observed, directly or indirectly. On the whole the Chinese culture has not been taken too seriously. As our historians and scientists have been for the most part Westerners, we find them detailing differences in their own lands, and often exaggerating them; we find them also minimizing differences in lands far away, until very recently.

Another and much more important factor, or series of factors which have existed in connection with **self-surrender**, has been feudal society. Society liked the idea of the discipline of the ego, especially the ego belonging to the member of some lower class. Japan offers some extreme examples of the wedding of the an-atta doctrines of Buddhism with the establishment of a finely structured hierarchy. The rest of the world differed relatively, rather than absolutely. In India, however, extreme measures at crushing the ego resulted in totally different types of abasement, abasement rather than surrender.

In modern times this situation has been reviewed by Marx and Freud first. Each of them contributed something to the general knowledge, but the positive contributions have been overwhelmed by the establishment of philosophies based on the observation of an individual. This works contrary to the idea of self-surrender.

Adlerian psychology has definitely examined the differences between abasement, frustration and inhibition on the one hand and self-surrender on the other. India’s masochism is not spiritual. Feudal inhibitions have been inherited by post-feudal societies and caused difficulties in neural operations. This has been followed by a technological society in which a sort of Newtonian acceleration has been at work, antagonistic to any sort of surrender, but not antagonistic to defeat. Here there must be a complete re-examination of the various values of zero (0), one (1) and infinity (or infinities) in all departments of life from mathematics to states of consciousness.

Finally it cannot be repeated too often that the superficial writers on mysticism have definitely by-passed history. A certain St. Theresa or John of Ruysbroeck is made a mark of detailed study—though they have hardly affected history. A whole dynasty of Osmanli sultans are held of no account, leaving the field free for fictional writers. A great intellectual like Mr. Morris writes brilliant tomes, the conclusions of which fall before the historical facts connected with the life of the Mogul Emperor Akbar. Akbar stands as a Gibraltar against superficial examinations of both mysticism and self-surrender.

## The Paradox of Self-Surrender in the Different Traditions

One of the richest and most powerful emperors who ever lived, he was as one of the world's most versatile geniuses and he affected the arts and culture of India perhaps more than any other one human being. Yet he left his throne upon the appearance of any holy man, he regarded the sages and saints of his time as being absolutely superior to him, and he practiced meditation to the extent that his hours for sleep were a minimum. This shows that true self-surrender does not end, necessarily, in man becoming a philosophical idiot. In any event Akbar both preserved and resurrected traditions, did operatively affect the lives of human-kind, and stands as an exemplar for the future world.

The rise of the integrative outlook in our day, in which Oliver Reiser, Charles Morris and Lancelot Whyte in American come very close to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Bhagavan Das and Aurobindo Ghose in India indicate that the very term "self-surrender" must be re-valuated in the light of the cultural stages of humanity at any time. Self-surrender does not mean abasement or frustration; it means ultimately the surrender of all that is false in order that trueness shines through the personality. "If thine eye be single, then shall thy body be full of light."