

Advanced Trainee Thesis

This Advanced Trainee Thesis was written in November 1991 towards the end of the three-month Advanced Training at Living Waters Centre in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney, Australia.

Please note that my thoughts and terminology have evolved since this time.

When I first submitted an outline of what I was going to write, the senior teacher in charge of Trainee theses called me in to check that I hadn't lost the plot...

Glossary of terms

Essence: During my Advanced Training at the Centre, Ahrara Bhakti discovered the Essence work of A.H. Almaas (see his book, *Essence*). This had a profound effect on her thinking and how she worked. She was inclined to equate 'Essence' with the Self and this point is taken up in the second thesis.

Individuation: A Jungian term for the 'journey to wholeness' – ie, the journey to become your true individual self rather than the product of the traumas of your childhood.

Jungian Sandplay: This may be thought of as a form of conscious dreaming. The basic tools are a tray of sand and physical symbols (eg, small plastic toys, decorations, figurines, etc). The subconscious is given a chance to shape the sand and place the symbols. One can then 'gestalt' the symbols. For instance, one may have placed a plastic spider in the sand. One could then imaginatively become the spider and talk as the spider. An extraordinarily powerful and transformative technique.

Rebirthing: A breathwork technique involving accelerated, expanded 'circular', continuous breathing. It pushes extra energy around the body and the flow of energy comes across blocks embedded in the body. These bodily blocks have been put in place through the psychological and physical traumas of early childhood and birth. In rebirthing, the traumas are re-experienced and the block dissolves. Breathwork engages the alchemical power of the body to transform energy. It can also help to fire up the kundalini energies.

Self: A term used by mystical writers and by Carl Jung. It describes a 'high' part of oneself that can emerge from the unconscious. It seems that it can emerge only after a very great deal of deep Inner

Work. What exactly is the 'Self'? That question is taken up in the second thesis. (Note that in *The Job Intersection*, I refer to 'the Self' as 'the Christ'.)

Session: A breathwork 'rebirthing' session.

Voice Dialogue: A technique for allowing up inner parts of yourself (sub-personalities) to have their say. Deceptively simple; very powerful. See H. Stone & S. Winkelman, *Embracing Our Selves*. Sometimes referred to as Dynamic Dialogue.

Mandala: After a personal growth technique, on a blank piece of paper, we would trace a circle. Then we would allow our hand to draw whatever came out. Nothing was pictured in the mind first. Rather, we just let our hands do the drawing.



The Emergence of the Self

Advanced Training Thesis

Ren

Written 23-24 November, 1991

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Foreword: The methodology of this thesis

Deciding on the right way to go about this thesis has proved to be a very strong reflection of exactly where I am now: the two-way process that is going on between the Ego and the Self.

One of the major areas on which I hoped to shed light was the relationship of Christ and the emergence of the Self. In *Aion*, Jung writes at length about Christ as a symbol of the emergent Self. In my experiences at the Centre, it has seemed that Christ is more than just a 'symbol' and that there is some sort of causal connection between Christ and the Self as it emerges in people on the path of individuation. I was planning to do a reasonably detailed overview of all my visions of Christ in Intentionality, the mandalas of Christ and the experiences of Christ 'identification' during sessions.

However, the more I thought about it, the more I realized that I, as Ego, did not have the answers and would never have the answers. So I thought that something other than Ego would have to write the thesis. Perhaps I could turn on the tape deck, invoke the Self – for instance, by Voice Dialogue – and just let him do the thesis.

That, I realized, was inappropriate too. It was a sort of abrogation of responsibility – hoping something else – the Self – would do it for me.

So now, as I start on my thesis, my intent is to have both Ego and Self doing parts of the thesis. This reflects accurately where I am on my path of individuation. Ego and Self are not yet able to do the whole thesis together. They have not come into union. However, the Self has emerged and is in the process of teaching and reshaping the Ego. There is also a sense too that the Self is learning and the Ego is helping it in this.

So, in this spirit of the dialogue between Self and Ego, I present this thesis based on my own path of individuation. There will be an emphasize on the aspect of the Self's relationship to Christ and on the Self's desire to share and be met.

As I end this introduction, I observe that I have absolutely no idea what the Self is going to say.

The emergence of the Self from the Ego's perspective

In retrospect, the Self first announced its possible emergence about a year before I came to the Centre. In a wet rebirth at Euroa House, I had an experience of Christ-identification. I stood in the hot tub, arms out to the side and had an identification with Christ on the cross. In this rebirth, I also experienced a past life in which I was a leper (and as I write this, I again speculate as to whether that past life was contemporaneous with Christ's). At the time, it was an interesting curiosity that I couldn't make sense of.

In my first experience of Intentionality (as a trainee), I had my first vision of Christ. I went into Intentionality on the intent 'To love, accept and support myself and my Inner Child and his healing.' Here is an extract from my journal (18/6/91):

The figure of a Christ-like adult is coming towards me. I am a child. He loves me... I run towards the Christ-like figure... (In real life, I cry.) Briefly we swap and I am the Christ-like figure hugging the child. As child, there is a black rock in my heart. I feel it physically in my body. The Christ figure takes it out of my heart. We decide to smash it on the ground into many pieces. Some of the pieces sparkle. Out of the sparkling pieces, he forms a clear diamond which he puts into my (child) heart. It is now a clear window in my heart.

In a later session as a trainee, I came out of a session and started to draw. It soon became obvious to me that what was coming out was an image of Christ. 'This is stupid. What a cliché,' I thought to myself. I stopped myself drawing the mandala and turned the page. However, again a picture of Christ emerged. 'I'm not sharing that in the group. How embarrassing. They'll all think I'm wanking, and made it up consciously.' So I turned the page and did a third mandala which I did share. (See Mandalas below).





It was only weeks later when I heard Bhakti's talk on the Jungian framework of personal growth that I realized the great significance of a Christ mandala – that Christ was a symbol of the coming emergence of the Self.

Many other things in my period as a trainee fitted into the Jungian framework – especially the events in sessions and Intentionality that related to 'The Legend of the Monkey God King' (discussed in my Trainee Thesis). That thesis itself was structured by a vision of a Christ many thousands of feet tall – whose ankle height would correspond to the top of Mt Kosciusko.

All through the second half of my time as a trainee, the phrase, 'Eli, Eli, la'ma sabach-tha'ni?' (My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?) kept going round and round in my head. Then in the second last week, without my having discussed it with anyone, Mara shared she kept having the phrase *Eli, Eli, la'ma sabach-tha'ni?* going around and around in *her* head.

In my first session as an Advanced Trainee, I had a very strong identification with Christ on the Cross. From my journal (30/9/91):

With the Christ identification, felt strong sensations of the despair of separation from god – Eli, Eli, la'ma sabach-tha'ni?' Sensations in palms and the sensation of Christ leaving the body.

In the Nataraj meditation earlier that morning I had a spontaneous Intentionality. From my journal:

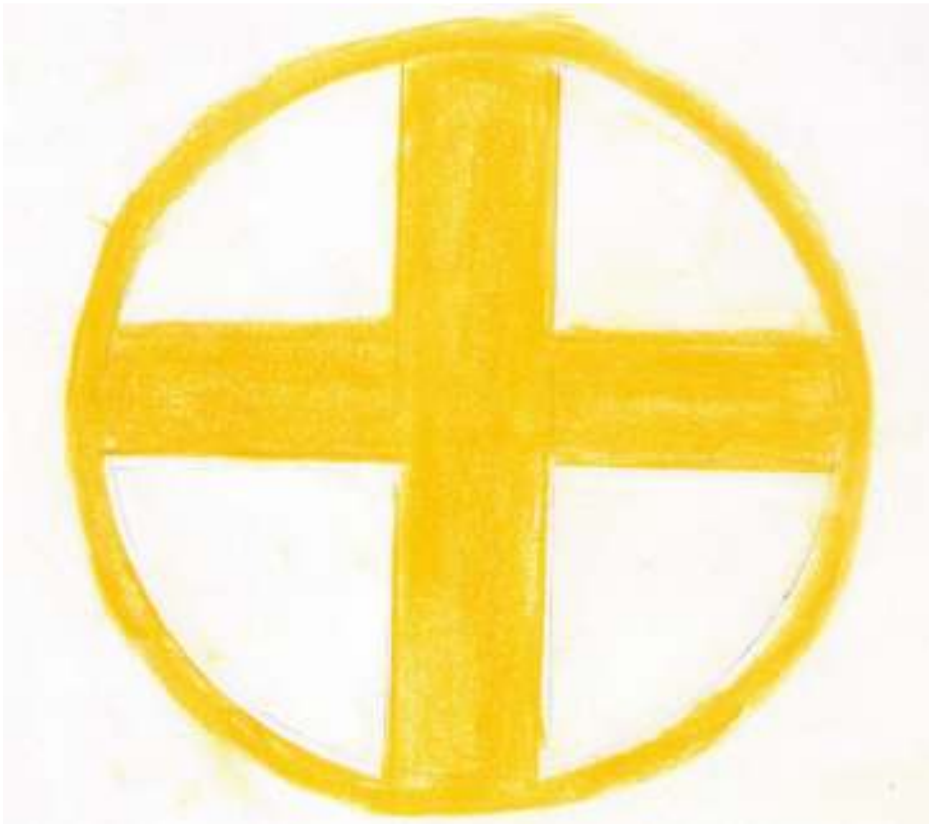
I was on a solitary path. It was hemmed in by two rows of very tall bamboo. Bhakti was at the end of the path to greet me. The path got narrower and narrower as it got closer to her. I really had to jam myself through it. Then, when I got there, everything – all the animals and birds – looked like cartoons – nice but like cartoons. Bhakti said: 'Yes, it looks artificial and not real now but soon it will look very real.' It changed so that the landscape and everything looked very beautiful and real.

Then eight days later (Tuesday, 8/10/91) this vision was picked up again after a rebirth:

I got to the end of the path (through the bamboo to where Bhakti was waiting). She pointed with her right hand to another path. Previously, while struggling through the last of the bamboo I had heard the question in my head, 'What do you seek?' I had answered: 'The clear path of light to union with the One'. Bhakti pointed to a clear, white path. I followed it. Then I experienced a very close identification with Christ preaching. People listening. They were being bathed in his life – the life flowed out of him. That is what the listeners and followers were attracted to. This was his gift. I am the way, the truth and the life.

Images of preaching faded. I met Christ on the white path. We embraced... Vision of him saying, 'You are my son.' (Much crying on my part in real world.)... A sense of light pouring from his body into mine. We swapped clothes. He took his off first and so was naked. On the front of his robe was a templar cross in a circle....

I put on his robe.



On Monday of the following week, (Week 3, 14/10/91), we did a process using dance, based around self meeting Self. During this, an energy came up which had this desperate desire to scream: 'MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORESAKEN ME!' but, as this was supposed to be a quiet process, I somehow managed to keep the scream down. Afterwards, walking past Bhakti I quietly asked, 'Can the Self need sessions?' 'Yes. Mine sessioned for two years.'

I came out and a mandala emerged which was a very vivid depiction of an angry Self. (See Mandala below)



The next day, I had a session in which the Ego shouted, 'It's not safe to let the Self up. I want to protect you.' and the Self said things like, 'I don't want to come up. I don't want to go on a journey... I don't want to go on a journey back to God. I just want to be back with God.'

Later that day, in Sandplay, I had a Christ symbol which was half-buried in sand and didn't really want to come out. But it did gradually come out and was propped up by a part which called itself 'Beingness' and was symbolized by a shell. The phrase kept coming out, 'I am that I am.'

This 'Beingness' has since also come out in dynamic dialogue and working with Essence.

It is as if this level of Beingness is the level where there is no trauma – a level that underpins everything. Self has trauma. But Beingness doesn't. I have noticed in the processes working with Essence, that I go in on the adult trauma, go through that quickly into the child's trauma, through that I can go into the Essence's trauma (experienced as a psychotic episode – *I have no boundaries, I don't know who I am*) into this level of Beingness.

I am that I am. Amness experiencing amness. No boundaries.

There were many other Intentionality and other experiences involving the Christ image but the most significant of these involved only a transitory image of Christ. It is what I have come to think of as the embodiment of the Self.

The dream and the embodiment of the Self

Going into Week 4 of the Advanced Training, I had a feeling of nervousness, agitation – for no conscious reason. I realized that this agitation must be an emotional forewarning that this was going to be a momentous week. Yet I reached Thursday lunchtime and the end of Bodywork, thinking, ‘What momentous week? That was the last session for the week and nothing that momentous has happened.’

However, in the afternoon, I had the opportunity to ask Bhakti to work a dream from the previous night and that proved to be the moment.

I was walking in a factory. A huge factory with cathedral-like ceilings and a skylight. The factory was empty and I was walking on a carpeted area where there were work benches. I was walking in bare feet. I suddenly stepped onto huge thick pins that someone had left in the carpet. They were sticking through the soles of my feet. I stood on my right foot to take the pins out of my left foot. Looking at the sole of my left foot, there was a plastic baby embedded right in the middle of the sole. It was stuck in there with its feet sticking up. When I pulled it out, there was all this white gunk deep inside my foot. I woke up.

When I had the dream, there was not the level of distress and pain that such a dream might warrant. But the dream images kept nagging at me all day – in retrospect, pestering at me so that I would ask Bhakti to work the dream rather than process on a hurt.

Here is my journal entry (24/10/91):

I feel different – as if surrounded by a new energy... Bhakti got me to be factory (strong), then skylight (which opened), then the shaft of light to shine on Ren to support him. Then to become the pins: ‘It’s not my fault. Someone left us lying around. It’s not my fault.’ (Bhakti got me to really feel this.) Then I had to be Ren stepping on pins and taking them out. Bulk agony. Screams, crying. When standing on right foot to take pins out of left, the pins went all the way through. Much pain in pins and their removal. Then I had to take the baby out and squeeze out the puss (heaps of pain) and then put the pins and baby into sunshine. I became baby – covered in gunk. Plastic. Wanted to get clean, bigger, then come alive. Ren dragged himself over to tap and washed me (much shaking). Also he washed off the spots of blood on my feet. Then I (as baby) was put in sunshine and grew rapidly. I became large baby with spot on third eye then became Christ-like man. I put hands towards the source of the light and sun came through my palms and struck face. I became a being of light and merged with and around Ren. Like I was within and two inches around Ren. Much shaking through body. ‘I am and always have been.’

After the merging, I shouted to the source of light: ‘What is thy will?’ And the answer came back: ‘You are my son. Go and live that way.’

The working of this dream was a very profound experience. The energy stayed with me all day. I was a bit disappointed when I woke up the next morning to feel just like me!

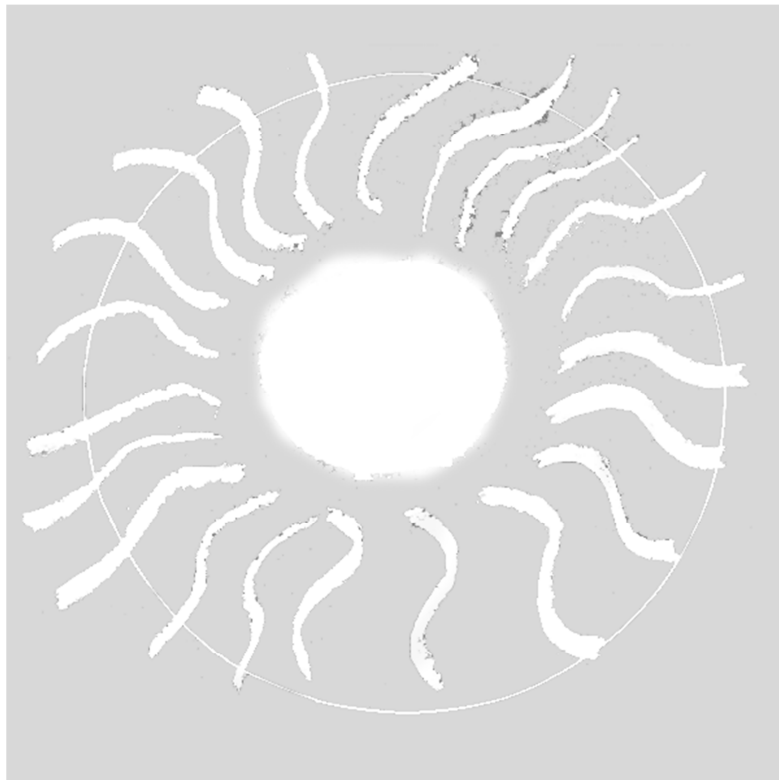
Fortunately, the next day I was able to do some Voice Dialogue and explore my disowning parts. The disowning part wanted to say, ‘That didn’t happen... you’re just the same.’ And, more importantly, the part which emerged the day before came through in the Voice Dialogue. It felt wonderful to be in that energy again.

There was again a sense of the energy extended about two inches beyond my body. His main message to 'the Ren part of Ren' was that he (the Self) was embodied now and would be here even if not always to the fore. 'I am always present.'

In review, the dream fits brilliantly into the Jungian framework of the emergence of the Self. The Self (the baby) embedded in the sole (soul). The soul itself is damaged – possibly by past lives (the pins). There is also gunk around the baby/self. This may be some of the trauma that Essence/self experiences as child when not met before it has a chance to be protected by an Ego personality. The cathedral-like factory seems an apt image for a place of transformation – it is of the spirit but also a place where work has to be done.

In terms of Chinese acupuncture, the baby/self was embedded at 'Kidney One' and the kidneys are the place where fear is stored – also it was embedded at a place which could also be associated with stigmata – Christ's wounds in hands and feet from his nailing to the Cross. This image came out during the subsequent dreamwork. (The baby had spots of blood on his feet.)

(See the two mandalas below drawn after this experience. Here we see a Self with a sense of contentment.)



(Note: the white of the page has been grayed so it can be made out that what was drawn was a white sun.)



Since this embodiment of the Self, I have been rather bemused to find how much like myself I still feel!

In fact, I sort of felt deserted by the Self and took this feeling of desertion into the next rebirth (Week 5, October 28th). I had a very strong identification with a follower of Christ – a woman, I think – watching Christ being crucified on the Cross. There was a feeling of cosmic, absolute and total desertion when he died. Why didn't he save himself? Absolute, engulfing devastation. *I want to die. Kill me, God. I can't go on, I won't go on.*

I shared this experience in the group and after the sharings came to an end and people had left the centre room, I found myself looking at Bhakti and shrugged. She smiled.

I said, 'Sometimes my process bemuses me... I can't help but think that there's more of a connection between Christ and the Self than what we would normally call symbolic.'

'Well, there is no Other.'

The need to share/be met

I have noticed certain very key changes since the embodiment experience. The most obvious one to me is around the issue of sharing – or, as I find myself putting it, ‘being met’.

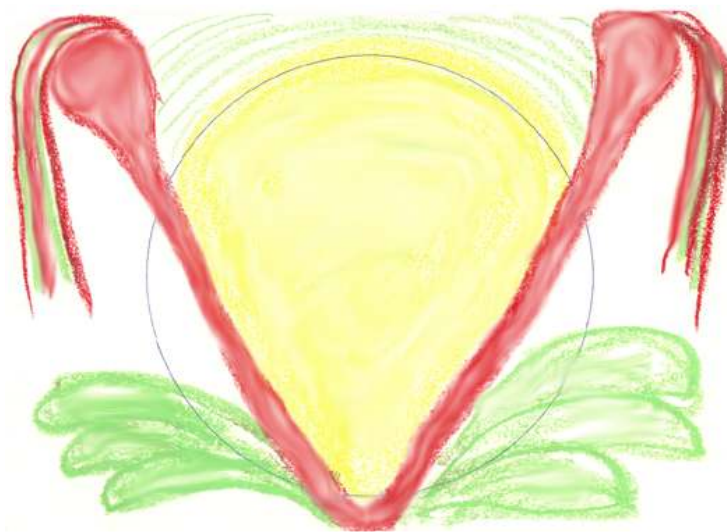
This has been an issue which I have sessioned and processed on quite a bit. At first ‘Why share?’ was my big question. I mean, why tell someone they have been causally involved in upsetting you, that you are pissed off around them. Why not say, ‘Fuck them. I’ll just go off and process on them. It’s not them anyway. It’s just my [inner] child’s stuff. Anyway, sharing with them will just bring up more stuff – fear of sharing, frustration, anger with their replies, and all the rest. Fuck them. I’ll just go and process and get some gift out of it.’

But I have changed a lot around the issue of sharing. Now I’m at the stage of thinking, ‘Why the hell would I want to be around someone who didn’t want to meet me?’ In fact, as we move into the last two weeks of the training, I find myself looking forward with relief to leaving so that I then won’t be around certain people and basically the bottom line here is that these people don’t want to meet me – they want to project on me or hide from others or run away from sharing. And I’m thinking, ‘Why the hell would I want to be around people who don’t want to meet me?’ (I don’t have an answer to that question yet by the way.)

This I see as a pretty radical change and I’ll try to make sense of some of it.

The sharing I am talking about is sharing for sharing’s sake: no desire to make the other person feel anything (for instance, not trying to make them feel guilty), no attachment to getting the other person to change or to do anything – just sharing in order to share and be shared with. A desire to be met. Why is this so important to the emerging and emergent Self?

Firstly, I think with the emergence of the Self, you have the basis of an internal alchemical vessel in which many emotions can be transmuted much more readily. This, I think, is the message behind the mandala below:



It speaks to me of the formation of this inner alchemical vessel. One of the ingredients in this transformation is to put out the emotion – to say what you are feeling around someone and somehow this allows an almost instant transmutation of that energy into something else. (Perhaps this is the case to some degree whether the Self has emerged or not.) The other condition too is that you actually feel the feeling and the act of sharing can support this. You have to feel it and pinpoint what exactly the feeling is before you can share it.

The other thing that seems obvious to me is that the Self has a lot of traumas and issues to clear and most of these seem to be around not having been met as a young baby/child: not being emotionally met, not being psychically met. It is as if Essence when not seen, not acknowledged, not met, goes into shock. As it is still pre-personal, it experiences this lack of 'being met' as psychosis: *I have no boundaries, I don't know where I end, I don't know what I am, I am rejecting myself.*

The attempts at sharing then bring up the issues and allow for the healing: a meeting on an emotional/psychic plane that allows Essence/Self to know itself as it is attached to this INDIVIDUAL.

(On rereading this last sentence, I am reminded that, when I first wrote it, I didn't really know where it came from or why I used capital letters but now, having heard from the Self in dynamic dialogue – see later in thesis – it makes great sense to me.)

If I resist sharing, my inner psyche seems to go into a 'stew': there is a sense of Self rejecting Self.

Here I find a danger in the way some people apply the adult/child lessons into everyday life. A few times in the centre, I have tried to share some upset I have around a person and their response is, 'Well, you better have a talk to little child Ren then, hey.' Obviously, this isn't being met. It's a more sophisticated jargonistic way of not hearing other people's feelings, avoiding sharing, in fact trying to discredit the person in feeling what they are feeling.

In fact, it reproduces the child's (well, my child's) experience of 'I don't have a right to feel anything... I am only allowed to feel "acceptable" emotions.' Rather than using the work to allow our feelings, and experience them; the work is used to squash our feelings. *I shouldn't be feeling that; it's wrong; I've let my child take control; that bloody child of mine.*

In sharing the feeling and being met... 'Yes, I see you are upset'... I have a chance to break the pattern and transform the feeling in an instant.

The sharing then becomes the healing.

I have run out of worthwhile observations that I can make from an Ego level. I am now going to create a space for the Self to come through and shed some light on the process.

My plan is to do some Voice Dialogue and tape record it and transcribe the tape.

- Ren, Saturday morning 23rd Nov 1991.

The voice dialogue with the Self

This was facilitated by Megan Y. on the afternoon of 23rd November, 1991. I decided on four questions:

1. What is the relationship of the Self and Christ?
2. Why is sharing so important?
3. Is there a difference between Self and Essence?
4. What does the 'embodiment' of the Self mean?

I suggested to the facilitator that, if the Self did come through, it would probably take over and not need much prompting – which is how it proved to be.

I have here transcribed virtually all parts of what was said. I have only omitted some parts of personal advice/instruction to me on what to do next year.

Parts of my Ego are very uncomfortable with including all of it and want to omit bits. I think the fear is that of being thought of as inflated. Yet the ideas are so interesting, I have left them in.

There was quite a deal of shaking, vibrating and some sounding, before the Self came through. At first he said, 'This isn't a direct connection. It's through some other voice...' Yet there was a sense that, as the talking went on, the connection became stronger and more direct.

The Self:

I shall describe myself as the Self. I shall talk first about the connection of Self and Essence. It is a mistake, not a serious mistake but a potentially serious mistake, to equate Essence and Self. Self is an entity, a wholeness, a son of God, a derivative of God, a reflection of God, a seed of God placed inside a soul ready to go on a journey through time. The soul is a vehicle.

At various times, it builds up shells around itself as needed, that go by the name of personality or Ego. These things are used as a protective mechanism because the Self is too raw an energy to handle what you would call the direct confrontation between external reality. It needs a tutor in a way, a protector, a filter, a screen – until that screen gets strong enough to be a support. When it is able to be a support and strong enough to actually let go of its total domination in the life of good opportunity then the Self has a chance to emerge. The Self being of God and from God is able then to work towards a union with the man part of man, towards what we would then call a God–man or a union of God and man – so that both God and man can learn.

It is a mistake to try to reverence the Self or worship it in any way. It's something on a journey. It owes a debt of gratitude to the Ego. Surely, Egos can take over and they can become dominant but it is certainly a mistake to think of the Ego as a wrong-doer; it is a creation of the Self as a protective device to allow it to eventually come into full blossoming but it cannot do without the protective device.

In regards to Essence, this is a fortunate and unfortunate coinage. The Essence is associated with the Self, it is of the Self, it is an energy, a vibration of the Self but it is not the Self. The Essence has a lack of characteristics. What you would call pure

Essence has no ability to learn. What you seek in recapturing Essence is to have an experience of the pure energy – the energy before it became tainted....

What is the relationship between Essence and Being? Beingness and pure Essence are very, very close. What you would call Being is sort of the completely decharacterized Essence – Essence without any character, without any taint of human character. So it has a sort of sense of no boundaries, no spatial limitations, no temporal limitations. But also the pure Beingness has no emotions to it either. The emotions – even love, divine love, has a ‘human’ quality to it – a quality of character to it that is not characteristic of a pure Being experience. So the Essence then is sort of – not overlaid – it is sort of Being in a different vibrational way, more of a reaching out of Being, rather than Being just being. It is reaching to know and experience other things. It is reaching out to not just be Beingness experiencing Beingness but to be Beingness reaching out towards a sense of Otherness – that is when you get the emotional side of what you call Essence experiences – the love, the gratitude, the divine calm – that sort of feeling is more the Essence side of Being reaching out towards something else other than just itself.

When the child comes into its Being, when it is young and its energies are so high, the Essence is trying to reach out all the time or, in a way, the Being in it, via Essence, is trying to reach out all the time, is trying to make contact, trying to find out where it ends, what it is, how it can interact, and that is when it experiences rejection. It has no protector; it has no Ego; so that if it sort of comes up against a rejection or does not meet someone because of unconsciousness, then it experiences what we might call a near-psychotic episode in which it may experience itself as rejection, or itself rejecting itself and so, unable to handle that concept, it then shrinks back into what has been called the Black Hole or it shrinks back into shock basically. It is basically a deep, deep level of existential shock of ‘I don’t know what I am’ because Being seeks to know itself by coming into contact with others and instead of just being itself, it seeks to know itself. To do this it has to reach out and has to become other than just Beingness and, in doing so then, it is going on the journey and it does not meet or it meets, and learns and it does not learn, it experiences psychosis and it does not experience psychosis and this is how it goes on its path.

The Self has more of the characteristics of God at any one moment. It is of God – and this is where I come to the question of the relationship of Christ and the Self. The Self is of God and it vibrates with God and, as God has major learnings or traumas, the Self comes to experience those traumas as if, in a way, they happened now or are still happening now because the Self is not so conscious of time.

Now what happened with the Christ [Jesus] incarnation is that God had a very close identification with this soul. I mean, all souls come from him but it was a special soul created for a special one-life voyage so that it came fresh from God, with the Self ready to come up in that same lifetime of opportunity; so that there would be the one incarnation of this fresh soul from God and it would have a chance to experience the God–man experience, the emergence of the Self in the life as man and God. So, in that life, the man and God came up and it was then that the crucifixion took place. Now, in this moment of crucifixion, there was a huge, huge, shocking learning that God–man, as it was, took in: that huge-huge separation anxiety from God, the huge, huge feeling that God was not there for it, that God had deserted it. ‘Eli, Eli, la’ma sabach-tha’ni?’ My God, My God, why hast thou

forsaken me – or deserted me. And this shocking reverberation went through God to God's core because God had always felt that man had created this full catastrophe of this earthly plane for himself, that, in a way, He had washed His hands of man and had forgotten him in a way. He needed to forget him so that man could go on his own journey and then come back to God and God could learn but God had never fully appreciated the trauma that man was carrying in the depth of his soul – in the soul more than in the Self – this separation anxiety from God. The Self in a way remained linked to God but the soul did not – and the soul being what is actually reincarnated rather than the Self – and the soul being what experiences the trauma rather than the Self. So, through the incarnation in the Christ body, there was this huge shock that went through God and, because it went through God, it went through every Self as linked to God. So that, in a sense, every Self went through the Christ experience, went through the separation trauma, went through that huge, huge shock.

When they say in fact that there is no other, in a way, what they mean is that there is no other Self. There are certainly other souls because they are separate, the souls; they are separate people. But the Selves in a way are not separate because we reverberate through and with God so strongly.

So that, in a way, explains the whole Christ thing. And, in fact, you are lucky to be in the West where the Christ is better known because in other societies they cannot accept the Christ image which is the pure image and the pure reality of the shock – and it did not matter if the soul was born in that time or not. But other cultures have to turn it into something else and there is a danger in that too. There is a greater danger of inflation. There is a danger in the West of inflation but there is even a greater danger.

The importance of sharing. Yes. The importance of sharing has to be seen from three different levels. It has to be seen for the importance of the person sharing, and in this it (the person) has to be acknowledged, it has to be seen, it has to have its emotions recognized; it has to not stew in its own emotions. All those things are important, and very, very vital for the person just to put those things out there so they do not eat away at them as we know happens. So it is very important that they should be acknowledged and heard by the person actually saying them too – that they put those things out and hear themselves saying them to another. Otherwise many levels of the personality are hurt – the Ego is hurt – the child is hurt. So there is that level.

On the level of the soul, the soul is in a continual process of reaching out and trying to come in contact with souls that reverberate and understand and can shed light on its karmic path; and just this sense of huge learning. It is always trying to learn, to learn what other souls are doing and so learn what it is doing more and more. So it wants to share very much because it wants to have a feeling of learning and being learnt from. The soul more than anything else is hungry for learnings and for intense experiences which are also a learning. So on that level it is very important for the souls to share and experience other souls and reveal each other.

From the Self point of view, Self does not know itself as separate from other Selves so it has to hear these things put out. In a way, it is more important for the Self that these emotions are put out and expressed than any other level. Because the Self has to hear what it is feeling, what it is going through, and it has to be heard that

the other is not experiencing that at the same time. It has to hear what the other person is saying.

In a sense, the personality only wants to put out what it feels. It is often not very interested in what the other feels; it feels a need to put out what it feels. The soul wants to put out what it feels and it wants to hear. It wants to learn about others but to a lesser degree than the Self. The Self really needs to not just be met, to put out its feelings, it wants to really also meet – it really wants to hear that the other is not going through the same thing at the same time because then it becomes a sense of its own individuality – its own emotional-psychic personality reality that is not the same.

In a way the danger of the Self is that it becomes too identified with everybody else's Self. It has to realize that, although all Selves have this huge link through God, they are on a different path, they are different, and that is the challenge of the journey of the Self, as it starts to come up more and more, is to realize it is on an individual path with an individual Ego-soul-body and to really incorporate all those parts in it, and learn from all of them. Because the great danger is to become too identified with out-there. And you can see it in some people whose Self-Essence is strong; they are always out there for other people; they are out there rescuing other people and things like that and being missionaries because they don't see enough their own individuality, that they need to go on this individual path. So it is vital for the Self to hear what others feel and to put out the feelings too so that it can be met. 'Yes, I can see that is what you are feeling – that is your feeling.' And then it starts to get a sense of its own emotional-psychic boundaries and that is very, very important for the Self because the Self, in a way, is not so much constrained by the physical and it needs to establish its own emotional-psychic boundary. And only really sharing emotions will really help to fulfill that aim of establishing an emotional-psychic vessel for the Self.

As that's established too, it is easier to transmute the emotions. Once the vessel – the emotional-psychic parameters – are established for the Self, there comes an ability to transmute the emotions. Simply by putting them out, they will, as it were, meet the boundary and be dispersed, rather than contained in where they will fester and fester mainly due to the soul, the soul's anxiety rather than any other level – especially in men.

I feel that I have said a lot, probably a lot more than you need for your present project..

The final question I want to talk to is about the sense of embodiment of the Self and what it means for the Self to emerge. Many people are now able to contact this Essence energy and the traumas around the Essence and get to experiences of either pure Essence or Being through this interesting new process. This is very different from the emergence of the Self. The Self is the seed of God in the soul – the total God-seed in the soul. It is very different from that to contact the energies on any level. Every level has a level of what you call Beingness – it's in everything and that can be contacted in various ways and one of these ways is through the Essence trauma that you've been exploring. But this is not the emergence of the Self.

The emergence of the Self is the emergence of the God-energy stored within the soul and when we talk of 'embodiment', it is the full flowering of that energy so that it has contacted the whole body, whole soul, as it were, of the person. At that stage,

the soul and the Essence cease to be different. This is the key thing to take away if you want to take away something from today. The soul and the Self/Essence cease to be different. So, from this point in your journey, after the embodiment of the Self, there is no soul and Self; there is simply Self-with-soul. And that is why the embodiment of the Self becomes an important point for your ongoing journey all through the rest of your incarnations. And that is why people can incarnate as, sort of, already ascended masters as it were because the Self has become embodied in the soul. I hope I made that clear. I think that is fairly clear.

I don't know how much you want to put of this in your thesis, but I would very much like you to give it all to Bhakti because I feel some of this would help her in her learning. And, as I do not have an Ego as Self, it is not a problem for me what she would accept or not. It may be a problem for other parts of you.'

(At this stage, the facilitator asked a question of her own. She asked if Self was the same as spirit.)

'What most people call spirit is the Beingness. It is that level of Beingness which underlies everything. In the beginning, God was Beingness; there was just Being. But it did not know itself, it was just Being. Formed then, on top of this Beingness was a sort of desire to know itself – not just to be itself but to know itself. It is as if you can imagine a pool of water that just gradually spreads and spreads and spreads out and never ever comes in contact with anything. How does it know what it is? Only if it comes in contact with something, can it say, 'Ah, I am water, I am not rock. There is something there that stops me.' And Beingness then came a desire to know itself. And that was the first emergence of what you might call Essence, an emotion on top of the Being and with the emotion on top of the Being, God began to have characteristics. So that God in a way then became more than just Beingness. Beingness is never traumatized which is why people crave that experience of Beingness: I am that I am. But God, emerging from just his Beingness, began to desire more than just the Being, He began to wish to know what He was. And that is all I shall say for now.

But what most people call spirit is the Beingness. So God is more than just Beingness, more than just spirit now, because he has evolved and learnt. As Beingness, he was still all-powerful but powerful over what?

I will emerge again and will talk more on the evolution of all things.

But what I want to do is I want to write things in conjunction with the Ego. I like what we are doing in the thesis – that we are doing it in parts together as it were. It is going to be a long journey before I as Self and Ego come into any sort of merging. At the moment, I am nurturing different aspects of the Ren part of Ren and he is also – very strong Ego – he is helping me by his strength and we will come into more and more conscious a union over the time...

For now this is a very great deal so I will stop.'

Some reflections by the Ren part of Ren

During the voice dialogue, I was very strongly aware of what was being said but after it finished, I had some trouble recalling all but the most striking parts. Rather

like a dream which you are very conscious of when it was happening but tends to evaporate on waking. I was pleased to have the tape recording.

The part which has made a very deep impression on me is the idea that when the Self fully emerges or 'embodies', Self and soul join in union so that the karmic path is forever unalterably changed. Apart from anything else, it is nice to know that all the hard work has resulted in a permanent advance in my soul's path.

The other thing which has occurred to me just this morning is that, as I come to the end of my time at Living Waters, I have been quite aware that I have not had a full kundalini experience – the rising of the snake. But now I have let it in that the emergence of the Self and its fusion with the soul is a more significant, lasting event.¹

The Self's reflections on sharing reminded me of an insight I had. It was during the week of the first lecture on Essence (Week 6). This was an amazing week for me (and many others in the centre) in which I feel like I had a revelation about the nature of relationships every day. On Wednesday, we did the 'birth canal' experience. Working my way through that tunnel of bodies, I felt a moment of almost total panic – I didn't know when it was going to end or if I was going to make it through. In that moment, I desperately reached out for psychic and emotional support. And I was met. Sarai was there and the other conscious beings were there and were supporting me. They met me on an emotional and psychic level.

This felt like a very great revelation to me. It seemed to me that this is what most babies go through. In that moment of desperate panic in the birth canal, they reach out on an emotional and psychic level for support. And, hopefully, they are met by their mother and, ideally, by conscious support people. If they aren't met... trauma... trauma all the way down to Essence level.

It made sense of the problem that I and other Caesarians have struggled with – this sense of having no psychic boundaries. When the baby goes down the canal, it puts out for emotional/psychic support and is met by the mother. With Caesarians, the mother is unconscious. When a Caesarianed baby such as myself went into its moments of panic, it put out for emotional/psychic support from the mother and was not met. It kept putting out and putting out – nothing. Hence this feeling of having no psychic boundaries.

Somehow the vaginal baby, going down the birth canal not only has the boundary of its skin pointed out to it but also, by reaching out and being met, has, its emotional/psychic boundary established also.

After finally getting through the birth canal of bodies (relief) and, while lying on the mattress with my sitter, I felt able to reach out to her in a different way – on an emotional/psychic level and be met. Then this feeling of melting, merging love came up. This seems the – or a – major way that 'Essence' can experience itself as melting, merging love: it reaches out emotionally and psychically and is met by another Essence. This then brings up this feeling of the melting, merging love – though it is still Essence experiencing itself.

¹ Since the time of writing this thesis, I have learnt a great deal more about kundalini and realized, in fact, that I was having kundalini energies rising up my spine – raising vertebra by vertebra (often characteristic of the main *sushumna* channel). But I had been misinformed to expect kundalini as a snake-like energy rushing up the spine (which is sometimes characteristic of the less important, subsidiary channels of *ida* and *pingala*).

I am not sure how the 'Self part of Ren' would put this. But it does seem to basically fit in with what was said on Being and Essence.

I am suddenly reminded of my dog – or dogs in general. They are very 'Essence' creatures, capable of reaching out psychically, meeting humans on an emotional/psychic level and very able not only to feel love but to assist people in feeling melting, merging love. Dogs have lots of Essence but I doubt whether they are in possession of a 'Self' the way humans are. I don't know. I'm still struggling to get a handle on the difference between Self and Essence.

As the Ren part of Ren brings this thesis to a close, I would like to share that I feel quite nervy about how it will be received.

- Ren, Sunday, Nov 24th, 1991.



Reflections 2014:

The thesis was, in fact, incredibly well received – even though it contradicted some of the things that Ahrara Bhakti was teaching at the time. The next time I heard her talk about the emergence of Self, she talked of it in terms exactly like this thesis.

Now that's a teacher.

Let me not leave this extremely discomfoting revealing of my inner life without this observation from St Teresa of Avila who, like me, was extremely discomfoted in revealing her inner journey but, in her case, was instructed to do so by her confessors.

It is not intended that the powers, senses and passions should continually enjoy this peace. The soul does so, indeed, but in the other mansions there are still times of struggle, suffering and fatigue...

- *The Interior Castle*, 'The Seventh Mansions' 2:14.