

Winter Term Review

Discovering Reality leading to Self Realisation (6)

Start with Meditation

We began this term looking to see if we could understand the Real world that we know lies beyond our senses, rational thought and imagination.

We took guidance from these words of the first Shankara:

What then is 'Reality' beyond all our experiences? There is only one thing that never leaves us – the deep consciousness. This alone is the constant feature of all experience. And this consciousness is the real Absolute Self.

Doctor Roles confirmed this to us after a lifetime of study based on knowledge, meditation and work on being when he told us from his own experience:

There is only one Consciousness. The levels are levels of impediment to that (Universal) Consciousness. Everything is that Consciousness. That is what we have to feel and know.

And the words of Bede Griffiths had a resonance of deep understanding that we each felt:

Beyond all thought and feeling and imagination there is an inner sanctuary into which we scarcely ever enter. It is the ground or substance of the soul where all the faculties have their roots and which is the very centre of our being. It is here that the soul is at all times in direct contact with God.

Then we looked again at the Ladder of Self Realisation given to us by Shankaracharya Santanand Saraswati, the foremost exponent in Northern India of the non-dualistic teaching of the Advaita tradition which showed us the steps or stages by which we can come to Reality.

These steps were defined several times in different papers and they are an octave pertinent to the development of Man and Woman. They are summed up in the (attached) diagram by Doctor Roles. We can see there are two intervals that have to be filled in the development of this octave. The first interval between Mi and Fa is filled by the introduction of a Method and Higher Knowledge. The method we have been given in the Advaita tradition is Meditation.

Between Si and Do there is another interval just before Turiya. It is filled by a Second Impulse coming from outside.

This process is known only to the Teacher, and unless the disciple becomes the Teacher he would not realise the importance of these shocks. (Record 1962 p28)

These Seven Stages have a parallel with the Seven Levels of Man in our Western System and the Shankaracharya gave his permission to incorporate these seven stages with our Western System. He thought they would fit in very well. (ibid p29)

The parallels that can be seen are found in the last four stages of the Ladder. Stage 4 in the Eastern Tradition speaks of the 'Pull of the Way', and the Western System speaks of 'Man with Permanent Aim'.

Stage 5 is the first stage of Realisation or Consciousness in the Eastern Tradition and is referred to as 'Insight'. The Western System speaks of 'Man who is Self Conscious'. This is the first level of School in the Inner Circle of Humanity.

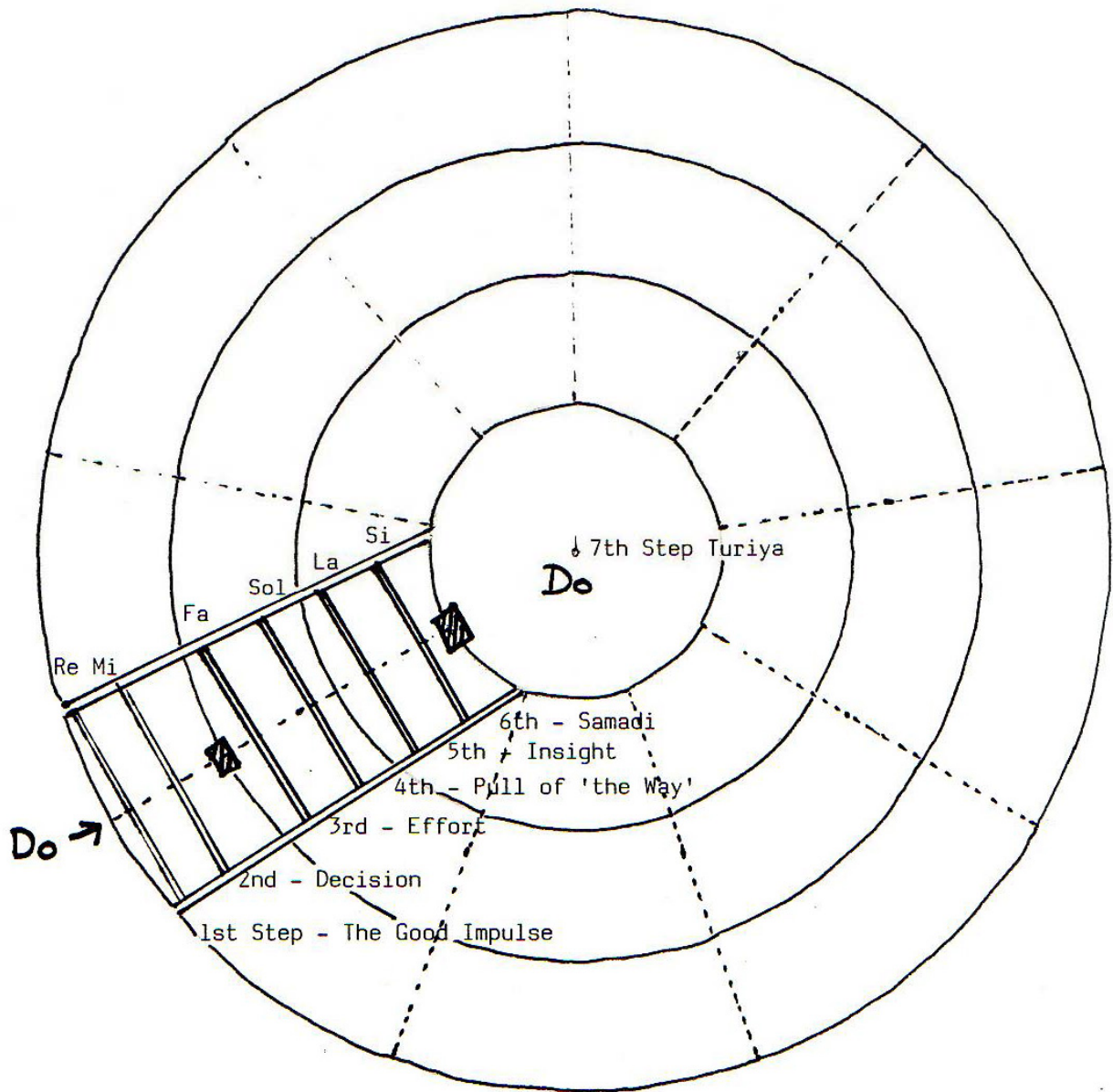
Stage 6 in the Eastern Tradition is 'Abundance of Insight and Sattva', and in the Western System is 'Man with Objective (Cosmic) Consciousness'. It is the second level of Inner Circle School.

Stage 7 in the Eastern Tradition is Turiya, that of a Fully Realised Man, who knows all that can be known. He knows how to Do. This state can only be brought about by the grace of Param-Atman. Stage 7 in the Western System is 'Man of all Possibility'. Here again it is a Man who can Do. It is shown to be beyond the Higher Centres. This Man is immortal 'within the limits of the Solar System'. This is the third level of Inner Circle School. In Christianity he is referred to as Divine Man and all that involves.

Pause

In case we find this subject too daunting the Shankaracharya gives us a story:

Of a traveller who has to go on a journey of seven hours and who starts in the dark at 3 a.m. with a small lamp in his hand, and with the aid of street lamps. The way is not clear and the light is bad, and he feels his way with some trepidation and caution. By the time he reaches the Fourth Stage, there is dawn, and the sun's rays make the Way increasingly clear so he doesn't need other lamps. He can now with certainty tread his way up to the High Noon of the Seventh or final stage; so that when he meets the Atman he is going to see he can become like Him.



DEVELOPMENT OF IMPRESSIONS - THE LADDER