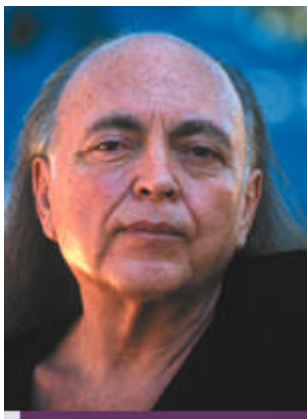


True Academy

from Adidam.org

In the following talk from October 9, 2006, Avatar Adi Da speaks about true academy, the nature of philosophy, "academia", and His experiences at university and seminary.



"The Academy I Have Established"

Not having any kind of academic background before I went to Columbia University, I naively presumed that the study of philosophy would be participation in a way of life, or something that had to do with transformation by Wisdom.

What I found was that academic study of philosophy is just about ideas or word exchanges. It is strictly "academic", a term that now suggests thinking or conceptual activity divorced from any kind of life-transformation.

The doing of academic philosophy has nothing to do with life-transformation. It is a conceptual discipline without any other reference to profundity. Naively, I expected that it would even have to do with Spirituality, but it was nothing of the kind. Therefore, I had to carry on My own investigations by Myself, and, ultimately, I had to go elsewhere, outside the domain of academia.

My involvement in this merely academic and conceptual activity, including examining philosophy as an historical process and as a development of conceptual activity, generated a realization that there were fundamental problems needing to be dealt with. They were not merely academic or conceptual problems, but fundamental problems arising from what I saw as the absence of profundity, and the absence of answers, in both Eastern and Western civilizations.

It was also made evident to Me that, ultimately, religions were failed exercises and myth-based. So what I got from studying university philosophy was the discovery that something was wrong. At Columbia, I was not involved in anything like a Wisdom process at a traditional academy, even though I somehow expected that to be the case.

What is commonly called "philosophy" is not philosophy. "Philosophy" literally means the "love of wisdom". In fact, Wisdom was personified in the ancient days as a kind of feminine icon, ultimately representing what in the Indian tradition is called "Shakti".

If you look at the dictionary definition of "philosophical", it specifically makes reference to a kind of calmness in the face of life, a transformed disposition. I use the term "equanimity" to mean the same thing, except that I am referring to something beyond a behavioral disposition, technique, or attitude.

Ultimately, what I call "philosophy" is about the transcending of mind, and even of brain. I did continue with philosophy after Columbia — including at Stanford and at two seminars — but it was not done merely academically, not merely in the Western context, and not merely as an exercise of mind.

However, at university, that is not what the study of philosophy is about. It points again to what the president of Columbia said in My first week there: "At Columbia, we will not teach you how to be happy, but we will teach you how to think." That said it all. I could just as well have dropped out of university right then. Because, if philosophy is not about Realizing Happiness — meaning in ultimate terms — then what is it for?

The process I Myself was involved in was philosophy in its original sense. Everything could actually come under that heading. However, the academic process was not about Realizing Happiness, or Ultimate Wisdom — and, so, what was the point? Well, there was no point, except to get more and more bound up in problems. And that is what occurred for Me at Columbia. I saw the dead end of all that was proposed in the world.

At the same time, there was a Yogic process going on with Me, including the events associated with the "Bright" that occurred during My time at Columbia. Yet, that was a profundity that I brought with Me. It had nothing to do with Columbia itself. I had to find it all Myself and make use of it in a manner that was relevant to My own Purpose, or Disposition, and to the Motion of My own Life here.

What I have since established has precedent both in the East and the West--in the East in the form of traditional ashrams, and in the West in the form of the academies of philosophical process, especially as exemplified in ancient Greece (not only by Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and, later, Plotinus, but by many others who are more secondary figures in the philosophical tradition).

In the ancient days, philosophers were Realizers of a kind. But, as time went on, so-called "philosophers" became less and less like Realizers, to the point where Realization had nothing to do with philosophy anymore. Thus, in recent centuries, the doing of philosophy has become completely divorced from Realization in any sense whatsoever.

Philosophy has been taken out of the academy and reduced to something "academic". Not only has it become merely an exercise in concepts alone, but it has also become a pursuit that is focused in the analysis of language itself. It has become something without reference to Wisdom or Ultimacy.

In the places where I engaged university and seminary study, there were no wise men or wise women. There were no Realizers. There were intelligent people. There were people who were more alive in some kind of consideration and profundity than others. However, these were places where philosophy was failing. They were places where everything and everyone was failing because of a reductionist mind. That mind has acquired everything — even what was of virtue in traditional pursuits of the past — and turned it all about, or reduced it into something less than ultimately fruitful.

There is much that goes on in academic institutions and research centers that is certainly important, positive and of great interest. Yet, there is also something missing, just as there is something missing in global civilization altogether, and in Western and Eastern civilizations such as they have been.

Academic institutions are not oriented toward transformation in the manner that I am talking about. They are not about to become ashrams or traditional academies dedicated to Wisdom. The exchanges at universities tend to be reductionist, and the same thing is true in religious institutions as well.

Both academic and religious institutions are focused in false or limited views. At the general level, they are concerned with merely social-ego matters — and, even at the highest levels, their considerations are limited by "point of view", or the presumption of a separate "self" located somewhere in time and space. Real profundity is absent. Beyond a point, there is no profundity in the institutions of the common world at the present time.

The return of philosophy to the situation of academy and to persons of Wisdom would seem to be a necessary cultural matter. What I have established — including the Reality-Way of Adidam Itself, the body of practitioners of Adidam, the Sacred Places of Adidam, My Written and Spoken Teaching, My Literary Art and Image-Art, the history and stories of My Work — is such an academy.

The Academy I have established is a circumstance of actual Wisdom-Teaching and Wisdom-Realization, where people spend time in the Eternal Company of the Realizer. They are transformed by that devotional relationship, through processes not merely of verbal consideration but of Wisdom-participation. In the Academy I have established, people are enabled to participate in Reality Itself.