

The Focal Point

By Wei Wu Wei

We mistake the functional centre of the phenomenal aspect of our noumenality for a `self'. It has no more autonomy than a heart, a physical organ, no more volitional potentialities, and no more self-consciousness; yet we attribute to it the sentience which represents what noumenally we are.

A psyche-soma, phenomenal as it is, must have a functional centre, without which it could not be what is seen as a `sentient being'. Such centre must be psychic, just as the heart is somatic. The five senses, interpreted by the sixth, depend on this centre for their manifestation as perception and cognition; all functioning, instinctive or rational, is directed therefrom, and it is logical, therefore, that this centre should be considered as the subjective element of the objectivised phenomenon. So, phenomenally, it appears, but itself this `subject' is an object, so that never could it be what we are, but only a part of the phenomenal setup of the discriminated and separate phenomenon which we think that we are. Never could it be autonomous, never could it exercise volition, never could it be what we conceive as `us'.

Moreover our sentience is essentially noumenal, and we are mistaking the switchboard for the power-station, the reservoir for the source, an electronic computer for a mind: the functional centre of a sentient being is purely cybernetic.

The identification which gives rise to a supposed `entity' that then and thereby thinks that it is in bondage, is identification of what noumenally we are, of our natural noumenality, with the functional `organ' in the psyche-soma which becomes thereby a supposed `self' or `ego' with relative, if not full, autonomy and volition. We do not even care to remember that only a small fraction of our physical movements, of our organic functioning responds in any way to the initiatives of our personalised wishes.

How does this situation arise? It arises as a result of the splitting of mind, called `dualism', whereby the phenomenal aspect of noumenality - that is pure impersonal phenomenality - divides into negative and positive, and there appear `objects' which require a `subject', and `others' require a `self', each totally dependent on its counterpart for its apparent existence.

But mind, though apparently split in the process of phenomenalisation, remains whole as noumenon, and only in the becoming apparent, or in order to become apparent, is it obliged to divide into an apparent seer and an apparent seen, a cogniser and a thing cognised, which nevertheless can never be different, never two, for though in appearing it divides yet in its substratum it remains whole.

All phenomenality, therefore, is objective, that is appearance in mind, and its appearance is dependent on its division into a seer or cogniser and what is seen or cognised, that is which becomes apparent to an observer whose existence is only apparent in order that appearance may appear. It follows that in all this phenomenality there is no `ens' anywhere, for neither the apparent cogniser nor the apparently cognised is an entity in its own right, i.e. having a nature of its own, autonomy or volition.

It follows also that the substratum of `sentience' whereby all this manifestation is cognised, called prajna in Sanskrit, is an immediate expression of noumenality. Utterly impersonal, as devoid of `ens' as are phenomena, `it' is nevertheless, and `it' must necessarily be, what we are, and all that we are. In conceptualising `it' as prajna, `it' is conceptualising `itself', via the familiar dualistic process of splitting into conceptualiser and concept or cogniser and cognised, so that in seeking for what we are - that for which we are seeking is the seeker: the seeker is the sought and the sought is the seeker, and that - as Padma Sambhava told us in plain words - is what we are.

There is no entity involved anywhere, and space-time is only a conceptual framework which accompanies events in order that events may have the necessary extension whereby they may appear to occur.

Objectively there is total negation, for the Negative Way alone abolishes the factuality of all phenomena and the existence of entity as such, but if a positive representation is to be attempted these are the elements out of which the image seems to be composed.

Note on Identity

Each 'other' becomes (or is) a 'self' to itself, and each self becomes (or is) an 'other' to another 'self'. That is what 'individuals' are. - WEI WU WEI.

We are miserable unless the sun is shining, but if the sun were shining within we should not even notice whether the feeble phenomenal sun was shining or not - WEI WU WEI.

That which is self is other: that which is other is self.
And this which I am is neither self nor other - WEI WU WEI.

"He is enlightened" or "he is not enlightened." What difference could there be? In either case he is still there.
"Emptiness is not being there to be empty!"
That also is the meaning of 'poverty'." - WEI WU WEI.

It is what I am that is seeing,
And I have ten-thousand eyes. - WEI WU WEI.

What we call a shadow, is, in fact, a shadow of a shadow - WEI WU WEI.



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