

FRONTIERS OF EXPERIMENTATION

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In considering the phenomena of ESP I seem to think almost wholly in terms of relationships; for ESP is essentially communication of information between two agents, sender and receiver, and the content of the communication in part reflects the relationship. (The word "information" can be translated as "stimulus of some kind or another.") This information is optimum if the relationships of the two or more agents involved have teleological characteristics. For this reason it may well be that group techniques of studying the effects of LSD—situations of a group of two, group of three, etc.—will provide one approach to an explanation of what occurs.

To start from the neuro-physiological point of view—Adrian and Ashley have lately said that information is processed in the brain in either a spatial or temporal array of relations. It is highly likely, according to them, that spatial relations are translated temporally. If, for example, you look at that ash-tray, you receive a certain set of stimuli but, in order for these stimuli to become of value to you, they must be temporally arranged, even though the object has only spatial dimensions. It is believed that, even to retain one simple image, we must have such temporal relations in the brain.

In attempting to answer such basic questions as the relationship of the self to the external world—who am I?, what is the world?—we use such temporal relations, are forced to use them because of the brain mechanism. Though it may well be that, to answer such questions, a time dimension is not necessary. Another dimension, or set of dimensions, may be all that is required in translation; to the neurophysiologists like Adrian and Ashley, there is no reason why a completely unique set of space-time relations within each brain is not possible.

From a philosophical, or metaphysical, point of view all our activity is governed by relating—by relatedness or relatingness. Everything we do is governed wholly by the way in which we see (or feel) relationships, or relate ourselves to systems of relationships. The number of relationships is limited, and these we feel, if we do not precisely apprehend them. I am aware of myself only in my relationships with others—with John, or Humphrey, or Duncan—in terms of the character of our relationships. I may see them in terms of visual stimulation, but I feel them because I interpret their existence in terms of our relationships. It is a relationship which is feeling, which may be triggered off by sensory stimuli, but is not the stimuli. I exist, am aware of myself, in terms of this feeling—the one universal of Whitehead's conceptual framework—otherwise I am nothing. It follows that I am I because I am part of a pattern of relationships. These relationships are felt as obligation and expectation in terms of rightness and goodness.

For me, rightness is that which is correct or proper or appropriate to the achievement of the end of a social grouping (social pattern of relationships) or of a person as related to the external world. This is essentially a teleological argument. If we, as people, come together to achieve an end, what we do is either right or wrong in terms of the relationships set up to achieve that end. Each contributes, that is function; and if we do not contribute, then we are wrong.

Goodness is betteringness, the making better of the achievement of the end. That is to say, goodness is concerned with means; but, being so, is ultimately concerned with ends since, in the means the end is also bettered. A system of relationships may have rightness but no goodness—it does not improve, create. But by its bettering the betteringness becomes right. The two are intimately related in this constant dynamic of change which is creation and creatingness. Here is the positive and negative, the Yin and Yang. Rightness can be nothing without goodness, and goodness cannot, without rightness, be bettered. I am aware of myself wholly in terms of this moral system. I am I because I have relationships within this

conceptual framework, these relationships being governed by the abstractions that are obligation and expectation.

Let us take the metaphysical proposition of Father Omez when he says that man is the center of the world. Since rightness cannot be goodness, and since goodness cannot be without rightness (except in the complete whole that is the ultimate conception we call God, the Perfection, and the creator) then man as aware of himself in such a system of relationships can be so only as being central, relating outwards from his apprehending center. Nevertheless, though we are aware of self, and of the bases of pattern, only in this centrally apprehending fashion, we are still capable of postulating that this self-pattern is part of the larger pattern which we comprehend as based upon the fundamentals of rightness and goodness. (We do not know God's will but we comprehend its bases.) We belong to this fundamental continuum—and here may lie an explanation of telepathy, and other phenomena—in that we are part of this fundamental reservoir of goodness and rightness. Being part, it may be possible to have telepathy, and foresight, and hindsight.

I suggest that we formulate some kinds of experiments in which we consider these relationships between observed and observer, and between and among members of groups, in LSD experiments. It may well be that a person seeking self under LSD may find the substratum of the reservoir which is awareness, or understanding of rightness and goodness. There he can unscramble the confusion of the system of beliefs pressed upon him from childhood onwards, a system based upon rightness and goodness. In this way he moves closer to the reservoir of Godliness, of Spirituality. I think this may account for the excellent therapeutic effect of LSD when properly used. It would account also for the universal use of other psychedelics for this purpose. The reservoir is there in each of us, the person, the I and his world, and the world itself, compounds of the abstractions that are rightness and goodness. That the mathematician may finally reduce to symbols of energy. Meanwhile we may reach a concept of the totality of the universe, and of the human world itself.