

Symbol and the One

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This world of dew.
Is a world of dew.
And yet. And yet.
Issa

1. Introduction

We wish to be happy. To be: enlightened; at peace; wise; in love; good; without suffering; our true selves; more; real; whole; simple; complete. This wish is understood as universal to the human condition. It is a cause sometimes of frustration and pain, but self conscious recognition of this wish, is tacit recognition that our human condition might be more than meets the eye. Yes, though, of dew and evanescence, and, as the poet said, yet and yet.

This wish is emblematic. Our lives may be more than the self circumscribed limit by which we are bound. This understanding is earned with much strain. Coming upon and realizing that we are bound up in our self imposed limit is at once a freeing and a recognition of a deep problem on our journey toward happiness. The freedom here conceived is in the possibility of moving beyond the self imposed limit, recognizing the limit as horizon to be sailed toward and through. The problem can be understood as recognition of the need to return responsibility to the individual for the state of his or her own existence. This is not to say, as we know, that freedom is immediately attainable, or what we understand as beyond the horizon is known (as self or other) or knowable. This is also not to say that the actual realignment to self responsibility comes easily, without perhaps great and costly effort before it is assumed. The shift will necessitate perhaps, several reorientations. One involves a recognition regarding ourselves and who and what we are, including what and how we know, another, recognition that the world in which we live might not be dead material or mechanical matter outside of us, but living, intimate to us, within us, as we are within it.

We begin to shift our way of understanding by recognizing that the limit we have self imposed at the horizon is permeable. The sea of our own being in which we live is held in a greater ocean. We are told this and we know it deeply on our own. The questions arise always at the boundary. They reflect all aspects of our actual life; knowing, feeling, willing. Beside the basic who and what questions, we ask also how I know. Is knowing real at the core here? If we are of this ocean, will it be of use in our journey to see how this is so? If so, how to receive the bounty the Ocean holds? So, we set out to territory ahead, unknown.

2. Episteme

Episteme is about knowing. It is parent to what we now call epistemology. It is to be understood as true knowledge. Knowledge and being at whatever level met would be truth for that level. It can be thought of as states of being, with the caveat that these states are alive. Episteme is real knowing when knowledge enters understanding and is accurate. It can contain in that context, systemization as science, and theory as deep contemplative speculative accurate thought regarding the nature of the world in which we find ourselves. It is gateway understanding to the problems of self and world we are trying to consider. It is more intimate and real to us than we might realize, not simply the idle talk of academic philosophers. In this view how and what we know intertwines with who and what we are and the what and how of this world, in a most concrete way. In relation to epistemology, it can be thought of as the goal of that science.

As adjunct to the positive function episteme has a critical function. Here it serves to correct the errors of our previous misknowledge. Again, this is a form of epistemological study. The errors are what have bound us and block our pursuit. When the understanding awakens to consider the problems of existence the positive and the negative movements within episteme can work in consort. As how we know, and what know, are literally and concretely intertwined with who and how we are, it would be of great benefit to the seeker after happiness to know with accurate knowledge to begin with and truth when the term is found.

In either case, the correction of the false misknowing or the increase in accurate knowledge awakening to what is true; an advance in understanding the circumstance of our bound existence has been made. Correct enough error and we might come upon a life in which real knowing is possible. Assimilate a world view more accurate and appropriate to our possible nobility as humans, and our world experience can change toward that nobility. What is important in either case, at any level of either movement, is that the movement is toward growth, expansion wholeness. A mind or soul is understood here as being open to be taught by the world. So when we find that ... “our way is to teach our soul”, the meaning here in part is the direct understanding that the world we live in, is in fact the place of our future realization (Tathatagarbha – understood here as womb of the Buddha). As such, our very life becomes symbol, as we begin to learn that the universe within and without is a play of deep profound meaning, leading from chaos perhaps, to the intelligibility about reality that is possible for us.

This work of the awakened understanding is sometimes called dialectic. At times dialectic is understood as simply a search through the forms of knowledge in an attempt to rise through those forms to get a greater view of the forms, singular or as a whole. Dialectic is sometimes a critical set of argument and response, with strict logical form in an attempt to come to knowledge or truth, or disabuse an errant mind of falsity held.

Plotinus presents dialectic as his method to achieve the term of that we seek. For Plotinus, dialectic is the power of a soul to move through realms of reality toward what is beyond knowledge to the One, the Source of all: a real movement of a living soul in life. A being evolving. Dialectic, as lived and evolving, takes place for us ever at the horizon point of our life. Conceived this way, as the movement and orientation of a living being in a living world, Dialectic serves to correct the understanding in regard to reality. Dialectic has its life in knowledge, following the delineation of truth in knowledge, finding an ever expanding object in its moving, whether the movement is out to the beyond, or in to the depth of our own nature. In its critical function it causes the object to ever dissolve in to its source. This double movement, one advancing toward truth through knowledge, one clearing away falsity through critical thought creates at once an open ground and a demand for the soul to proceed. Symbol knowing is a major ally to Dialectic.

3. Truth, the One, the Good and Knowledge

The One, as Truth, is conceived here, as sourceless ambient light which bathes everything. The One is Author of all; the Good, the end Term of what I am, and what the Universe is. Its presence (not immediately known to us) is the most effective act. As source, it grants anything its being at any level, from Universal Being, to Universe, to grain of sand. We can only know this sourcing in retrospect. We can't 'fathom the Silent Power'. The One, Unity, we are told grants unity to the unities. This is language here, but what is meant is, that anything that is in any realm owes the fact of its being to this grace. In some unspecified way, we participate in this Unity, and are by it. The One's grant of being is understood as at once procession and return. The One, the source even of universal life, breathes out life and in breathes life. This procession and return from and to the One, along with the notion that Truth somehow touches knowledge holds several cornerstone ideas in understanding how Happiness that we seek and the symbols we find in living our life can begin to coalesce in our thought. As Anthony would say, "Capitol Ideas". Inborn in our very being is the demand to return to this Source. The One then, as the Supreme object of desire in any and all life, is the causeless cause of all our striving toward goodness.

Truth stands here for the One, The Source. In this view, Truth is necessarily undefined; the One is held to be ineffable. Truth presencing the One is simple fact.

Truth needs no announcement or acknowledgement, nor is there any. Knowledge is held to be fragmentary Truth conditioned by multiplicity. Some part of Truth is in any real knowledge, and all knowledge contains some element of truth. This is a simple iteration implied in the notion that the Intellectual Principle and all that is included within it and all that follows from it in to manifestation emanates somehow from the One.

As such, it is possible to come upon real knowledge in its forms, as we are sourced from the same source. More; it is a necessary stage in our way. At first we see that real knowledge can be accumulated. We can use the forms to form our wisdom. We see perhaps that we can become wise or whole, or simply better in our move to evolve in mind and heart by and through these forms. In our move to authenticity we begin to see through the forms given us, that this knowledge we think we are assimilating, is in fact Real Being of an incomprehensible grandeur and scope that permits us life within it. We can begin to see that this use so called is in fact a conversion that begins to go on within us and that even here we are of this real. We are not capable to contain truth, this is axiomatic, and we become aware that we are not capable without the massive reorientation spoken of, to come to real Knowledge, the deep being of the universe. We are of intellectual bent to be sure, and in this view our identity lies There in the Real Intellectual Being of the universe. But as we are also of soul born, we must use our heart/mind and thought to understand. This demand to understand is prefigured in the One, and is experienced by us in the movement in our whole being toward the One. To come to truth the individual must begin to disappear in it. The gate is through one's own integrality of being. Intuition in to Self nature opens beyond self knowing to a realm of open awe and wonder. In our way, we may be able to absorb knowledge, become it even, though we see that it starts to absorb us, but we are necessarily absorbed by Truth.

At any rate, this would be the end of episteme conceived this way.

4. Cosmogony

What kind of world need it be to so that we can talk of Symbol as useful to us in our movement toward happiness? Cosmogony treats of how the world has come in to Being. It is prior to cosmology which is a science of origins from within the world we live in. Cosmogony, in the view we are considering, is Theogony. That is it implies that the world is unfolded into existence as Theophanic unfolding of deity on various levels in various modes. Such language these days is hard to hear. But the symbols we use, if they are not simply sign and emblem, must refer to some thing real and actual. When we use deity as a word in language, it causes us to take notice, to mark that we are pushing outward toward some borderland consideration.

We, casually use words whose meanings outstrip the understanding in the use. This highlights, of course a most marvelous of symbolic forms – Language.

The simplest way to proceed is to remember that the Universe “in which we live and move and have our being” is alive, and see what this implies. The implication it seems, moves in several directions. The Universe understood here as a living being owes its Livingness to the Source of Life itself. The One is understood here as the Source of this life. Life prefigures in the One under the aegis of its superabundance. While nothing can be predicated of the One, it is also so that we can't deny It Life or intelligence. The movement of this Life Intelligence out of the One, fills Being as Being emanates from it. (Language has trouble here. The usage of words like 'out of the One' while meaningful in some way, is not accurate. We know in our thought, that nothing is outside the one, yet we do not yet know that we are not - thus our work). This emanation we must remember is Ever, not something that happens in time. This living Universe unfolding is grandeur within Grandeur itself. In the conception we are trying to understand, this Universe unfolding out of the Absolute One into Being Living is a movement from potential differentia in the One, so to say, to a plethora of and multitude of powers, intelligences and beings that underlie this and any Universe. Deity. The dead nature of the world as postulated by modern scientific thought, (which is hopefully changing), is juxtaposed to an understanding of the world, as Living Being, differentiated but not different from the One Source.

As the One is full to overflow with Living Intelligence Being, so is this Being toward its emanent, Soul. It is given to Soul in this view to place in to Nature all the natures it can. Soul, powerful being that it is is tasked with moving its vision of the Intelligible Being in to existential life. The process as Anthony has tried to describe requires a multitude of Souls and various translations of the numerous variegated multivalanced layering of Living Being. This Being is to live, and Soul is the means. What is important here is that Soul brings, through its contemplation of its Intelligible prior and its capacity by contemplation to place Form into matter, us our world. The Intelligence Being, which is of the Prefigured Intelligence of the One, enters Nature, as the world. Human life now has place and because of this movement of intelligences through Soul, possibility for Intelligence, and more, possibility to achieve Unity and rest. The world as process now, is not on this view simply an indefinite infinite of facts that we group, but rather higher and lower grades of intelligence power differentiated, filled with meaning at all levels within a uniform underlie. A universe.

Nature ensouled is replete with the Life of Being and its forms. It can exhibit, as the ancients knew, the Universe as a living Being, which makes or can make the phenomena within Nature a symbolic writing revealing the forces and laws governing the energetic, intelligent and spiritual aspects of this universe. Nature

supplies body, which, mind or Soul enters to live here. Human beings living now as part of nature become enrolled in the school of living on Earth. To see this way will involve a transformation of mind which can serve to alter our relation to knowledge and its expressions. This is simply an implication of Plato's lead that we look to the world as the most wondrous expression of the profundity of the Realities beyond.

Understanding the world in this way, as Theophany, opens much possibility for us, here. The essential community between visible and invisible things can now be seen. Sympathy between us and the Ten Thousand things become available and meaningful. The attraction between us and our source is possible, as what we have opened to is this source whether we know or not. All existence, we are told, in whatever mode has its principle in the Divine Intellect and translates or represents this principle in its own way and according to its own order of existence. Divine Intellect is sourced in Unity. As such all things participate Unity and are linked and correspond with each other.

Some interesting shifts become available to the understanding if we are permitted the grace of entry in to this world view. The world can become a mandala field, real as appearing as the doors of perception are cleansed and opened. Symbol consciousness arises in the understanding as we participate in the Theophanic Cosmogony. Intimacy and wonder mark the journey. Ideas, once simply above and unavailable become the living truth of our lives. Beginner's mind is actualized so our experience is fresh. Joy becomes available in the simple expression of living whole. Freedom is felt as above events and belonging to us. The World becomes our teacher; we become listeners and maybe speakers of this teaching. Life is now meaningful wonder. Language is become liturgy. Thought, prayer. Some satori has occurred.

5. Symbol

Any consideration of Symbol is really a consideration about knowledge and the forms it takes. It presupposes that there is more in our world than what we experience through our senses. A great difficulty here is how we understand our ontology. Is there a world outside our consciousness or not? Are deities projective forms sourced in our own unconscious or are they emissary from realms outside the scope and extent of the individual mind? Symbols help here to bridge the gap between Thought life and lived life. In some sense it might not matter where the imaged symbol arises from. Is the planetary system within us? Are we within it? How one answers this has consequence, and care must be taken in the attempt. This is not pursued here.

What is intelligible by definition. As intelligible, it carries meaning wherever

splayed in existence. That is what intelligibility is. Symbol begins here. Subjectively by the bare assertion I Am, objectively as the fact of any existent. The One has no fit symbol. Yet, symbol life begins in the One as outflowing power, Source of all.

Nature's life holds deep and secret truth. At once it reveals and conceals by the profusion the unific being that has poured in to her. Nothing stops the continuity of being, and as such forms appear in the variegated Universe carrying this vestige of being. This universe, Nature structured by the Intelligibility of the Being through Soul appearing in and as it, and in and as us, carries the mark of being in its forms. As Thing on whatever level, this mark also carries the trace of unity as simple fact, and the capacity to be known as symbol of a deep rich beyond in the understanding. We, as cocreators differentiated within this system, have then within us at least potentially the capacity to know this mark.

Symbols are the language of the transcendent in its Word expressed in and as this universe. Nature here receives this word in its capacity to receive life and whatever intelligence it can contain. This filters down to us, mind born, body based, after generations of evolution, and it speaks to our capacity to receive this Word. Inwardly this word is Thought intelligence; outwardly this word is the world. This permits us in our understanding to see the world as meaningful in our deep thought as symbol of the supernatural realities that structure it. Symbol seeing then, is participation in the reality of our world. The shift we sought, if made grants this.

We must remember here, that while we live in Nature, we are more than just that. We have our own unique hookup to the unified Being Source. In our co creation of our world, the universe manifests through us in and through the world in which we live, and we find ground for understanding the world aright. We see that the sea of being flows through us, image after image of living life figured, to what ever capacity we have to grasp it. It is good to recall here, the notion re two (at least) levels of Imagination, one Real and productive, one imitative and reproductive. The unfolding toward manifestation takes place in the real and productive imagination, the creative imagination. The reproductive imagination is where we start our journey back so to say. Interplay between these two ways of the imagination, both within us and within the world, serves as a ground for symbol life as we are trying to conceive it. As such, symbol, the means for transmitting the superational knowledge and Vision of the Real, understood as contemplating the universe in to existence, is intertwined with a faculty within us that can grasp this Knowledge through the symbols provided.

Symbols use images of various form that vitally evoke within us deep intimacy with our own being, at first, and then later Universal being. We are both affected and effected by real symbol, recognizing some deep relatedness to us. We are affected and effect as we live. Hopefully we learn to live within opened heart and mind,

and begin to see the world anew. With the call of and to the soul, grace awakened desire begins to evoke from the collective universe of variegated multivalenced forms contained in the intelligent world system as wisdom. Within this self knowing capacity to transmute things of form in to essential symbol, understanding arises.

Symbolic form, understood as evoking and revelatory of the deep being of world and self, may be compared to a map. The images, glyphs, lines, shapes, shadings help to reveal real landscape. Spiritual topography is shown to us. According to Plato, only the Form of Beauty is directly sensibly revealed. And it is beauty that instigates our remembrance of the Divine. Following Beauty we work our way back. The law of worship, our aspirational intent, is derived from the order of the gods and powers that surround our station. To generalize briefly: various layerings of symbol meaning become available. If we are stationed mainly in material life, we need material substance as aid in our Journey. We take material things as refuge in this realm as aids to remembrance. Statues. Stone. Outside nature. Food. Incense. Simple letters, language and glyphs, come to mind. I doubt that the symbol for a planet is much comfort here. Stationed somewhat more in psyche, a deeper level of the forms becomes efficacious for us. Mantra, music, art, names of the Gods, meaning in all direction. The Zodiac shows up here. The realm bridging astrological symbolization is here. Depth psychology and its myriad meaning forms, here. Intellect brings self knowledge, deep philosophia, mathematics revealing Divine Number and its mysteries. Astrology is sourced here, and the wisdom of the sage is from here. The One has no symbol as such. It comes to us in the deep silence that is not opposite sound, stillness with no reference to movement, peace without reference to strife, good unreferenced, love not referenced to hate, Symbols with no other bases than that they are, uniquely, what they are.

6. Astronoeisis as a Symbolic Exposition.

Some thoughts and questions regarding AstroNoesis.

Astronoeisis begins in Vision. Whose? It has been said that what is presented is the Intellectual Being's vision of the One. If in following our premises this is so, then some Visionary had to at some point participate in that vision. Recognizing that word and symbols are at best close approximation, we assume that what the visioning is about actual real truths. These are made available in language and symbol. Something here also speaks to realms ineffable. How is this to be regarded? Or not? The vision is thought to be accurate description - perhaps loose- of the processes in the Divine Mind. Or as that mind. But the vastness overwhelms, - does it not?

A premise here is that Astrology works. What is the working? If real information

is transmitted through the symbol language, whether by the Astrologer or directly intuited, what has happened? Consider again the complexity of the ephemeris. To some the symbols remain meaningless, to others a book of living life truths for a Soul in this life. How can it be? When the old shepherd looked at the sky why was that wisdom not available to him?

So, a mastermind enters through contemplation in to the deep being of the universe, and comes out with a large swath of wisdom. Through much deep culturalization, some small semblance of enough forms becomes available to express that vision. Seen in contemplation, the closer to the contemplation in the unfolding with the forms available, the more Truth contained in the expression. Generally it is this that has attracted us. Unseen magnetic wisdom translated in to graspable knowledge form, that we can if we are cultured enough begin to imbibe. The living wisdom is as food for us to the extent we can enter in to the contemplation of the Visioning. This deep Soul sustenance we receive, is at once the call of the Real to us through the forms of our lives, and the Grace of the Grantor.

So, when I sit here now, on September 5, 2009, reading this, and say that I have Mars on Mars.... There is much implied, and God only knows what has been revealed.

