

Essay

The Experiential Basis of the Spiritualist/Materialist Duality

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ABSTRACT

It is the nature of experience as being the product of a relation that creates the Spiritualist/Materialist duality as an extension of the fundamental Existence/experience mental-conceptual duality, while it is the unavoidable and inviolable limitation inherent in the Individual's creation of experience that blinds the Materialist, through their attachment to the reality of experience, to the Reality apprehended by the Spiritualist. It is also true that the Spiritualist can be blind to the reality of the Materialist if they hold too tightly to what they, from their perspective, create as experience. Experiential reality is not unreal, it's just not as real as the Existential Reality which, through relation to Itself, both creates and apprehends it.

Key Words: experiential basis, Spiritualist, Materialist, duality, existence.

All experience is the product of some relation of Existence to Itself. More specifically, all experience is the product of some relation of an Individual Existence to some other part or aspect of Existence, as that product is apprehended from the Individual's side of the relation. Thus, all experience is the product of a relation in which the Individual that is apprehending the experience is involved. Therefore, in the absence of the Individual's involvement in a particular relation, there is no particular experience created and apprehended by that Individual. Conversely, every experience that an Individual apprehends requires the involvement of the Individual in some relation in order to create the product that is apprehended as the experience.

And for every relation in which an Individual is involved creating a particular experience, there is a mutually exclusive relation in which the Individual cannot be simultaneously involved, which mutually exclusive relation is the relation in which they must be involved if they are to create and apprehend the opposite or complementary experience. Therefore, for every experience there is an opposite experience, and for every experience that we are having in any moment there is an opposite experience that we cannot, in that same moment, experience, because apprehending that opposite experience would require our involvement in a relation that is mutually exclusive of the relation in which we are already involved as we create and apprehend what it is that we are presently experiencing. This limitation upon what an Individual is able to experience in any one moment is both unavoidable and inviolable, because experience is not what's there, but is always something we ourselves, as Individuals, are involved in creating, according to our involvement in some relation with some other part or aspect of Existence, and our involvement in any relation in any moment makes it impossible for us to be, in that same moment, i.e., simultaneously, involved in any relation that is mutually exclusive of the relations in which we are already involved.

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I call this limitation upon what an Individual is able to create and apprehend as experience in any one moment *the principle of the preclusion of an Individual's simultaneous creation and apprehension of experiential opposites*. It is this principle that is responsible for the phenomena of wave-particle duality and quantum uncertainty, because when an Individual is involved in a relation with an underlying Reality that creates a wave experience they can't be involved simultaneously in the mutually exclusive relation with that underlying Reality necessary to create a particle experience, and to the extent that an Individual is involved in a relation with an underlying Reality that creates any amount of any experience, they can't be involved in the mutually exclusive relation with that underlying Reality necessary to completely create the opposite experience. Thus, to paraphrase Neils Bohr's famous quote regarding quantum descriptions of reality, experience is not about revealing what's there, rather experience concerns what we can create through relation to what's there, and so concerns what we can say about what's there.

It is also this limitation upon what an Individual is able to create and apprehend as experience in any one moment that makes it impossible to feel good when you feel bad and vice versa, because when you are involved in the fundamental relation that creates either a wanted or unwanted emotional experience you cannot be involved simultaneously in the mutually exclusive relation necessary to create the opposite emotional experience. It is also this limitation that makes it impossible to know that the Earth is round as long as you think that it is flat, and to believe in evolution while believing in the biblical version of creation, because these are opposite conceptions, i.e., opposite mental experiences, and therefore must be created as the result of what are mutually exclusive relations and therefore, according to the principle of the preclusion of an Individual's simultaneous creation and apprehension of experiential opposites, cannot be created and apprehended in the same moment by the same Individual.

And it is also this limitation upon what an Individual is able to create and apprehend as experience in any one moment that fuels the Spiritualist/Materialist, or Spiritualist/Science debate, because it is this limitation that makes it impossible for the Materialist to apprehend what the Spiritualist knows as long as the Materialist continues to see the world as composed of what is only experiential in nature. Because as long as the Materialist is involved in the relation in which they see the world as composed of matter or energy, of some physical experience, or even a mental experience, it is not possible for them to become involved in the relation in which they can apprehend that the world is composed of Existence, of Spirit, of Consciousness, i.e., composed of that which is not an experience, composed of that which is the opposite of experience.

All experience comes in pairs of opposites or complements because all experience is the product of a relation, as that product is apprehended from one side of the relation. And so what we experience is always one side of a two sided coin, so to speak. And for every relation in which an Individual can be involved that creates one experience, there is an opposite, mutually exclusive relation which, if the Individual were involved in that relation, would create the opposite or complementary experience. Put another way, for every relation that creates the Individual's experience of one side of the coin, there is an opposite mutually exclusive relation that would

create the Individual's experience of the other side of the coin if they were able to be in that relation instead. (Remember though, there is no coin in the absence of the Individuals involvement in the relation that creates it.) And so we have hot/cold, good/bad, wanted/unwanted, wave/particle, light/dark, etc, etc. But owing to the principle of the preclusion of an Individual's simultaneous creation and apprehension of experiential opposites, we can only experience one or the other of the experiences in an experiential pair, or some portion of both, in any moment, because all experiential pairs or complements are the products of opposite and so mutually exclusive relations, which means that if we are involved in one relation creating one experience then we cannot be simultaneously involved in the opposite mutually exclusive relation necessary to create the opposite experience.

There are three different types of experience: emotional, mental, and physical, and each of these three different types of experience has a different fundamental duality or complementarity that derives from the opposite and mutually exclusive relations in which Existence can be involved as it creates and apprehends that particular level of experiential reality. The most fundamental and so first level Existential relations are those that create emotional experiences, and those relations are relations of either aligned or oppositional Existential flow, as apprehended from the perspective of the Individual, and create what the Individual apprehends as wanted or unwanted emotion, respectively. The next and so second level Existential relations are those that create mental or conceptual experiences, and those opposing relations, which I have yet to specifically identify, create at their most fundamental level the opposing concepts of Existence and experience. Lastly, there are the third level Existential relations that create physical experience, and those opposing relations, as apprehended from the perspective of the Individual, are penetrating or penetrated, and create what the Individual apprehends as wave and particle experiences, respectively.

The important point here is that at each level of experiential reality, i.e., emotional, mental, and physical, there is a fundamental experiential duality, and owing to the impossibility of an Individual's simultaneous apprehension of experiential opposites, being involved in the relation that creates one of these fundamental experiences makes it impossible to be involved in the relation necessary to create the other experience. And so it is that when you feel bad you can't feel good, because while you are flowing in opposition to your Self you can't be flowing in alignment with your Self. And so it also is that when physical reality appears as a particle it cannot appear as a wave, because when you have the perspective of being penetrated by a particular Reality you don't have the perspective of penetrating that particular Reality.

And for the same reason, i.e., owing to the impossibility of an Individuals simultaneous apprehension of experiential opposites, when you conceive of the world as being composed of experience you can't conceive of it as being composed of Existence, as composed of Consciousness, as composed of that which, through relation to Itself, both creates and apprehends experience. The Materialist, or Experientialist, be they a scientist or otherwise, can no more comprehend the validity of spirituality than can someone who is looking North simultaneously also look South. It's not the fault of the Materialist or Experientialist that the other side of the coin remains hidden, it's just that they have a perspective that does not allow the other side to be seen, to be created as something they can experience. The Materialist or

Experientialist is being limited by an experiential mechanism of which they are not aware, and of which they cannot possibly become aware unless and until they release their grip on the idea of the primacy of experiential reality, on the idea of experiential reality as having an existence that is in any way Experiencer independent, because that idea is mutually exclusive of the idea of experience as being completely Experiencer dependent, which idea is necessary to conceive of experience as something that is created rather than as the revelation of what's actually there.

The Experientialist sees experience as primary and that which apprehends experience as secondary, which is why the Materialist conceives of and tries to explain Consciousness as the product of some sort of neurological mechanism, as the product of brain function, as the product of what is a physical experiential reality. Conversely, the Existentialist sees Existence as primary and experience as secondary, and so conceives of and tries to explain experience as the product of some mechanism of Existence or Consciousness, as the product of what is not Itself an experiential reality. Both views cannot be correct. One view sees these two realities in their actual relation, while the other sees them in the opposite of their actual relation. One view of the relation between these two realities, i.e., Existence and experience, sees experience as it is, which is as being Experiencer dependent, while the other view of the relation between these two realities is based on a view of experience as it is not, which is as being Experiencer independent.

Now the rub in all of this is that Existence is itself a concept, an experience, and so conceiving of the world as composed of Existence is still seeing the world as composed of what is ultimately an experience. However, there is a subtle difference between conceiving of the world as being composed of Existence and conceiving of the world as being composed of experience. When one conceives of the world as being composed of Existence, it becomes possible to know that experience is not what's actually there, and so for one who sees the world as composed of Existence there is at least the possibility of knowing that what's actually there is not the concept of Existence, but rather something non-experiential that the concept indicates or points toward, which is Itself beyond experience, as both the Creator and Apprehender of experience. Conversely, when one sees the world as composed of what they experience, composed of matter, or energy, or thought, or wave-functions, or even emotion, they must think of what they experience as being what's actually and directly there, they must think of experience as Experiencer independent, and so cannot see experience as referring to something other than itself, as referring to something other than what is only another, perhaps more subtle, experience.

We cannot do other but view ourselves through the lens of experience, in the form of emotional, mental, and physical experiences, and moreover, in the form of emotional, mental, and physical dualities. And so when we feel, we must feel good or bad, and when a physicist tries to identify the character of a thing it must appear as wave or particle, and when we conceive of what we are, when we conceive of the world, of our nature and its nature, we must see it in terms of Existence or experience, as composed of either Existence or experience, or their conceptual equivalents, for those are the most fundamental conceptions of reality and themselves represent the fundamental reality duality.

The question often posed is: What is the nature of reality? However, this is really a trick question because reality as a whole consists of two completely different and yet related realities, and the

overall nature of reality can only be understood in the context of these two realities and their relation to each other. Thus, the nature of reality is that there are two realities; the reality of experience and the Reality that, through relation to Itself, both creates and apprehends experiential reality. And though these two realities are completely different in nature, in as much as one is created whereas the other is uncreated, they are nonetheless inseparable, like a mirror and the reflection contained within it.

We think that what we experience as reality, and especially what we experience as physical reality, is what's actually there. For example, we see a rock and we think that what's there where the rock appears to be is just that, i.e., a rock. However, what we experience as reality isn't what's actually and directly there where the experience seems to be, because what we experience as reality is just a boundary that's created where Existence here and there meet, as that boundary is apprehended from the perspective of our Individual Existence as we take part in the relation that creates that boundary, that relative existence, which we then apprehend as experience. Put another way, what we experience as reality isn't what's actually and directly there where the experience seems to be, because what's actually and directly there is the fundamental Reality of Existence, and experience is just what seems to be there, the same way a reflection can seem to be what's actually there where there's really only a mirror or some other reflective surface.

And just as we look out at the world and think that what's actually there is what we experience as being there, so it is that we look at ourselves and think that's what's actually here where we are is also some sort of experience. That is, we look at ourselves and see a man, a woman, we see short, we see tall, we see black, we see white, etc. etc. However, just as what's actually and directly there where we see a rock, or any object, or even empty space, is the fundamental Reality of Existence, or more correctly, the fundamental Reality that the concept of Existence points toward, what's actually and directly here where we see ourselves is that same fundamental Reality. And so it is that I say that what Exists most directly where you are is what Exists directly everywhere else as well, and that is the non-physical, non-experiential Consciousness-Existence that is, at this very moment, apprehending not only these words, but the meaning underlying these words, both owing to and limited by the relations which you are, as an Individual point of Existence, in this moment involved. However we usually don't see ourselves as that, we don't know ourselves as the fundamental Reality, because we instead know ourselves as the other type of reality, i.e., as an experiential reality, as what is only a reflection that rests on the surface of our True Nature.

This condition, wherein the fundamental Reality sees Itself and the world as being composed of what is only an experiential reality, and in so doing loses sight of Itself, loses sight of its True Nature, is referred to as self-ignorance or maya, and how this condition is created and maintained by an Individual point of Existence can be understood when one understands not just the Experiencer dependent nature of all experiential reality, but also the limitation by which any Experiencer is bound in their creation of experience. Once again, that limitation is that for every experience you are creating there is an opposite experience you cannot create in that same moment, because every experience you create requires that you be involved in some relation with Existence and your involvement in that relation makes it impossible for you to be simultaneously involved in the opposite relation necessary to create the opposite experience.

Thus, it is the nature of experience as being the product of a relation that creates the Spiritualist/Materialist duality as an extension of the fundamental Existence/experience mental-conceptual duality, while it is the unavoidable and inviolable limitation inherent in the Individual's creation of experience that blinds the Materialist, through their attachment to the reality of experience, to the Reality apprehended by the Spiritualist. It is also true that the Spiritualist can be blind to the reality of the Materialist if they hold too tightly to what they, from their perspective, create as experience. Experiential reality is not unreal, it's just not as real as the Existential Reality which, through relation to Itself, both creates and apprehends it.
