

The Drama of Human Experience; Anticipator and Anticipated, Who is Playing for Whom

Asgar T. Minai

School of Architecture, College of Engineering, Architecture
and Computer Science, Howard University, USA
Minai@scs.howard.edu

Abstract

One of the puzzling problems of describing artistic and scientific ideas and concepts is their “language”, or their means of presentations. Semantic issues in verbal description specifically, and even scientific modes, often have their limitations. The notion of “anticipation” and its derivative: anticipator and anticipated, due to interconnection with both the subjective and objective world, become highly contextual, and subject to interpretation. It is suggested here that the notion of anticipation, and therefore anticipatory systems, because it falls into both domains, subject and object, would have to challenge the said problem, in order to carry a certain degree of accuracy. That is, since these two domains each have its own modes of presentation, then any discussion on anticipatory systems has to define its boundary within the ranges of domains which covers many schools of thought, from one end of extremes of objective description, to the other end of subjective description. Here we suggest that even the most extreme of subjective experience, namely mystic experiences, should not be excluded from our understanding of phenomenon.

Keywords: Epistemology, Phenomenology, Consciousness, Intuition, Objectivity, and Subjectivity.

Anticipator and Anticipated

In this paper we use anticipator and anticipated as synonymous with the subjective and objective worlds. Then, through analyses of objective and subjective activities we make reflections upon the domains of anticipator and anticipated.

What is generally known in the literature as “objective” and “subjective” have recently been subjected to a new interpretation by changes in the philosophy of science, especially by the Heisenberg uncertainty principle. That is, what was “objective,” “out there” in Cartesian philosophy is revisited by some scientists and philosophers. Subjectivity has taken over part of the domain that once was considered objective. Objectivity does not deal with the thing-out-there as an independent object from the subject. What is considered objective by science is what an individual finds, which can then be turned into “accepted knowledge” due to regulation by public verification and acceptance. However, this body of knowledge, which was once objective, and is now based on the uncertainty principle, is considered partly subjective. This is because of the observer’s impact on the observation process. This is summed up by F.J. Varela and

J. Shear when they say "the subjective is already implicit in the objective high-light how the received distinction between objective and subjective as an absolute demarcation between inside and outside, needs to be closely scrutinized" (Varela and Shear, 1999). That is to say, we, similar to Varela and Shear, consider subjective phenomena not to be the same as purely private experience. Rather, we assume "the subjective is intrinsically open to inter-subjective validation..." Or, in other words, *subjective experience* is an *explicit* and *active component* of the science of consciousness.

To the extent that we have knowledge of history, man has always been superimposing mental frameworks over the pictures of the world around himself to make them fit to his "assumed picture" - his worldviews and philosophies. That assumed known picture itself has been subject to individual interpretations coloring the disciplinary views, and changing over time, from that of early man and his superstitions, to the sophistication of his modern scientific views. Of course such frameworks are nothing but a description of man's relation to nature; a nature which is a system totally interwoven with overlays of complexities of causes and effects, the forces of which there is no complete knowledge. Yet the only knowledge there is, is produced by the mind, which itself is a causal formation of nature in the two million years of the brain's evolutionary development and therefore subject to that nature and that philosophy. This knowledge, if taken through a Cartesian perspective, is separate from reality because of the dualistic function of this view of the world. A world in which man stands outside of it, looks at it, and describes it. Hume and Beverly also suggest that there are two realities: one, which is there independent of subject, and the other, which refills through the senses.

Some philosophers make a distinction between existence and essence on the part of reality. In such world man is anticipator and the object world is anticipated world separated from each other by the thinking "I." However this very subject of history and philosophy is constantly in question, especially at times of paradigm shift, when major changes or breakthroughs take place. Two examples are Heidegger and Nietzsche, "when they question history and philosophy if it is not hermeneutics and contextual." Hence, we suggest understanding neither the objects of history nor its metaphysics nor its logic but its context - a web of interconnection of events tied together in space and time. That is, a second order cybernetics, where the anticipator and anticipated are inseparable parts and entangled into a single world without separate identities.

What constitute the most contrast between Eastern and Western philosophical orientations is this idea of dualism between man and his world. The Western philosophy, centered around rationality, focuses analysis on existence, or what constitutes the identity of things, whereas Eastern philosophy questions such interpretation and supposed knowing, and is geared to knowledge of the essence and natural existence. In other words, the second group maintains that existence or sense reality is only shaped in one's mind and has nothing to do with reality out there. Descartes, as said earlier, pictured the reality by placing the fundamental emphasis on the "I", whereas those like Husserl and especially Sartre call it essence. They deal with "phenomenon" on "things as they are," trying to reduce the presence of "I" in favor of properties of world objects. A third view emphasized here is that not only are things what they are either, because of what we conceptualize them to be (existence) or the nature of their being (their essence), but also

because of their context, or the “text” in which they are “situated.” This view of the world emphasized by deconstructivist such as Derrida would have to assume that the role of anticipator and anticipated changes due to contextual changes of the text, the reality as changing patterns.

It is maintained here that in eastern philosophy, first of all the self has to know itself prior to knowing other things, and if it has not done so, its knowledge is not valid. It is also maintained that we do not know the essence of things, because we can never know all the constituent components of a thing. All we are aware of in our surroundings is awareness of *similarities and differences in the world of objects*. This is only a relativistic knowledge of how things are similar to other things. We are only conditioned to see “difference,” and that is the basis for the laws of entropy and its byproducts, information theory and communication. This perspective of reality is more tuned to Husserl's and Heidegger's views, expressed in phenomenology as “immediate experience”. It is also tuned to Sohrevardi's (an Eastern Arif/Sufi) concept of “knowledge of the presence,” which assumes there is no “I” separating the “I” and the world, or beings and Being. Both of these forms of knowledge oppose the knowledge acquired in science and logic. They see a continuum of object and subject, and that, together with its context of totality, makes knowledge.

With this in mind, without the presence of “I”, the anticipator loses its role as standing “out there” watching the anticipated, he/she is neither playing for someone nor watching a play enacted by the object world. He/she is part of the play of a changing flux, a text of information in motion.

With this worldview, we would fall in the camp of those western philosophers such as Hegel to Heidegger and then to Derrida. They are the group who insisted that “the quest for scientific knowledge is simply one human project among others” (Rescher, 1984). This is also the group which reacted to the Greek view that “epistemic is supreme” (Rescher, 1984). We also share the views of another member of this school of thought, Ludwig Wittgenstein, who said: “We feel that even if *all possible* scientific questions be answered, the problems of life have still not been touched at all. Of course there is then no question left, and just this is the answer (Merleau Ponty, 1963).

Adopting this orientation, we will be more centered around phenomenologists and philosophers who are more susceptible to intuitive knowledge and qualitative dimensions, that is, those who take a more critical stance against formal rationality and objective science. That is, for those who consider there is no independent anticipators, they believe that many dimensions of human life or cosmic order in general are “inaccessible to the highly abstract and selective methods of science.” These people agree that “scientism - the indiscriminate application of scientific methods to all questions - is a particular case of alienation or objectification which deprives man of his human reality and makes him confuse himself with things” (Merleau Ponty, 1963). With these objectives, we prefer those specific highlights of Western and Eastern philosophies, which put direct experience in the foreground of their view of the world.

There are similarities between what was described as phenomenological orientations and those of eastern mystics, or Arif's and Sufi's views, where “knowing” or “wisdom” is based on what is known as “mystic experience,” or “knowledge by

presence.” This holistic experience is a phenomenological domain of mysticism. This type of phenomenology suggests that “consciousness is not limited to the body. Consciousness is encountered as something more like a field than a localized point, a field that transcends the body and yet somehow interacts with it.” That is, mind can be considered to be non-localized, like a field, and “that experience arises from some sort of interplay between non-localized awareness and the localized brain” (Forman, 1999, also see, Freeman and Nunez, 1999). In such phenomena of mystic experience, mystics often have talked about “oneness with One”, or “beings of Being”, or altered state of consciousness, where the mystic is unified with Being. The German idealist Malwida von Meysenburge describes the mystical unity with external objects as follows:

“I was alone upon the seashore...I felt that I...returned from the solitude of individuation into the consciousness of *unity with all that is*, (that I knew) down as one that passes away, and (rose) up as one imperishable. Earth, heaven, and sea *resounded as in one vast world encircling harmony...I felt myself* one with them (von Meysenburg, 1900). Malwida’s experiences are similar to many ‘Arif’s and Sufi’s if she is in a sort of “intuitive-like” state of mind or “altered state of consciousness”, which consciousness does not have access to. It is an experience, which, like intuition, transcends both consciousness and known physical boundaries. This mystical experience, or what Forman refers to as some kind of awareness, is something which goes beyond either sense perception or perhaps the brain, but rather they suggest a distinction and/or interaction between consciousness and the brain” (Forman, 1999, p.376). That is to say, awareness may have a non-localized, quasi-spacial, or, as we said above, field-like character. This field is said to be transcendental. This phenomenal experience of mystics is not meant to be falling within the boundaries of any sciences; as a matter of fact, as Rumi has said, it is anti-reason, and anti-logic, and anti-rationality. However, as Forman suggests, we should explore *all* of human experience. According to Rumi, rationality defines self-constructed boundaries and claims there is no way beyond these logical boundaries, whereas, love (intuition) transcends the physical universe of Reason, claiming that there are ways and had traveled many times.

Reason says, “The six directions are the boundary,
And there is no way out;
Love says, “There is a way,
And I have many times traveled it.”

Rumi, in *Kulliat-I Shams*

To put consciousness into the context of evolution, Ilya Prigogine says, “It is interesting that with an increase of complexity, going from the stone to human society, the role of the arrow of time, of evolutionary rhythms increasing” (Prigogine and Stengers, 1984, p.301). It could then be said that this capacity to increase the rhythms of evolution, particularly on the development of consciousness, suggests a reason for human existence, or why and where we came from. To understand this, we should link physics to human consciousness. In doing this, we share Zohar’s notion of a quantum approach to consciousness. She describes this notion in the physics of the quantum “vacuum” as quantum field theory.

She suggests quantum vacuum is not a proper name, because it is not empty. It is rather the fundamental and underlying reality of which everything, including us, is an expression. Tony Hey and Patrick Walters (Zohar, 1989) express it, “instead of a place where nothing happens, ‘the empty’ box should now be regarded as a bubbling ‘soup’ of virtual particle/anti-particle pairs” (Zohar, 1990). That is to say, after the Big Bang, there was the vacuum. The vacuum can be described as a ‘field of fields’ or as a sea of potentialities. It yet contains no particles, rather expectations (energy fluctuations). She uses this metaphor to explain this notion of vacuum: if we live in a world of sound, the vacuum could be thought of as a drum skin, the sound it makes as vibrations of that skin. The vacuum is the ‘substrate’ of all this is. On this basis Zohar refers to the ‘genealogy of consciousness’, which traces the roots of our own complex mental life back to their origin in single boson relationships, and traces the origins of the universe back to a creative dialogue between bosons and fermions. This dialogue “lends a new kind of physical interpretation to one version of what cosmologists call the Anthropic Principle” (Zohar, 1990, p.224). John A. Wheeler proposes his ‘Participatory Anthropic Principle’ to describe his version of universal unity. This principle suggests that, “observers are necessary to bring the world into being” (Barrow and Tipler, 1988, p.22). Rumi expresses the same notion in a poem saying, “The revolving universe, is tamed by our consciousness”.

Wine in ferment is a beggar suing for our ferment;
 Heaven in revolution is a beggar suing for our consciousness
 Wine became intoxicated with us, not we with it,
 The body came into being from us, not we from it

Rumi, in *Mathnawi* (1811-1812)

Theilhard de Chardin expresses similar feelings when he says, “we are not concerned with thought as participating in evolution as an anomaly or as an epiphenomenon; but evolution as so reducible to and identifiable with a progress towards thought that movement of our souls expresses and measures the very stages of evolution itself. Man discovers that he is *nothing else than evolution become conscious of itself*, to borrow Julian Huxley’s concise expression” (Teilhard de Chardin, 1959, p.221). With the voice of Rumi and that of Theilhard de Chardin, we could add one additional expression by the ‘Arif and Sufi sages, when they expressed the man-God relationships in *wahdat al-wujud*, an *al-haqq* (I am God), *the Glory is mine*. That is, from the preceding and what was said by Rumi and Chardin, human beings are partners in cosmic creation. That is, without binding of bosons (love) and fermions (the embodiment of love) there would be no life, no Being, no God.

In Eric Jantsch's (1975) classification of consciousness, there are three modes of perception using the image of a stream. The following three models reflect Jantsch's historical perspective of how we have viewed the world around us. The first two points represent the past worldviews, and the third is today's outlook.

1-The rational approach assumes a separation between the observer and the observed. The object (it) is supposed to be assessed objectively and without the involvement of the subject. The basic organizing principle here is logic; the measurement is in quantitative terms. This approach divides the world into physical

(amenable to objective science) and metaphysical (inamenable to human understanding). Man has therefore devised the disciplines to deal with these separations. The rational approach is geared to a static cosmos, where an unchanging structure is unraveled by science in positivistic or structuralistic ways. The affairs between subject and object are to be decided on by rational cognition. Man stands taller than the reality and imposes his views on it, in an intellectual exercise that "exhibits the anthropomorphic features of his own rationality." He builds an abstract model of reality, which follows the laws of his own rational consciousness. He is the anticipator, and the world is the anticipated.

2- The mythological approach assumes a feedback link between the observer and the observed. The basic organizing principle is feeling, and the results are measured in qualitative terms. The mythological approach creates a subjective relationship with reality. In this relationship, one "gains a better access to an undivided, holistic reality with him." It explores the near infinite spectra of flavors the world holds in the psychic realm, the wealth of qualities which arise from our psychic response to the world with which we directly interact. This is the world of the "here and now" which is laid out in a finely woven web of qualities"(Jantsch, 1975). Here man and his world are both anticipator and anticipated. We do not anticipate things to happen, but we rather experience things happening. We know things through direct experience, via "knowledge by experience," without the presence of the "I."

3-The evolutionary approach assumes a union between the observer and the observed. The basic organizing principle is "fanning-in" by virtue of this identity, and the results are measured in terms of sharing in a universal order of process (namely, evolution). The evolutionary approach considers psychic receptivity and psychic activity as an integral aspect of the evolutionary forces of the world. There is a union of object and subject in the process called evolution. An understanding of self is often supposed to be a key to an understanding of evolutionary processes. Here there is no anticipator or anticipated, because they are one and the same.

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