

Self Liberation in Phenomenology and Dzogchen, Essays

PHENOMENOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO DZOGCHEN

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Phenomenology is the study of different kinds of givenness, the givenness of experience. There are various ways of being open to experiencing the world and the phenomena of the world. The phenomena and the objects of the world and the world itself can be experienced and perceived more or less directly and more or less in the present. The phenomena, the objects of the world and within the world as the world, can be experienced more or less in breadth and depth, and more or less in obviousness and more or less in subtlety. The world can be experienced more or less in translucidity and more or less in darkness, and more or less in openness and more or less in hiddenness, and more or less concealed and more or less unconcealed. There are many ways of experiencing the world and objects of and in the world which are the appearances of the world.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL

And most amazingly the phenomena of the world can be experienced in its many different dimensions. Truly we live in a multidimensional world and we are multidimensional beings in a multidimensional world, a multidimensional cosmology. Multidimensional beings have multidimensional views and multidimensional experience. Experiencing through awareness and through the mind the various dimensions of our experience is the essence of phenomenology and the meditative awareness practice. Experiencing the phenomena of awareness both within ourselves as our own being and within the beings around us opens to us the multidimensionality of everything and everyone. Experiencing through mind alone is very different than experiencing within awareness. And since the mind can be integrated within this awareness such experience has its own difference than being located in either mind or awareness alone.

Our capacity to perceive the world in its various dimensions has been reflected upon for centuries in meditative cultures. And this experience of various dimensions of phenomena and the world of phenomena is confirmed by contemporary quantum physics and science. We know this is a multidimensional world and universe. All of the modes of givenness, appearance and experience are related. There is relationship intimately between and within them. The awakened modes of experience and appearance vary in light of their ability to give to us and our ability to enter into and penetrate the phenomena of the world as directly and clearly as possible. The phenomena can be given and experienced more or less directly and more or less translucently. This means that our experience of the givenness of phenomena opens us to more or less of the various infinite dimensions of the phenomena and the infinite dimensions of the world. Phenomena itself is awakened as is so eloquently described in the Guhyagarbha tantra. By world I mean the universe of experience everywhere and within everyone and everything, from the most subtle to the most gross. Our own level of perception gives us and opens to us to the levels of the givenness of phenomena, and the multileveledness of phenomena opens us to our own dimensional perception. Truly this unfolding is a co-emergent process. Awakened awareness is co-emergent within awakened phenomena. Awakened awareness is within an awakened world. This is the essential understanding of contemporary Dzogchen and contemporary phenomenology.

There is the awakened givenness of phenomena of appearance which opens us to our capacity to experience the different dimensions of presence. From the presence of a spatio-temporal object concrete in its manifestations to the very beingness of the being of that object. From the presence of color and size and shape of an object, to the subtle energy of the object being manifested as an object in the field of being as a being. And so the different dimensions of the world that manifest to us in their givenness and their appearance reflect different dimensions of reality and of existence. The givenness of appearance reflects the different dimensions of the Beingness of Being in its manifestation and in its non-manifestation. The givenness of the phenomenological configurations of the field reflect the field's givenness as configurations, as an object and as an object configuration.

OBJECTIFIED OR SUBJECTIVITY

The phenomena of the appearance of the human can be experienced as an object among other objects. If the mind of the perceiver is objectifying and objectified itself by itself, then the otherness of an objectified human will be experienced. And the phenomena of the appearance of human subjectivity can be experienced and given to another human being if the other human being is in their own dimension of subjectivity within their innermost awareness which has no shape or form but is known in the wonderful co-emergent process of becoming aware of awareness in oneself and in the other. Truly awareness meets awareness...inside meets inside. The unfolding of intersubjectivity is mutually co emergent. Subjectivity is the primordial openness of awareness in time and space in the continuum of mind and body. Intersubjective is the openness passing through the openness of the other.

APPEARANCE OF WORLD AS OPENNESS

Phenomenology focuses on the appearance of the world and its various dimensions. Phenomenology is an experiential understanding of our experience of phenomena in and of the world. It allows us and presents to us the different dimensions of the world of reality and the actuality of the world. So, depending on the phenomena experienced, the reality and actuality of the world shifts in profound and bewildering ways. As we phenomenologically become aware of awareness, the nature of awareness is experienced as openness, spaciousness. Experiencing this openness within one's own self the openness within the world itself becomes more apparent.

APPEARANCE AS AN UNHAPPY ILLUSION

Buddhist idealists as well as Hindu Vedic idealists declare that the world is an illusion or delusion and is not real. What is real is the nothingness or spaciousness of the dharmakaya dimension or in the language of the Hindu, the dimension of shiva, the spacious void. This understanding both comes from the experience of the masters of

meditation who use direct perception of meditative experience and also from the scholastic traditions in both Vedic and Buddhist religions. The Buddhist traditions used madhyamika reasoning as well as other forms of idealistic philosophy of logic. In a sense this reasoning is used to point out the unreality of the immediate situation and the conclusion is that things do not exist and also do exist and that they neither exist or neither do they not exist - a rather deconstructional stew that would even bewilder Derrida about what is or is not in this idealistic enframing. It is as if the language negates itself in the very speaking...and so what is left is only an aphasic experience. By aphasic I mean nothing can be said, nothing can be affirmed, and nothing can be thought.

This kind of deconstructionist thinking not only points out the impermanence of composite reality but moreover makes the attribution about the illusion of all appearance and the illusion of one's self, and the illusion of experience and the illusion of the experiencer. This illusionary way of thinking is challenged by phenomenology in this matter of appearance and reality. Contemporary phenomenology has a great deal to offer Dzogchen's presentation and understanding in this multidimensional and contemporary world.

THE UNHAPPY BELIEF IN THE ILLUSIONARYNESS OF LIFE

For the most part, many people simply believe these delusionary statements and attributions and work and live within this illusionary belief system with its advantages and disadvantages, including, at times the resulting problems of bonding and problems of schizoid like detachment. The well-established psychology of bonding is overcome by the nonattachment and nonbonding of detachment ethics. This kind of belief system over time structures both a personal and cultural viewpoint that can foreclose experience, invalidate experience and negate the very narrative schema of life's experience. For many Buddhist idealists experience itself does not count and is without validity. In fact the world does not count. The phenomenological experience is without signification. As some Buddhist writers have said "phenomena never were and never will be".

Unhappily the experiential question arises as to whom or for what is the great compassion if everything is illusion. Is compassion itself illusion? Does the great compassion manifest illusions? Is this the sport of consciousness...illusion for illusion sake. And from within whom does compassion arise? And for whom does compassion arise? Is compassion an experience? Is there an experiencer of givingness of compassion? And is there a whom who receives the gift of compassion?

In actuality the positiveness in which many Buddhist masters and students live is the manifestation of the indestructible compassion in action, confirming the worthwhileness of life, the validity of human experience, and the validity of the archetypical powers. The power and indestructibility of awareness and the manifestations of all of this vast human action goes far beyond the madhyamika and the idealistic philosophical view of life, the world and action. The actual action goes far beyond this philosophical muted view of human experience.

MANIFESTATION OF WORLD AND MANIFESTATION OF SELF

Phenomenology is the study of experience of the world and the phenomena of appearance both as the manifestation of the world and the manifestation of sense of self. Contemporary phenomenology can present the light of actuality and reality on these idealistic ruminations and solipsistic attributions about the invalidity all of human experience.

PHENOMENOLOGY UNDOES ILLUSION OF IDEALISM and UNDOES THE VIEW OF MECHANICNISTIC REALISM

Phenomeology challenges certain forms of western realism that sees beings as entities and thinks of Being itself as a kind of ontic entity. For western realism Being itself is a

kind of Big Being, a Big entity...the Biggest of all the beings...a super Being. And for some Being is understood as the totality of all the little beings or the Big Being is thought of as source of all the beings. For the concrete realist all the beings including the Big Being is an entity. Human beings are entities and God is itself the Biggest entity; an entity beyond the other entities but entity nonetheless. The big entity Deus is the cause of all the little entities. And all the entities including the Big entity and the little entities only have knowledge through mediation of language and priesthods of some form. For many, Knowledge is a function of belief and not direct experience. For phenomenology knowledge is a function of direct experience.

For phenomenology Being is not a being among other beings. Being is not a being. And Being is not an entity. In this way Being is no -thingness and nonetheless Being allows beings to be and Being manifests the Beingness of Being in all the beings. BEING itself is empty or openness, radiant openness luminous openness. If one wants one could easily come to understand and come to think that Being is Deus. If one also wishes, one could easily understand Being as the dharmakaya manifesting the Beingness of being of sambogakaya and the beingness of the beings of nirmanakaya. And also if one wishes to come to understand that Being is shiva and the manifestation of Being of the various tattvas and realities as shakti.

The masterful phenomenologist, Heidegger, takes awareness of the experience of appearance as the source of knowingness. He states that the discursive mind alone in its discursive conceptualization can easily become solipsistic and foreclose knowingness of the Beingness of beings. Dzogchen Masters and Shavite Masters have a similar understanding.

MIND ALONE CANNOT GRASP THE BEINGNESS OF BEING AND CANNOT GRASP
THE NATURE OF AWARENESS AS MANIFESTING SUBJECTIVITY IN THE
CONTEXT OF MIND AND BODY

Phenomenology challenges the view that there are no differences phenomenologically between perception and hallucination. Phenomenology also challenges the view that the givenness of experience does not depend on whether this object exists objectively and really or not. Phenomenology challenges the Buddhist views of the world as a

hallucination or delusion. Phenomenology challenges the Buddhist invalidation of human experience.

Initially, Husserl himself thought that phenomenology was not able to speak about the reality of phenomena and appearance as reality. This was a very limiting view and located Husserl in the idealistic discourse wherein he was locked within the transcendental hidden I; a hidden world and a hidden I. So solipsism seemed to be the initial fate of phenomenology. The phenomenology whose inspiration was to the things themselves was becoming locked in the box of the mind alone.

HUSSERL'S EXPANDED VIEW: THE EPOCHE

Happily, Husserl radically transformed phenomenology as he expanded the reduction and epoche to the suspension of mind, opened the phenomena of actuality to relational actuality.

Husserl's epoche and reduction allowed him to suspend the mind and enter into the experience and appearance of phenomena as they present themselves to us and within us. Based upon this phenomenological experience of the givenness to the field of awareness a reflection is possible. Reflection follows the prereflective experience of knowingness of phenomena. Reflection follows the prereflective awareness of the phenomena. Reflection follows the nonconceptual intuition of the givenness of phenomena. Phenomenology now focuses on givenness of experience and the knowingness of awareness. Gnosis has precedence. Direct perception has precedence. The phenomenologist now focuses on and within the dimension of appearance and givenness in order to reveal the inner structure of the experience of the world as the manifestation of phenomena. The shining of phenomena! Phenomenology elaborates the radical experience of the phenomena of the world in the light of their givenness and validity. From the givenness of experience a reflection and articulation emerges.

SUBJECTIVITY AS AWARENESS, PRIMORDIAL AWARENESS IN MIND AND BODY

The primordial givenness of experience takes place within subjectivity as knowingness. There is this primordial givenness to the experience of knowingness as the actual as it presents itself to us. Subjectivity itself is not an entity. Subjectivity is experienced within the entity of the mind and body, but subjectivity itself is no thing and has no form or shape...Subjectivity itself is primordial awareness manifesting in a particular time and place, and manifesting in a particular mind and body within the unfolding in a particular time and space. Subjectivity is the manifestation of primordial awareness in time and space. Subjectivity is timeless awareness manifesting in time and a locality of time.

This awareness of awareness which phenomenology undertakes allows awareness not to be focused on mind alone but in becoming aware of itself, the awareness of subjectivity openness up as to what it actually is. Subjectivity is awareness whose nature is spaceousness, energy, light as in illuminating. To say that the self does not exist is bewildering and is confusing in the lack of experiential clarity. It is true the mind and body exist temporally and that as mind and as body the human being is an entity, a composite. And that this entity exists for a certain limited time . It is also true that the human being is also subjectivity within mind and body appearing in time and space. It is also true that this basic subjectivity that is not contained in mind alone is openness, vast spaceousness, luminosity and pervasive sense of oneness. This is the unborn and indestructible vajrakumara in dzogchen language. And moreover this subjectivity is multidimensional as this subjectivity is awareness itself. This awareness is multidimensional and manifesting in time and space as the nirmanakaya manifestation of awareness emanating as flesh, the world of the human, the world as desire. It is also true that this very same awareness is the archetypical dimension that is luminously energetic and is power that is ontologically prior to the dimension of flesh. It is also true that this very same subjectivity is the manifestation of the primordial awareness itself that is unbound and infinite in its dimensions. Pure Subjectivity is the manifestation in time and space of the dharmakaya. Pure subjectivity is the manifestation of the dharmakaya in time and space. As Husserl would so often declare: 'what is the wonder of all wonders pure consciousness and the door way is our own subjectivity!'

MEDIATED KNOWLEDGE AND UNMEDIATED DIRECT EXPERIENCE

There are two different ways of understanding. There is the understanding of the analytic objectified knowledge and the direct non-conceptual lucid knowing experience of appearance of reality that can then be reflected upon and articulated. Understanding is direct experience followed by articulation; reflected articulation. This is the science of phenomenology, the science of awareness.

REALITY AS THE PHENOMENAL AND THE ACTUAL

The epoche and the reduction are methods of Husserl's phenomenology. Phenomenology does not exclude the actual world from being known and phenomenology is concerned with meaning of beings and with Being itself. For phenomenology there is no gap between meaning and the experience of beings. Even Being itself is a focus of phenomenology. From the phenomenological point of view, the actuality of Being and beings is the natural focus of awareness.

Later Husserl maintains that the epoche is used to suspend a certain dogmatic mind enframing towards the appearance of reality. The suspension allows us to focus more directly on the experience of multidimensional reality just as it is given. Epoche releases prejudice, releases enframing that is containing appearance and containing the experience of appearance of reality, not an exclusion of reality. The suspension opens us to be able to approach the experience of the givenness of appearance and the manifestations of objects as phenomena and as realities. Suspension of mind allows for a disclosure and unconcealment of what is given and the possibility of what is to be given. To speak of the sense and manifestations of the real in this context is to validate the givenness and significance of the multidimensionality of phenomena and the reality

of appearance. Suspension of the mind allows the explicit use of the instrument of direct perception which is vast and subtle and can meet the vastness and subtlety of the various dimensions that are presented and given to us as reality and actuality. Suspension allows for gazing to manifest.

Phenomenology as method through the suspension of mind and the openness of the gaze allows a way of experiencing and consequent reflective thinking of beings and the Beingness of the world as actuality. Here, situated in the field of awareness one loses nothing of their own being and is able to enter into the depth and breadth of the multidimensionality of world and otherness. Through awareness one enters nonduality within duality, and through duality into nonduality.

BEYOND IDEALISM AND BEYOND MIND ALONE

To perform the epoche and the reduction is to activate awareness of awareness and to be able to experience the various dimensionality of actuality. Phenomenology does not stop at the focus on mental content and ideation. To stop at mental content and ideation alone is to take a path that leads to becoming located in idealism and solipsism. Phenomenology overcomes Self enclosed ideation of mind alone. In fact to perform the suspension of mind does not imply any loss of relatedness to realness. The phenomenological attitude makes completely possible the experience of reality through appearance and manifestation. In this way the very oneness of manifestation and subjectivity reveal the immanent oneness of the knower and the known

THE EXPERIENTIAL BASIS OF PHENOMENOLOGY

Phenomenology rejects analytic and those scholastic philosophies preoccupied with the construction of purely formal and logical hypothesis. This rejection is the same for contemporary analytic thinking as well as the Buddhist hyperlogic of negation such as the mahyamaka as well as the mentalization of hindu vedantic thinking. Phenomenology is in opposition to the mentalization that is experientially distant from the world and its

manifestation. Phenomenology consistently returns to the experiential base of the givenness of phenomena and appearance which is the manifestation of the multidimensional actuality of which both the knower and the known are in oneness, primordial oneness. Phenomenology is ultimately the method of direct perception which is gnosis or jnana. Husserl initially investigated direct perception as intuition and phenomenologists now understand intuition as gnosis or direct perception. This understanding was greatly influenced both by Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's work.

APPEARANCE AND REALITY ARE NOT DIFFERENT ONTOLOGICALLY

Phenomenology challenges the understanding that the world we live in might be nothing but an illusion. Husserl and Heidegger both came to understand that phenomenology being limited to the world of appearance as it is, in no way describes the world as illusion. Heidegger, Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty understood there is a prereflective oneness between us and the world, within us and the world. This prereflective oneness is the oneness of awareness. The oneness of awareness manifests as us and the world. This is the oneness of space, this is the oneness of light, this is the oneness of energy, this is the oneness of presence. There is this natural primordial nonduality from within which the duality of phenomena arises. Duality naturally arises out of nonduality. The duality of phenomena (the me and the you) arises out of the naturalness of the nonduality of primordial awareness. We can experience duality of phenomena within the nonduality of this primordial base of awareness. This relationship of duality, being and experience is not some kind of foundational mistake. The view of negation of view of Buddhism is completely unnecessary and reflects an alliance to tradition wherein from the beginning there was inadequacy of the use of language, the inadequacy of negation.

We are in the world and our subjectivity is manifested in the oneness as world. Because of the innate perceived oneness the knower and the known, the natural ground of realization is possible to be experienced by all beings, with natural immediacy. There is no original sin or big mistake of hallucinating a world that does not exist.

Heidegger says the fundamental question as to whether there is a world makes no sense since 'dasein' (awareness as the great expanse) is itself being in the world. The very asking is a manifestation of being in the world. The query is self-refuting since it presupposes that which it denies. This is also the understanding of the contemporary phenomenological neo thomist Jacques Maritain who consistently expresses the givenness of the world to human experience and that the knower and the known are essentially in oneness. If there is no prereflective oneness there could be no knowingness. Direct perception is the natural givenness of being in the world of the knower and known as knowingness itself.

Just as phenomenology is concerned with meaning, it is concerned with appearance. How things appear, how they manifest and what significance they have, is an integral part of what they really are. To grasp the true nature of the object is to grasp how the object as world manifests and reveals itself to us. The reality of the object is not hidden behind or beyond the phenomenon, but unfolds itself in the phenomenon and as the phenomena. As Heidegger once put it, it is phenomenologically absurd to say of the phenomenon that it stands in the way of something more fundamental which it merely represents. Although the distinction between appearance and reality can be maintained, this is not a distinction between two separate realms. This distinction is internal to the dimensions of appearance. How the objects might appear in one gaze and how the objects appear in and through a more subtle gaze will manifest differences within the sameness. Different dimensions manifested by the same phenomena, different dimensions manifested through the same phenomena.

For phenomenology the world that appears to us is the actual world although this world may consist of multidimensional realities and is infinite in its horizons. In this world there may exist hidden and concealed aspects of the world within the phenomenal world itself. Hidden and concealed dimensions of the world that allow the various appearances to differ depending upon their manifestation of the various experiential dimensions. There is more than one dimension to every experience. There is more than one view. Phenomenology has both horizontal and vertical dimensions of knowingness. The vertical represent ascendant states of the experiential field and horizontal represent relational states of the field. The two poles are completely contributory to the sense of

stability and continuity of the awareness field. And the appearance of phenomena is temporal and the very manifestation is duration itself.

AWARENESS AS THREE DIMENSIONS OF GIVENESS

How can we think of the three dimensions of awareness or consciousness as the three kayas?

Pure awareness in its spaciousness or great expanse

Pure awareness as luminous radiance

Pure awareness manifesting as the embodiments of the worlds

We must think of phenomenological awareness as the three different modes of giveness. Each of the three kayas is a different mode of giveness or presentation. In a sense we can be aware of these different dimensions of awareness; the different manifestations of awareness, as different manifestations of giveness of appearance, the three dimensions of the one awareness, the three dimensions of giveness of the one awareness.

The appearance of emptiness and spaciousness of the unmanifest

The appearance of radiance and luminosity of the manifest

The appearance of energy of the manifestation

Thus there are different ways of becoming aware of awareness and there is a relation of manifestation between them. The appearance and manifestation of awareness has three dimensions or three manifestations. The first is nirmanakaya which is the world as it appears with its conventional appearance. The sambogakaya is the world as radiant light and energy and the dharmakaya is the un-manifest view of spaciousness, of potentiality.

Depending upon what giveness or what view is being manifested multidimensionally, that will be the perception of the reality; of this multidimensional reality. Nirmanakaya

will seem and be reality, sambogakaya will seem and be reality and dharmakaya will seem and be reality. From the dharmakaya view, only the dharmakaya dimension will be actuality. From the nirmanakaya view sambogakaya and dharmakaya are actuality and from the sambogakaya view, sambogakaya and dharmakaya are actuality. Each is real or actual in this multidimensional reality depending upon the view.

Each view is contained within the other and present in the other in potential or in actuality. In dharmakaya everything is present in potentiality. In nirmanakaya everything is contained in actuality, namely sambogakaya and dharmakaya. The real or the actual is the manifestation of each kaya and so there are different realities or actualities in oneness. Existing or actuality is the manifestation of each reality, although each kaya implies a different mode of existing or different dimension of existence. Each implies a different level of subtleness and different kind of subtleness. Each reality is a different kind of actuality and yet all are the one reality of awareness or consciousness.

From dharmakaya the others kayas are potential but may not be in actuality. From sambogakaya, dharmakaya is present in actuality and nirmanakaya only in potentiality. From nirmanakaya, both sambogakaya and dharmakaya are present in actuality.

In meditative awareness one may have the experience of one or all of the kayas. All of the kayas are in oneness- in the same house, the one house with different floors or dimensions. One is not more real than the other and one is not less real than the other. There are three floors in the one house...there is only one house and within the house three different floors.

The word "real" as it is often used in most Buddhist texts is a mixed and weak signifier. There is actually nothing signified within this linguistic structure of the word real. This aphasic view is normalized in Buddhist language, and in this normalization dissociation is normalized. In the truest sense the real is the actual as in the actuality of potential and the actuality of phenomena manifesting. The use of the word real as meaning inherent existence or eternal existence is an arbitrary attribution to the word real. Something can be composite, completely temporary and briefly real, briefly actual. To be in time does not destroy reality but actualizes real in time and as time. Time is the manifestation of the actual... Just as time is the manifestation of the great compassion. The statement

that only emptiness is real is linguistically without signification and inaccurate in this contemporary language epoch.

Such languaging of the real and unreal meaning delusion is more of a historical political and polemic statement reflecting a hopeful continuity of philosophical tradition with early Buddhist understanding and tradition. The path from Hinayana to Mahayana to Vajrayana truly stretches the word real beyond all recognition. The quest of validity of view is a consistent quest and source of quarrels throughout Buddhist history and life. The sense of validity of thought and empowerment is based on the historical person of the Shakyamuni Buddha who died over 2500 years ago. Much of what he is attributed to have said takes place on the mythological dimension.

Then there is the deconstruction frame of Nagarjuna and his relentless use of lack in his deconstruction of the actuality of experience and validity of person and the world. He uses Madhyamaka as a way of deconstructing the actuality of time and deconstructing the validity of a multidimensional view of reality with the use of the language of negation. Such as it is and is not, neither is nor is not, and never was. This is a way of using negation of language in speaking about the translucidity of the actual and its inclusive multidimensionality. This kind of muted language forecloses the actuality of the innateness of language as expression and manifestation of the primordial awareness itself. There is no logos. Phenomenology understands that language is the world and is the manifestation of reality itself. Language is the house of being. The Madhyamaka kind of aphasia forecloses the actuality of the Samadhi of syllables. This aphasic approach forecloses the sound dimension as well as the symbolic dimension of the vast multidimensional reality. This kind of presentation is a loss of and foreclosure of the power of logos, the power of awareness. Madhyamaka is the path of foreclosure.

The Dzogchen understanding easily holds the multidimensional view and also contains the independence of the mind view as described by Longchenpa. The porousness of reality and its various dimensions are expressed in Dzogchen understanding, yet these teachings can be limiting and psychically unavailable to contemporary cultures because of the rhetoric of delusion and the declared unreality of experience. In this contemporary philosophical world, the reality of experience and perception must be

taken into the formulation of Dzogchen. The reason is that naturalistic experience is so obvious and naturally validating. The way of negation and muteness of the symbolic and language function as being seemingly apart from the actuality of awareness itself is a step that actually mutes the experience of self-revelation which is the nature of the awareness itself. Self-revelation is the nature of the primordial guru. The way of muteness is a reflection of a view and way of life of rejection and foreclosure on human experience as valid with a language of melancholia, nihilism and solipsism.

The phenomenological understanding of Dzogchen does not require that everything arises only out of the mind alone, as a kind of mental projection. In early Buddhism, there is no independence of mind reality. Outside of the mind alone nothing exists. There is no independent reality outside of the mind.

Phenomenological understanding of Dzogchen does not require the belief that the world is an illusion which does not exist but rather that there are multiple realities within the same phenomena and within the same situation. Each of these realities depends upon the other in the sense of ontological priority but are different dimensions of actuality. Phenomena does exist in one dimension and in another dimension the phenomena may not yet experientially exist, may not be actualized, but only exist in potentiality.

As the philosopher Brentano pointed out, there is physical reality or material reality and there is psychic reality-one is visible and one is invisible. They are two dimensions of experience. Because you cannot find or see the psychic does not mean it does not exist.

UNIVOCACITY

The non-Aristotelian view of one, one substance of the world and different manifestations does not trouble phenomenology. Or rather, the view that there is one essence and many different manifestations does reflect phenomenology. If by each manifestation you mean a different incidental essence with one ontological essence, this does and can reflect phenomenology. Phenomenology is the approach of univocity rather than analogy or equivocality. Univocity reflects the oneness of essence, of

awareness, and the world of its manifestations. Univocity is the realization of equality consciousness and the purity of all beings.

GAZE

Awareness can become aware of its own self by the gaze turning back on the gaze. This is not the mind turning back on its self. The mind can reflect on itself and this self reflection can be the mind reflecting on itself, including its self as subject and its self as object. This is a self-object relationship. When awareness becomes aware of itself- when awareness becomes aware of awareness- this is the praxis of knowingness knowing knowingness. The full depth and breadth of awareness being aware of itself may require the awareness becoming its own object, awareness being aware of itself immanently. But this experience will never be objectified as it will never be thought. Awareness becomes aware of itself from within itself, immanently and intrinsically. When awareness focuses on itself it does not go outside itself to do so, awareness does not become otherness to itself. Rather awareness focuses within itself and through itself. Awareness locates itself within itself. It becomes itself in completeness and fullness.

This self-manifestation of awareness can be a function of awareness gazing into awareness but this will be a non-mindful approach or a non-thoughtful or non-conceptual approach, hence there will be no objectification.

So, first as method, there is the differentiation of the mind from awareness. Second, there is the experience of awareness as awareness wherein the recognition of awareness as a field phenomenon becomes manifest. This is a non-conceptual, clarity experience. This knowingness is without conceptualization and is direct perception. This perception of awareness of awareness in one's self then allows for the perception of awareness in the other. Again this experience will be unmediated and come through the direct skills of the practitioner. The experience can be reflected upon, but the actual experience of knowingness knowing knowingness has actually taken place. This

reflective step is the step of languaging what has taken place. Putting the experience to words places the experience in the representational continuum.

Without the mind becoming separate from awareness, the mind reflecting on the mind will make this an objectified process of the thinking function. And this will be a self-object experience. The self will be conceptualized. When awareness becomes aware of its own self directly, this will not be a conceptual experience but a direct unmediated knowingness. Through this initial knowingness the kayas will present themselves phenomenologically: nirmakaya, sambogakaya and dharmakaya.

LONGCHENPA: THE RELATION OF PHENOMENA TO MIND AND TO AWARENESS

The Magical Realism of Longchenpa

I will use the words of Longchenpa to describe his understanding of the relationship of mind to awareness. Longchenpa said “Are you not asserting everything to be mind? Let me clearly outline the distinction to be made. In general, if the world of appearance and possibilities (whether of samsara or nirvana) is explained to be awakened mind -which is awakened awareness, or awareness, or awareness field - what is meant is that phenomena are alike in that they do not waver from a single awareness, and they manifest naturally as they display dynamic energy and adornment of that awareness. They are manifestations of awareness, primordial awareness. In this sense they are considered to be the mind, just as one calls the rays of the sun “the sun” when one says sit in the midday sun.”

Longchenpa continues “To hold that apparent phenomena are mind alone is to stray from me. The manifestation of primordial awareness is not the manifestation of mind alone. In ordinary speech some people hold apparent phenomena to be one’s own mind alone. They speak without defining the issues involved and commit error as ordinary mind and awakened awareness are not identical. Ordinary mind refers to the eight modes of consciousness and their associated mental events which together constitute the adventitious distortions affecting human beings in the three realms. Awakened awareness refers to awareness. Naturally occurring timeless awareness has no

substance or characteristics, the basic space of all samsara and nirvana. Since the world of appearance and possibilities arises as the dynamic energy and display of awakened awareness, awakened awareness which is actually their cause is simply the label applied to them as the result. While that which manifests as samsara and nirvana is understood to be the dynamic energy of awareness, one should clearly further understand that awareness itself constitutes an unceasing ground for the arising of things although it has never existed as a thing, whether of samsara or nirvana.”

Longchenpa continues on, ” apparent objects are understood to be clearly apparent yet ineffable and have never been mind alone. Empty yet clearly apparent, groundless, timeless and pure. When freedom occurs, the dynamic energy and display in being groundless are naturally pure which is like awakening from a dream. Thus one should know that self-knowing awareness without ever having wavered from its original state of natural rest. Unchanging dharmakaya is uncontaminated by any substance or characteristic.”

Longchenpa elaborates that “the Dynamic energy is the creative potential of awareness and accounts for the fact that samsara and nirvana arise differently, just as the very same ray of sunlight causes a lotus to blossom to open and a night lily to close. Display is used in the sense of the radiance of awareness, displaying itself like a lamp, displaying itself as light or sun, displaying itself as sunbeams. Adornment refers to the fact that naturally manifest phenomena appearing in full array arise of themselves as adornment in light of awareness. This is similar to rainbows or the sun and moon being adornments of the sky.”

“The essence of the dynamic energy is unceasing. Unceasing, non-dual and richly endowed. I have shown these to be the essence of display.” Longchenpa. These quotes I have used are from Longchenpa’s great text *Words and Meaning*.

EVERYTHING IS THE MANIFESTATION OF AWARENESS

Everything is a manifestation of awareness. Manifestation is the primordial givenness. There are three modes of givenness and three manifestations of awareness, or two with

one mode being unmanifest. The manifest is the appearance of awareness. The appearance of the manifestation of awareness is in oneness with awareness. Appearance is ultimately the nondual oneness of awareness becoming manifest. To become aware of awareness is to become aware of the different modes of givenness. It is to become aware of the different manifestations as well as the unmanifested dharmakaya. Ultimately awareness is the actuality of awareness as nirmanakaya, the actuality of awareness as sambogakaya and the actuality of awareness as dharmakaya.

To perceive the manifestation or the givenness of awareness is to experience the nondual oneness of awareness. All objects are configurations of and within the awareness field or manifestations of the awareness field. As dharmakaya the appearances are manifestations within spaciousness, and within radiance as sambogakaya and within the elements as nirmanakaya.

Gazing is the manifestation of gnosis. Direct perception or gnosis is our way of knowing the givenness of awareness. So, gnosis itself has three modes as does the manifestation of primordial awareness.

Gazing within opens the perception of the three kayas. Then from within the gaze one gazes into the openness of the world and gazes from the gaze into pure awareness, manifestations of luminosity and manifestations of the elements.

Gazing bypasses the mediation of the mind and yet can integrate the mediation of the mind into the awareness field. In the way one gazes both into awareness or the manifestations of awareness and gazes into the manifestation of nirmanakaya through the mind in the awareness field. Awareness comes through both in the mind and beyond the mind.

AWARENESS GAZING INTO AWARENESS

Awareness seeing awareness and awareness sees through the mind, awareness sees both at the same time. Depending on the Place of the UNFOLDING View, the world will seem actual or only potential. From the view within Nirmanakaya the world is

actual, phenomena, is actuality and exists. From the view within Sambogakaya dimension the energy and luminous archetypical dimensions of the world is symbolic and personalized as actual and the very dimension manifests within Nirmanakaya. So these manifestations are considered actualities. From the view of Dharmakaya the spaciousness and emptiness of phenomena seems to that which is actual, the world of potentiality is the only actuality...

Gazing into phenomena opens up the phenomena, opens up the givenness of awareness. As one enters one dimension, the other dimensions of awareness easily open and become apparent. Initially the openness of the gaze within opens up the experience of awareness within oneself. The gaze views the same givenness of awareness in the other and in the physical world itself. One perceives the different dimensions of the givenness of awareness within one's own self, within others and within the physical world.

The oneness of awareness is apparent in the oneness of the three modes of givenness of awareness. There is the oneness of spaciousness, there is the oneness of light, and there is the oneness of the elements, there is the sameness of oneness of awareness as knowingness.

NONDUALITY WITHIN DUALITY AND DUALITY WITHIN NONDUALITY

The nonduality of awareness for phenomenology takes place within the phenomenology of duality. And duality takes place within the oneness of nonduality of awareness. Often in some idealistic eastern philosophical traditions in order to support nonduality the experience of duality is denied and foreclosed. The experience of duality of me and you in the oneness of nonduality is unseen and the experience is foreclosed. The indivisibility between phenomena and awareness is foreclosed. Phenomena are foreclosed. This view is often expressed in Hindu Advaita and certain forms of Buddhism. Nonduality does not foreclose the experience of duality within nonduality. Duality is phenomena in its infinite manifestations and nonduality is singular essence as primordial awareness. Duality arises from within nonduality. What is called duality is the

differences or differentiatedness within oneness of nonduality. In the dialectics of phenomenology's magical realism duality and nonduality are not in opposition whatsoever. Duality within nonduality is mutually inclusive and using Deluze's language the difference is nonessential difference.

GARAB DORJE: DEEP IMMERSION IN AWARENESS

I will utilize and transliterate the wording and understanding of Garab Dorje to describe the experience of the deep immersion within awareness. I will phenomenologize his language and understanding. Garab Dorje describes that **given** pervasive evenness or sameness of the field in which objects manifest and are conceptualized. Nonetheless awareness itself is not reified. And so body and mind dwell as a matter of course in the expanse of that evenness of the field, the oneness of the field. Regardless of how awareness appears to arise or whatever awareness manifests as a matter of course there is no wavering from this expanse of evenness and sameness and oneness. All difference is nonessential difference.

At the level of source or pure awareness objects with characteristics have no existence as objects when they are abiding in a state of deep potential. They are potential but not yet actual. Timelessly there is no duality and so no distinctions can be made. There is only potentiality. And so even within their actuality within the nirmanakaya there are still no distinctions between ordinary people and buddhas. There is no essential difference between samsara and nirvana at the level of nirmanakaya. What has substance and what lacks substance are equal in basic space. Buddhas and ordinary beings are equal in basic pervasive space of awareness in all of its manifestations. Relative or conventional reality and ultimate reality are equal in basic space. These dimensions are in oneness as oneness. Flaws and qualities are equal in basic space. Up, down, all directions are equal in basic space. Therefore when arising, things arise equally without being better or worst. When abiding, they abide equally without being better or worst. When free, they are freed equally. They abide in the basic space of their equalness. Although they arise unequally and with nonessential differences they abide in the basic space of their equalness. Although they manifest within unequally, they

abide in the basic space of their equalness. Although they are freed unequally, they are free within the basic space of their equalness.

It all comes down to using the term Buddhahood to refer to nothing more than one's own true face beholding itself.

The very essence of awareness has never existed as anything other than awareness. So, nothing exists within awareness that is not awareness itself. There is nothing to be found within awareness that is not free. This awareness is a field vast and infinite in its horizons. And although objects exist within the sea of awareness, the variations of the different objects existing in the sea of immanence are nonessential differences within awareness. These differences themselves are nonetheless awareness. Even the nonessential difference is awareness.

In light of this understanding Garab Dorje gives the following suggestions as path. Rest in suchness itself. Rest within awareness as awareness. Within the ultimate heart essence there is nothing to improve upon so positive actions bring no benefit. And there is nothing to deteriorate and so, negative actions inflict no damage. Within infinite spaciousness there is nothing to improve on. There is no karma within space and there is no previous life within spaciousness.

Awareness as such, dharmakaya in all its nakedness, regardless of what virtue has been created, nothing becomes any better and no benefit is entailed. Since in essence it has never been anything, karmic traces do not exist. For one immersed in genuine being, the total resolution is called timeless awareness, pure emptiness in which phenomena are resolved. By abiding in this very essence of awareness, those immersed in genuine being realize this awareness. They have merged with the reality of what is. Those who are immersed in genuine being to the very highest degree relate to apparent phenomena in an easygoing way since virtue and harm do not exist for them. They never fall out of self-knowing awareness as such because, for them, there is only the understanding that awareness manifests naturally. Dakini laughter reflects this experience.

Many people are bound by fixation. Those immersed in genuine being realize that all phenomena manifest their freedom within the great expanse of awareness. Awareness as the sea of potential is nonreferential. This sphere has no edges or corners. There are no causes and condition. It is spontaneous presence free of limitations. People who reify this state will reify enlightenment, and try to grasp liberation.

PHENOMENOLOGY OF SUBJECTIVITY WITHOUT A SUBJECT AS ENTITY

One of the great contributions of Heidegger to phenomenology was his deconstruction of subjectivity as awareness being reduced to being a subject of mind alone or awareness field as the property of the individual subject as mind. For many, subjectivity is the subjectivity of the mind alone. Unhappily and unfortunately for most people, the sense of subjectivity and sense of entity are equated.

Phenomenology allows for the experience of subjectivity without being the subjectivity of mind alone. Pure awareness that is pervasive and is the source of individualized awareness and individualized subjectivity understood experientially. There is the deconstruction of subjectivity being reduced to a individualized subject as mind body continuum; as individualized awareness. Subjectivity is the vast nonlocalized field comparative to space. Space as knowingness, space as subject is not experienced as an objectified thing or localized unit of experience, but is experienced as unbound vast awareness, a limitless, nonlocalized field of pure awareness. This space both embraces and pervades all things and beings within it. This is the space of pure awareness or pure subjectivity or pure knowingness without being located alone as knower as entity or subject. In other words subjectivity without a subject...knowingness without the knower. Or as the knower knows knowingness the knower is only knowingness beyond time and space and in time and space.

So subjectivity is primordial awareness unborn and undying and is located within subjectivity as mind and body. Hence there is the double play of subjectivity as awareness within mind and body and awareness which is nonlocal. So the person can experience the range of subjectivity given to him or her. From highly contained within

mind and body to becoming aware of awareness itself; becoming unbound and experiencing subjectivity as primordial space itself.

And so all knowingness both localized within a subject and nonlocalized is pervasive, is the same knowingness. There is knowingness without a knower and knowingness within infinite knowers. It is impossible to think of knowingness without a knower, but this is the very ultimate nature of awareness.

Even in death the mind may dissolve but subjectivity is indestructible, the true vajra is your subjectivity itself. The subjectivity of the mind body configuration is a manifestation of primordial subjectivity itself. The subjectivity of mind is primordial subjectivity veiled within the mind and body configuration of space and time. Timeless awareness is subjectivity without a subject.

In this understanding the very sense of personal subjectivity is the manifestation of pure awareness, primordial awareness. And thus the simple act of becoming aware of awareness is the path of oneness, nonduality. As Husserl so often exclaimed “what is the wonder of all wonders, pure consciousness, and the doorway is our own subjectivity.”

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