

# THE TWAIN

*Extract taken from The Dyad by Anthony Blake, DuVersity Publications.*

"East is East and West is West  
And never the Twain shall meet" (1)

If the power of the monad is in inclusion, that of the dyad is in exclusion. It is that aspect of the world which is grounded or centred - we are not sure which - in opposition. Instead of inclusive wholeness, our attention is towards exclusive contrast. The 'location' of this attention is problematic: is it at a point, along an axis, or in some other and more elaborate form; and, can it be represented in a spatial form at all? The diffuse contemplation which can be taken as characteristic of the monad is replaced by something 'in crisis'. This is because, in the dyad, we attend to a mutual exclusion in which both 'poles' of the exclusion are included. In other words, we have both exclusion and inclusion at once.

To understand what we mean by 'crisis', one needs to undertake an act of attention of a kind that evokes a crisis. One form of this can be reached by the following mental exercise: set oneself to contemplate '1/2', that is one-half without reference to anything at all (and penetrating behind the words 'one-half' or the symbol '1/2'). If this is achieved, the effect can be explosive. It is a direct encounter with the meaning of the term we introduced in Part One: dyadic-two.

The 'explosive' or energetic feature of such an exercise is proper to the dyad and has been remarked upon by many people in the content of generating creative insight. In creativity, there is often this step of entertaining two mutually exclusive views at the same time; and it is obviously this that obtains in humour. We are, however, used to discharging this energy as quickly as possible and we need to remark, here right at the beginning, that our typical experience is of turning away from 'dyadic-two' and not of dwelling in its realm.

The rejection of dyadic-two expresses dyadic-two. The exclusion of the dyad is a part of the dyad. How the dyad is treated as a whole obeys the 'laws' of the dyad.

The situation of dyadic-two is that of the insoluble. For that reason, our experience of this kind, if it does not result in discharge, leads us into 'knots' or a deadening state of impasse. We do not want to dwell in realms where resolution, a way out, is not possible; where there is nothing we can do to change things.

We have introduced some psychological observations to flesh out the concept, but we need to look at it in its own terms as an aspect of the world and not simply as something that might happen to us. The dyad is not only a case of logical contradiction, the mutual exclusion of propositions; nor is it reducible to such features of the world as the mutual exclusion of solid bodies, for example. Where it does obtain, we discover something very remarkable and unsettling: that what things are is not only diverse but also self-disjoint. Our deep-rooted ideas about the underlying consistency and uniformity of the world are threatened.

Our views of the world are riddled with contrasts which appear to us as alternatives: either the one or the other is correct. We seek for the one view to triumph and the others to be vanquished. It proves almost impossible to imagine a world which, in its foundations, is not of a single nature. After all, such is the whole import of the monad.

However, in our expectation of finding the one correct view of things, we falsely imagine that the alternative is to accept something inconceivable: that the world is dual, that the two sides are mutually exclusive and therefore out of communication with each other, and as a consequence it would be as if there were two separate worlds in disassociation. It would be impossible to even

imagine how we could encounter such a state of affairs, how we could process information in two completely contrasting ways within the same brain, and so on. In philosophy, such a prospect was entertained under the theory of occasionalism, according to which God made the one and the other - e.g. body and mind - agree. In our own times, the use of God as a means of explanation is somewhat out of favour. But, this does not render it meaningless. In our own view, 'God' arises for us whenever we contemplate wholeness and an essential thread of our investigation is that 'God' is manifold in the form of the different systems. 'He' does not have to be thought of as a superior being, nor any kind of eternal agent. It will turn out, in fact, that God as explanation which appears as a non- explanation is an exemplification of the dyad.

If the usual view of a dual world is false, what is the alternative? To answer this question, we have to step back into ourselves again. Contradiction as self-contradiction is a central issue in human life:

"You say I contradict myself? Well then,  
I contradict myself"

Walt Whitman celebrated contradiction, even though most people regard self-contradiction as a sign of unreality and, even, the root of mental illness. At the same time, there has hardly ever been a remarkable man who did not manifest some kind of self- contradiction. In many ways, the root self-contradiction stands for the inner kernel of an individual's uniqueness. Human life defies reason. There is something incompatible between cognition and the energy of cognition. It does not matter what this incompatibility is supposed to consist of or derive from: we feel it; it is rather like a paradoxical energy, which has the property of waking us up from monadic participation.

Take thinking. I am thinking about something and so my thought is what I am thinking about; it is intentional and, if it loses this intention, it falls into confusion. At the same time, there is an energy of thought. Thought is arising out of my psycho-physical organism. How it does this is unrelated to what I am thinking about. It is not as if, for example, what I eat that determines the subject of my thinking: eating cheese does not make me think of cheese. Similarly, I do not think in neurons or synapses. Apart from such cognitive speculations about where the energy of thought comes from, it is possible to experience the energy of thought directly. This can have an important bearing on creative work, when we learn to 'hearken' to this energy as a guide. (2)

In order to think, it seems that I must forget how it is that I think. There is the well-known story of the frog and the centipede, where the frog asks his friend which leg he begins walking with. Confronted with this question, the centipede falls over in a tangle. When invited to the local pub, he sets off without any hitch. There seems to be something disjoint between being a 'subject' and being an 'object'. (3)

These are three versions of the dyadic state: self-contradiction, thought and the energy of thought, and objective and subjective. None of them is particularly definitive but each illustrates what we mean. The question is whether such features, which we find in our own experience of ourselves, are applicable to the world at large? Our prejudice in the matter should be obvious: everything that we find in ourselves must also be a feature of the world at large; even though, in the light of our discussion, we must allow for a duality between ourselves and the world. 'The contradiction,' if we can put it this way, 'contradicts itself'. If we pursue some unitary vision, we will find that the dyad 'wipes itself out' and we arrive back at the monad. The dyad rests on nothingness: it is not brought about by something, or imposed by something. This is as it is in ourselves, in this sense: the realization of the dyad in ourselves comes through an act of recognition that has no antecedents, an act that has no process in its construction; that is itself intentional.

It is very difficult to conceive of the world at large as being capable of self-alienation. After all, doesn't it just sit there at one with itself? Isn't it the case that wherever there is contradiction, it is

due to us? But, just imagine that the world 'just sitting there' is aware of itself and our own awareness is of a kind with that. And, let us ignore traditional views of some 'mind of God' that presides in utter harmony. If, in any sense, the world or universe is aware of itself, then the dyad becomes possible reality.

Why should we assume that the world is not aware of itself? Is it because we feel that the universe is not a self, that it is merely in 'being there' that it is? Let us think about what a self is like. It has something to do with experiencing a limited aspect of the whole at any one time, but in such a way that this limited experience is more than the rest. Thus, we do not know what is happening in our brains or blood or cells, we are missing most of what is going on around us in the environment, only a very few memories are currently available, we have limited access to the knowledge we know, our states are only a fraction of our range of states, and so on. At the same time, this limited perspective provides a location for our intention, our creativity, our freedom, our will; all of which would be impossible with total global awareness.

Do we go round in circles here? Have we not arrived back at the dyad in order to express what we mean by a self: the 'less' that is 'more'? (4) We can suggest that it is the dyad 'which enables' us to recognize a self, including ourselves. It is not a case of selves inventing the dyad out of their own nature but of the dyad being recognized by the dyad in the form of selfhood. This bizarre statement is not as extreme as it looks. What we are dealing with throughout our discussions is the 'reading of experience', in which all the things that we know and are familiar with are called into question. We begin the discussion knowing about selves and not knowing about dyads, etc. But, as we progress, the roles reverse, since we are dismantling the familiar to uncover the raw ingredients of which it is made. Thus, we are able to recognize 'self' in ourselves by virtue of some power of recognition and it is to this recognition that we are addressing ourselves.

### **THE LESS THAT IS MORE**

is a useful formulation of what we mean by the dyad, since it gives us a means of recognizing one. To illustrate this in a mild way, consider this extension of our discussion of selfhood. In the universe at large, where can we expect to find freedom? The answer is in regions of life. Yet, these regions are rare, because life requires very special conditions (including the right combinations of planet, star and supernova). So, what is limited to very special niches of the universe turns out to be capable of generating insight into the whole thing. This is in startling contrast to the traditional 'mind of God' view. But, of course, it is merely a projection of our own self-appraisal.

This may prove to be irreducible. It may turn out to be the case that in no way can we 'unstick' ourselves from the recognition of the dyad. Thus:

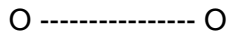
### **ONLY THE DYAD SEES THE DYAD**

where what we mean by 'seeing' is left obscure. There cannot be any objective measure of the dyad because that would mean to ignore it altogether. It would be like standing outside something to measure the inside of it. Standing outside amounts to treating the dyad as a 'black box'; which we do when we say that there is no way in which we can make sense of the idea that the world is aware of itself. What takes us 'inside' is, in a way, our own self; but this does not mean, as a consequence, that this insight is subjective, but that it is both subjective and objective.

We find ourselves forced to use human analogues such as the universe 'being aware of itself' for one basic and irreducible reason: what we confront in the dyad is not expressible in terms of objective information. We cannot say that we find out that the world is dyadic, as if we might come to learn this from observation. The dyad is not a matter of observation and, as we have

hinted earlier, puts cognition into question. We do not come to know about the dyad; what we do is come to the point at which the dyad is real for us. Not only is it impossible for us to 'unstick' ourselves from the dyad, it cannot be experienced without we ourselves being subject to it, or 'caught' in it. It is not something to be looked at from outside.

We return to the theme of the locus of the dyad: where is the 'point' at which the dyad comes to be? This is not a point 'out there', 'in' the world and separate from us; nor is it at the meeting point - if there is such a thing - between ourselves and the world. It is 'in' us and 'in' the world. We express the world and the world expresses us, that is: each brings the other to light, simultaneously. The important contrast is not between ourselves and the world, it is between the two 'poles' of reality, the two natures of everything, which obtains everywhere that it is recognized. The simplest image we can have of polarity is:



that is, some kind of axis of contrast. The image allows us to think of some mutual exclusion that is bound up in a single whole; but we should not imagine that the line drawn in the diagram has any actual meaning. If the 'two' are in mutual exclusion, then they do not connect. Remember our numerical description:

dyadic-two  $\frac{1}{2}$

The 'image' of  $\frac{1}{2}$  is much better than that of the axial line; perhaps just because it is almost impossible to form any picture of it! There is no dividing line between the two poles; there is no interface; there is no connection; and, therefore, there is no location at all for where the dyad 'is'. It is inherently false to locate the dyad in the human mind. Yet, how then can we say that the two poles apply to the same world? At least, ascribing the dyad to peculiarities of human sentience does give the dyad some kind of location and therefore a kind of wholeness.

Let us realize that our whole idea of location and also our idea of 'belonging to the same world' is thoroughly bound up with the domain of objective knowledge. What we are trying to do in giving intelligible form to these notions is being incorrectly placed in a realm which of the type that we can survey, or look over and observe. We want to completely invert the procedure and say the following:

### **THE DYAD INDICATES THAT THERE IS A WORLD IN CONTRADICTION**

We discover that there is such a world from our experience of the dyad; we do not begin with a world and then discover it as a dyad. The dyad reveals that kind of world; the world in general does not reveal the dyad. Such an extreme view lands us in great difficulties. Is this 'world of the dyad' in any sense the 'same' as the world of the monad? The answer, as one might expect, is both Yes and No! There is all the same content but what it means is radically transformed. And, we should add, that it remains supremely important to have done the work on the monad and come to the point of 'living in the medium' before the dyad is even contemplated. The reason for this is mainly pragmatic: the avoidance of an habitual contrast of concepts and the quest for a confrontation which deepens our contact with reality

The dyad can be treated as an organ of perception; but what can be seen by means of it is, of course, the dyad everywhere. Our perception of the dyad is also a measure of our strength, of how much we can bear. For, the hardest thing is to contemplate a reality posing a kind of problem that is insoluble. (5) It is even questionable whether we can call this a 'problem' at all. We know that logicians have struggled with paradoxes such as that of the Cretan liar, which rest on self-contradictory propositions; and it is a common feeling on the part of the layman that such troubles are self-imposed and 'unreal'; but, his 'self-imposed' difficulties are not to be dismissed as an invention of his own mind - they are an act of recognition, a kind of perception. The logician is taking the problem as real and, without him, there would be no problem. However, this does not

make it unreal. Of course, it seems that the 'problem' gets solved in the end - as Russell managed to do with his theory of classes - but it appears again in another guise. What the logician neglects is the 'selfhood' involved, that such propositions exhibit the paradox intrinsic to any speaker: it is a feature of intelligence to find itself in self-contradiction. If a group of logical paradoxes comes to be resolved then others must necessarily be invented (or discovered).

Why do we say that? Think of it in this way: the only way for an intelligence or a self to deal with being a thing is to annihilate the basis of being treated as an objective entity. This means that the intelligence needs to reveal itself as both objective and subjective at one and the same time. This is the role of paradox. As many people feel, the error in normal approaches to artificial intelligence lies precisely in their requirement to avoid self-contradiction. Very probably, the most important step for human evolution lay in the provision of an organ of paradox (we have no idea what this means or how any objective process could bring about such a state of affairs).

We are not compelled by any evidence to say that the world is in reality founded on a fundamental mutual exclusion of itself from itself. Even to assert such a thing is itself paradoxical. For the moment, let us consider the following contrast between quantum mechanics and existentialism.

In quantum mechanics, in the interpretation of the Copenhagen school as led by Niels Bohr, it is asserted that quantum reality is dual - wave and particle, etc. - and that this is real feature of the world and not a product of our limited intelligence as others such as Bohm have felt. (6) In the existentialism of Sartre, we have the contrast of 'being-in-itself' and 'being-for-itself', the former being the things of the world and the latter the state of man. According to Sartre, it is a matter of 'bad faith' to treat oneself as an object: the reality of man is never objective. (7) As a consequence, a man can never justify his choices on the grounds of what has happened to him, or explain what he does in terms of any kind of cause. It is in practice impossible to live according to this view, i.e. to live an 'authentic existence' and Sartre himself contributed greatly to the perpetuation of Marxism as well as to a wave of 'meaninglessness'.

But Sartre had realized that we cannot have one set of actions which are free and another which are not. It is 'all or nothing'. This is contrary to the Copenhagen view in which one or the other 'pole' comes into manifestation according to experimental circumstances. At the same time, it is possible to see that human freedom is authenticated entirely by other human freedom: one human being can recognize, and 'give' reality to, another human being's freedom. This, the world can never do. That was why, of course, the role of 'The Other' was so critical in Sartre's theory; and both in his philosophy and in his novels and plays, he expressed the anguish of human betrayal. Thus, it might seem that here, too, we have the manifestation of one of the two poles according to circumstances. But, as in the Copenhagen view, both poles are always 'there' and one 'reads' either the one or the other according to one's own act. We can treat another self as a machine or as a free spirit. Nothing compels us to do either.

This, too, is the paradox in quantum theory where, so it appears, the very act of cognition (with its attendant instrumentation) brings one of the two poles into existence. What we 'do' and what we know are inseparable. This inseparability is a major key; but it denies us any chance of independent verification. No amount of information, demonstration, argument or whatever can ever make us see a man as free or as not free; the opinion of any other person cannot absolve us from the choice we make of ourselves.

Naturally enough, we yearn for some 'middle way', a way in which the extreme tension and demand for self-committal is made irrelevant, where we are let off the hook, where we can evolve some conceptual compromise and see the dilemma as an illusion, a mere self-created aberration as Wittgenstein put it, to 'let the fly out of the bottle'. We can clothe this yearning with aspirations towards a 'higher reality' but what it amounts to is wanting an 'escape clause'! It is too easy to

assume that, when we confront a contradiction, it is only a stage in passing towards a satisfying reconciliation.

### Notes

(1) Rudyard Kipling.

(2) In Heidegger's *What is Called Thinking*, he makes a great play on the etymology of the word 'think', relating it to the Old-Germanic 'thank' and turning thinking, then, into a relation with the 'gods'.

(3) In Gurdjieff's *All and Everything*, he makes it clear that the contrast can be unbearable. Thus, he portrays man as 'invented' to regulate the orbit of the moon which, if he were to become aware of it, would cause him to commit suicide. This is an inspired reworking of the Sumerian tradition in which man is portrayed as a device used by the gods, the Annunaki, in their work of cosmic engineering. The whole of his book is devoted to this issue which brings into focus the question of where freedom lies.

(4) Also, as in Sartre's phrase, that 'we are condemned to be free'

(5) See Medewar's *The Art of the Soluble*: science is this art which necessarily eschews the insoluble; however, mathematics raises this spectre in the form of true propositions that cannot be proved

(6) Bohm postulated the existence of a level of 'hidden variables', definitive entities and processes which only appear as a duality of natures. See his *Undivided Universe*.

(7) See Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*