

IMAGINARY TIME

Most of us can be fooled into thinking that 'virtual reality' floats about in its own world. When we Google, we hardly stop to think about the *actual* cost of such a transaction. Our search does not scan some non-physical web but is conducted through a massive bank of computers, consuming God knows how much power, which holds a copy of the WWW. However 'non-actual' something is *it can only exist* in connection with something actual.

I'm using the word 'actual' to include space, so it is relevant to the idea of space-time. Or to Bohm's 'explicate order'. I want to look at the whole act of *reading* in terms of both the actual and the non-actual.

We begin with the *text* as space. So far it is just spatial, an array of marks. It is silent.

Next is the text as someone opens the text, or picks it up. We have a time zero and the *start of a process*. We flick through the pages and the clock is ticking.

However, we might be distracted and thinking of something else. Then we pay attention and pick up on what the words 'stand for'. These can be people, events, worlds far away in time or space or even quite 'imaginary'. Our consciousness arouses various potentials and we say, for example, that we 'feel' what the words are saying and have images of what they signify. The text is *interesting* because it extends into eternity.

Then there is the engagement with *meaning*. This comes straight through independently of images and feelings. It tells us what to make of it, why it has been written. This *connects us with the author and his present moment of composition*. In this moment of reading I am united with him in his present moment of writing. The reading and writing coalesce.

The books on our shelves are 'brooding presences'. Maybe a bit like Arthur and his knights slumbering under the cliffs of Dover waiting to be summoned.

JGB once said that Mendelssohn's work on promulgating appreciation of J S Bach (who by then had almost been forgotten) was making a connection with the present moment of Bach's compositions *which 'had' gone on evolving in their own time*. This was a different view from that of Homer who, in the *Odyssey*, had Odysseus actualise the spirit of the prophet Tiresias by making animal sacrifices upon the vapours of which the prophet could feed and become substantial. This was to have echoes in the cult of martyrs later on. *Blood has long been associated with the substance of Being* (possibly why Gurdjieff used the term 'hanbledzoin' or blood of the spirit). **Blood as hyparchic** (breath as eternal).

Perhaps I have to sacrifice something of myself to realise what I read. Anyway, how can I in my present moment possibly be more real than all the events of time past and time future? These prospects evoke the sense of a hyparchic reality underlying

appearances. A world being woven out of meaning. What Bohm may have meant by the *implicate order*.

Are we now just a memory of our children?