

EDITORIAL

Psychic Phenomena and the Hazards of Translation

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Language is not an appendage of existence. It is but the most profound biologic structure; from which behaviour, including speech, is derived. The gap between speech (as a static outcome) and language as a dynamic potential is to be overcome through dialectic activity in creative synthesis (poetry in its broadest sense).

While psychic phenomena are lived profoundly in direct relation to the basic language structure the psychologic and psychiatric scientific studies are handling them using common translated expression as the basic tool of both reductionism and alienation away from our actual existence. Taking our emotional life as an example, we used to start by importing rather than translating a foreign word from a foreign language having some foreign definition (and connotation), then to go on using a structured method, also imported, within a fantastic illusion that we are scientists !!. The result is usually some redundant, disrupting, mutilating and alienating conclusions.

Sooner or later this foreign body imported data becomes more and more imprinted, remodelling and invading our deeper biologic (language) structure, turning us, ultimately, to some pseudo-existences. We are actually reduced to fit the prison of the foreign word instead of branching to actualize our endless open potentials. If we are to avoid such hazards we have to rearrange matters in a trial to re-put the horse in front of the cart. We have to start from our very language structure impregnated by our very history as coded and programmed in our very biology. Then, and only then, we have to proceed with the appropriate tool to uncover and discover whatever.

For instance, starting from an Arabic stimulus word like "WIGDAN", we notice that its meaning changes enormously according

proceed or to follow. It has been believed that this word is the proper translation of the English word "affect". This is the least true. The Arabic word "WIGDAN" could mean "to find". It also refers to "sadness", "anger" "love" and "hate" (with different proposition to follow). It is still related to the verbs "to create" and "to enrich" or "to enlarge". It seems to me that this word (WIDGAN) is so omnipotent to include connotations having affective, motivating and cognitive implications. Starting from our language structure by inspiring what this word "WIGDAN" could refer to, we would have been able to approach a complex phenomenon where cognitive, affective and creative aspects are included in what becomes reduced unduly to a limited emotional symbol. This is also true if we consider another Arabic word describing sadness and related phenomena. All such areas have been reduced to a superficial limited sector, that is what is imprisoned in the english word "depression". This has been translated for some reason as the Arabic word "IKTIAAB". The more inclusive mother Arabic word "HOZN" has its positive active aspect; as well as its painful handicapping bearings. It is also related to another word "HUMM" which is in turn partly related to certain volitional inclinations. All such aspects are not the least included in the currently used word "depression".

The restrictions imposed by the use of such a narrow word are not the least confined to the scientific or professional language. It has also invaded more and more our every day life. This endangers, beyond doubt, our deep language (emotional, existential, etc...) structure though undue remoulding, reductionism and alienation.

To conclude, we have to start from our very language, to inspire whatever it promises, to construct the appropriate research tool and ultimately to probe in, discover and promote our (not other's) own existence. As such, we can go parallel to, but not the least separate from others, objective efforts trying the same way in their own language structure. Through the same lead we hope to reactivate our existence by unfolding our philosophical stand as represented in our deepest structure (language as biology). Ultimately, we can benefit from the efforts of other creative activities to be aware more and more about our psychological existence. Poetry, in its broadest sense is ready to act its genuine role as the dialectic creative activity able to remodel the newly erupting existential phenomena into the dynamically, dialectically growing language structure.