

Högskolan i Skövde
Institutionen för kommunikation och information

The concept of identity in Bohm's implicate order scheme

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Per Areskog
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Handledare: Paavo Pylkkänen

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1. INTRODUCTION

David Bohm presents in his book *Wholeness and the implicate order* a metaphysical world-view where movement is fundamental. This view is radically different from our ordinary mechanistic world-view, and we have to reinterpret many of our daily concepts and perceive the world differently if we are to follow Bohm's thoughts. In Bohm's view movement is fundamental and is the only substance so to speak. Bohm argues that modern physics with quantum mechanics and Einstein's theories of relativity indicates the need for a new world view, and his scheme could be seen as such a view.

My main interest in this essay is the concept of identity: how are we to make sense of objects if movement is fundamental? What does it mean when we say that an object here and now is one and the same object at some later point in time? How can we form a concept of a person in such a scheme? Bohm's scheme suggests that past events and 'selves' could in a way exist in an enfolded manner and these can be important elements of what we consider a person to be. Persons in Bohm's view need not to be either physically continuous or mentally continuous, as is the case in most personal identity views that spring from a mechanistic world view. For Bohm the physical and the mental are not continuous separate entities but rather projections from a common ground.

Bohm's metaphysical scheme is an alternative way to perceive the world. To me it is a view which in a better way could be used to make sense of reality as such. The alternative mechanistic view has shown to be of huge pragmatic importance. We can thank most of our scientific discoveries to this view where the world is treated as if it is built up of separate independently existing parts. However such a view though extremely effective in many areas tends to leave out important aspects of reality. Bohm's view is a new perspective where wholeness is central and the whole is in a very real sense more than the sum of its parts.

One of the reasons I have chosen to look at identity in Bohm's scheme is that I had a problem to see how identity would work in a monistic scheme where movement is fundamental. This perspective however got me a better insight in his thinking as his idea of wholeness became more evident. Objects in Bohm's view do not exist independently of reality. They are products of reality, not separate building blocks.

Probably no ideas in this text are my own, instead my method had been to read and try to understand the implications of what others have written. Most of the ideas can be found in Bohm's book "Wholeness and the Implicate Order" as well as in Paavo T.I. Pylkkänen's book "Mind, Matter and the Implicate Order".

2. STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE

I will start by looking at the metaphysical ground of the scheme (section 3); how does Bohm think reality should be perceived? What does he mean when he states that reality is a process? I will continue this section by taking a look at how we are to view knowledge in Bohm's scheme. This is included since I think it is important to understand how Bohm thinks of knowledge and its connection to reality. If we are to understand the identity of objects we must in some way have knowledge of these objects, and here the connection between knowledge and reality plays an important part.

In the next section (section 4) I turn to the underlying concepts. Here some of Bohm's fundamental ideas are briefly explained. This section is not to be seen as a thorough examination of these concepts; that would be beyond the scope of this essay. It is rather to be seen as a very brief introduction of them. Their understanding is crucial if we are to make sense of how identity could be perceived in Bohm's scheme.

In the last section "Identity" (section 5) I finally get to the nucleus of this essay. I here make use of ideas from another relevant philosopher, Whitehead. Whitehead famously worked out the metaphysical ground for a view that takes movement as fundamental and it is useful to compare his ideas with those of Bohm. I end this section with a discussion of the concept of 'a person', which can be seen as a summary of the essay. In this concluding section I use what has been written in the essay to get an idea of how we are to make sense of the notion of a person in Bohm's scheme.

3. REALITY AS PROCESS

In Bohm's scheme movement is fundamental, it is the only substance so to speak. This is not of course a new idea, already Heraclitus thought that reality is to be understood as a process. Bohm recognizes that this thought have later been developed by the more modern philosopher Whitehead (1861–1947). (Bohm, 2002, p.61). Bohm's scheme is different in certain key aspects from Whitehead's but it is evident that many similarities can also be found.

What does it mean to say that movement is fundamental? Bohm expresses it as “all is flux” (Bohm, 2002, p.61);

Not only is everything changing, but all is flux. That is to say, *what is* is the process of becoming itself, while all objects, events, entities, conditions, structures, etc., are forms that can be abstracted from this process. (Ibid).

In this way he underlines that everything is ultimately flux and that we abstract structures or patterns in this flux. Bohm uses the analogy of the stream to convey his idea of 'process':

The best image of process is perhaps that of the flowing stream, whose substance is never the same. On this stream, one may see an ever-changing pattern of vortices, ripples, waves, splashes, etc., which evidently have no independent existence as such. Rather, they are abstracted from the flowing movement, arising and vanishing in the total process of the flow. Such transitory subsistence as may be possessed by these abstracted forms implies only a relative independence or autonomy of behaviour, rather than absolutely independent existence as ultimate substances. (Bohm, 2002, pp.61-62).

As we can see Bohm indicates here that in his view there are no absolutely independent parts of reality, we can only find a relative autonomy, never a complete one when we look at different aspects. This view comes close to Whitehead's in which reality is considered as an organism rather than as a machine with independent parts.

The notion that all is flux “implies that any describable event, object, entity, etc., is an abstraction from an unknown and undefinable totality of flowing movement.” (Bohm, 2002, p.62). The content of the laws of physics will always deal with such abstractions which only can be said to have a relative independence. (Ibid). The objects of physics will always be treated as if they were independent of the rest of reality but as we can see here Bohm argues that any 'object' is only a relatively independent abstraction from the total flux. This view indicates that reality is not completely describable by any set of ultimate substances;

So one will not be led to suppose that *all* properties of collections of objects, events, etc., will have to be explainable in terms of some knowable set of ultimate substances. At any stage, further properties of such collections may arise, whose ultimate ground is to be regarded as the unknown totality of the universal flux. (Bohm, 2002, pp.62-63).

3.1 Knowledge as process

How does Bohm then think of knowledge? Does knowledge in a way copy a reality independent of experience, as perhaps the most common naïve view holds? This is of course relevant to how we are to think of objects, for how are we to make sense of objects if we cannot have knowledge of them?

Bohm stresses the need to include the observer in reality as such, reality is not something that can be said to exist independently of the observer. Quantum theory and Einstein's relativity theories indicate such a view. E.g. an atom is best regarded as a poorly defined cloud where its particular form depends on the whole environment, including the observing instrument. (Bohm, 2002, p12).

The view that all is flux means that even knowledge is to be treated as a process which is an integrated part of the total flux: “one has to say that knowledge, too, is a process, an abstraction from the one total flux, which latter is therefore the ground both of reality and of knowledge of this reality.” (Bohm, 2002, p.63).

if *all* is flux, then every part of knowledge must have its being as an abstracted form in the process of becoming, so that there can be no absolutely invariant elements of knowledge. (Ibid).

In Bohm's scheme not even knowledge is invariant. This can perhaps sound a bit strange at first and one might think that knowledge thereby becomes a bit arbitrary, but as we will see this is perhaps not such a strange claim after all.

Bohm recognizes that “all knowledge is produced, displayed, communicated, transformed, and applied in thought“ (Bohm, 2002, p.64) and thought is an integrated part of reality. The world cannot be divided into Non-Thought (NT) and Thought (T), if one by that means that everything that is NT is not T, and everything that is T is not NT, and everything is either T or NT. A reality that is independent of thought is and must be ultimately unknown and unknowable. (Bohm, 2002, pp.71-79). The distinction between T and NT must be made in our daily life for pragmatic reasons and for the sake of our own sanity, but it must be recognized that all originates in thought. Reality is not T or NT, reality is One and the element of thought is always present throughout reality.

This suggests that we cannot divide reality into what originates in thought and into what does not. “e.g., even the relatively sophisticated Kantian notion of 'thing in itself' is as unclear as the naïve idea of 'real thing'” (Bohm, 2002, p.68). Kant still recognizes that there exists a reality independently of thought that gives rise to our perceived reality even though 'Das ding an sich' is unknowable to us. As I understand it Bohm here takes it a step further and to him a reality independent of thought is unintelligible. In his scheme all is flux, reality cannot be divided into T or NT not even in a Kantian fashion. Thought and experience as such are integrated into reality, they are not separate parts of it.

Some of Bohm's ideas resemble F.H. Bradley's thoughts¹. Similar to Bohm, Bradley also had a monistic world-view, but in his view everything is ultimately one experience;

Reality for me /.../ is one individual Experience. It is a higher unity above our

¹ F. H. Bradley (1846–1924) was according to Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy (1996) the most famous, original and philosophically influential of the British Idealists.

immediate experience, and above all ideality and relations. It is above thought and will and aesthetic perception. But, though transcending these modes of experience, it includes them all fully. Such a whole is Reality, and, as against this whole, truth is merely ideal. (Bradley, 1914, p.343)

The resemblance between Bohm and Bradley becomes perhaps clearest when it comes to their view of knowledge as integrated in reality and not something that just copies facts from a reality independent of thought. It seems however that Bohm is more careful and not as explicit as Bradley:

And it is even, when we reflect, ridiculous to seek to discover by thinking what the Universe would be like without thought. You cannot take reality to pieces and then see how once more it can be combined to make reality. And thus, if we are asked for the relation of truth to reality, we must reply that in the end there is no relation, since in the end there are no separate terms. (Bradley, 1914, p.117).

4. UNDERLYING CONCEPTS

To be able to understand Bohm's thoughts and its implications for identity it is crucial to understand a few underlying concepts. The ones that I present here are ideas central in Bohm's thinking. They are presented very briefly but I hope I succeed in conveying my understanding of them. These concepts or ideas will be used in the next section when we view identity in Bohm's scheme more directly.

4.1 Abstraction

In both Bohm's and Whitehead's metaphysical schemes the idea of abstraction plays an important role. It is noteworthy that the idea can be found in Bradley's thinking as well. To Bohm e.g. objects do not have independent or definite existence, but they are rather in some way abstractions from the total flux. To get a better sense of what is meant by "abstraction" I turn to Whitehead who I think puts it quite clearly:

to be an abstraction does not mean that an entity is nothing. It merely means that its existence is only one factor of a more concrete element of nature. So an electron is abstract because you cannot wipe out the whole structure of events and yet retain the electron in existence. In the same way the grin on the cat is abstract; and the molecule is really in the event in the same sense as the grin is really on the cat's face. (Whitehead, 2006, p.88).

The idea of abstraction underlines in this way that nothing is independently existing. Reality is ultimately one and it is not divisible into separate parts. An electron, for example, is here thought of more like a pattern than like a particle. Whitehead's idea is that everything is connected and that we cannot abstract an entity without leaving important aspects out. Emmet points this out when commenting Whitehead:

That is to say that every thing either does or may enter into the being of everything else; you cannot get behind the influence of things upon each other. So you cannot abstract an entity from its context of the whole world. (Emmet, 1932, p.88).

It is perhaps not surprising to find this idea popular in these monistic world-views since it underlines that reality is One, and not separable into Thought and Non-Thought. Our everyday error is that we take abstractions and treat them as if they were concrete entities capable of independent existence.

But there is nothing anywhere in the world which, taken barely in its own right and unconditionally, has importance and is real. And one main work of philosophy is to show that, where there is isolation and abstraction, there is everywhere, so far as this abstraction forgets itself, unreality and error. (Bradley, 1914, p.473).

4.2 Order

Order is the starting point in the Bohmian scheme, Bohm takes this and not measure as fundamental since measure in a way presupposes order. (Pylkkänen, 2007, p.48).

What then is order? That it is some kind of arrangement seems clear and not to difficult to understand. But order is quite a fuzzy concept that is very difficult to nail down. Bohm puts it this way; “we do not restrict order to some regular arrangement of objects or forms in lines or in rows” (Bohm, 2002, p.146). There are much more general orders “such as the order of growth of a living being, the order of evolution of living species, the order of society, the order of a musical composition, “ (Ibid). It clearly eludes a precise definition but still we can get a grasp of what is meant by order. Predictability is a concept that is closely connected to order but it is not the same thing;

order is not to be identified with *predictability*. Predictability is a property of a special kind of order such that a few steps determine the whole order./-but there can be complex and subtle orders which are not in essence related to predictability (e.g. a good painting is highly ordered, and yet this order does not permit one part to be predicted from another). (Bohm, 2002, p.149).

4.3 Measure

Measure is another fundamental concept in Bohm's scheme, “measure primarily gives the limits of qualities or of orders of movement and behaviour.” (Bohm, 2002, p.150).

Of course, measure have to be *specified* through proportion or ratio, but, in terms of the ancient notion this specification is understood as secondary in its significance to the boundary or limit which is thus specified; and here one can add that in general this specification need not even be in terms of quantitative proportion, but can rather be of quantitative reason (e.g. in a drama the proper measure of human behaviour is specified in qualitative terms rather than by means of numerical ratios). (Ibid).

According to Bohm the main feature of measure is thus to specify the boundaries or the limits, things are of course measured in proportions or ratios but this is not its main feature.

If one combines order and measure one can begin to build structures, and one interesting thing is that the older meaning of the word structure is to build something. (Bohm, 2002, p.151).

4.4 Implicate and explicate order

In Bohm's scheme the idea of implicate and explicate order is central:

There is the germ of a new notion of order here. This order is not to be understood solely in terms of a regular arrangement of *objects* (e.g., in rows) or as a regular arrangement of *events* (e.g. in a series). Rather, a *total order* is contained, in some *implicit* sense, in each region of space and time.

Now, the word 'implicit' is based on the verb 'to implicate'. This means 'to fold inward' (as multiplication means 'folding many times'). So we may be led to explore the notion that in some sense each region contains a total structure 'enfolded' within it.

It will be useful in such an exploration to consider some further examples of

enfolded or *implicate* order. Thus, in a television broadcast, the visual image is translated into a time order, which is 'carried' by the radio wave. Points that are near each other in the visual image are not necessarily 'near' in the order of the radio signal. Thus, the radio wave carries the visual image in an implicate order. The function of the receiver is then to *explicate* this order, i.e. to 'unfold' it in the form of a new visual image. (Bohm, 2002, p.188).

It is important here to point out that “there is no way ultimately to reduce the implicate order to a finer and more complex type of explicate order.” (Bohm, 2002, p.189) as one could argue could be done in the TV broadcasting case. Bohm uses holograms and quantum experiments as examples of implicate orders that cannot be reduced to finer explicate orders. (Ibid).

4.5 Holomovement

Holomovement is an unbroken and undivided totality, it is what 'carries' an implicate order. (Bohm, 2002, p.189).

in certain cases, we can abstract particular aspects of the holomovement (e.g., light, electrons, sound, etc.), but more generally, all forms of the holomovement merge and are inseparable. (Ibid).

Holomovement is thus 'the label' Bohm puts on the total flux, it cannot be measured since it is unbounded and as we have seen earlier, measure presupposes a boundary. “*The holomovement is undefinable and immeasurable.*” (Ibid).

To give primary significance to the undefinable and immeasurable holomovement implies that it has no meaning to talk of a *fundamental* theory, on which *all* of physics could find a *permanent* basis, or to which *all* the phenomena of physics could ultimately be reduced. Rather each theory will abstract a certain aspect that is *relevant* only in some limited context, which is indicated by some appropriate measure. (Bohm, 2002, p.191)

This means that Newton's physics, Einstein's theories and the quantum theory are in a sense equally true, they are all in a very real sense laws that only have applicability in a limited context. Newton's theories of motion are not less true than Einstein's, its just that Einstein's theories have wider applicability than Newton's (it works well in very high velocities as well). The quantum theories can never in its present form be joined with the theories of relativity, yet it is apparent that they work very well in their own area. Quantum theory is our best theory to explain the smallest things in our universe, while the relativity theories work very well when it comes to the macro-cosmos. In Bohm's view it becomes natural to find these kinds of opposing theories that work best in their own domain.

In Bohm's scheme the holomovement is multidimensional and it is because of these extra dimensions that things in our ordinary experience that seem far apart can be connected or things that seem essentially different can in fact be two sides of the same coin. Bohm shows how this works with a square-shaped aquarium with a fish in it. Outside the aquarium two TV-cameras are set up one on the short end side and the other on the long side. The cameras are connected to individual TV-screens. Now when one looks at the two dimensional TV screens one can see that when the fish in one screen moves

it also moves in the other screen. This connection is obviously not causal, although we could in fact misinterpret it as a causal relationship if there was a slight delay in one of the TV-sets. The correlation in the movement is instead due to the fact that both TV-screens project a three dimensional object and in reality they show different sides of the same thing i.e. the three dimensional fish. This analogy shows how things that seem far apart and disconnected still can be connected. (Bohm, 2002, pp.237-238)

5. IDENTITY

I am here of course concerned mainly with numerical identity: what is it that makes an object to be considered to be one and the same object? I will begin this section by looking at simple objects such as electrons before I turn to more complex ones. In the end I try to determine how we are to think of something like 'a person' in Bohm's scheme.

5.1 Identity in Whitehead's philosophy

Before we turn to Bohm's thinking let us look at how Whitehead thought of objects. This is of course relevant since both of them take movement as fundamental. In doing so they face similar problems in constructing their world-views.

An object is an ingredient in the character of some event. In fact the character of an event is nothing but the objects which are ingredient in it and the ways in which those objects make their ingression into the event. Thus the theory of objects is the theory of the comparison of events. Events are only comparable because they body forth permanences. We are comparing objects in events whenever we can say, 'There it is again.' Objects are the elements in nature which can 'be again.' (Whitehead, 2006, p.75).

So an object is here treated as something which we can say 'there it is again' about. They are in a way patterns of events:

You cannot recognise an event; because when it is gone, it is gone. You may observe another event of analogous character, but the actual chunk of the life of nature is inseparable from its unique occurrence. But a character of an event can be recognised. (Whitehead, 2006, p.88).

Objects are not simply located in any confined space, they are rather in a sense present throughout all of reality:

An object is ingredient throughout its neighbourhood, and its neighbourhood is indefinite. Also the modification of events by ingression is susceptible of quantitative differences. Finally therefore we are driven to admit that each object is in some sense ingredient throughout nature (Whitehead, 2006, p.76).

Whitehead's view of objects is thus that they never can be separate, they are rather patterns in events and it is these patterns that we recognise and abstract, so we can say 'there it is again'. As I interpret Whitehead an object can be said to be a recognisable pattern and its persistence over time is in a way reduced to the persistence of this pattern in time.

5.2 Identity in Bohm's implicate order scheme

Lets now turn back to Bohm and again take a look at his view of objects. From the analogy of process as a stream (as we saw in section 3) it is clear that no aspect of reality is independent, one cannot simply separate aspects of reality without leaving things out.

in spite of the undivided wholeness in flowing movement, the various patterns that can be abstracted from it have a certain relative autonomy and stability, which is indeed provided for by the universal law of the flowing movement. Now, however, we have the limits of this autonomy and stability sharply in mind.

Thus we can, in specified contexts, adopt other various forms of insight that enable us to simplify certain things and to treat them momentarily and for certain limited purposes as if they were autonomous and stable, as well as perhaps separately existent. (Bohm, 2002, pp.14-15)

The notion that all is flux “implies that any describable event, object, entity, etc., is an abstraction from an unknown and undefinable totality of flowing movement. “(Bohm, 2002, p.62). As we can see from the quotations above Bohm's views about the nature of objects are quite close to Whitehead's views. In a way one could say that they both share the same metaphysical ground for objects. However, Bohm has an idea of how objects may be thought of as existing in an implicate order.

Let us now look at a model for an electron in Bohm's scheme:

If one seeks for a more physically accurate model of an electron, one could say that the electron is a totality of fields/waves, all present together, in an orderly series of stages of enfoldment and unfoldment, which intermingle and interpenetrate each other, in principle, throughout the whole of space. In this sense a single electron is “enfolded” into the whole universe, roughly in an analogous sense that an egg can be folded into the whole cake! (Pylkkänen, 2007, p.72).

This (perhaps a bit technical) presentation of an electron underlines the essential aspects, i.e. it is present throughout its neighbourhood and it is not reducible to what is explicate. An object in Bohm's scheme is in a sense much more than what is now explicate. In other words, Bohm's idea is that the electron exists in an implicate order (which is not directly accessible to us) and it is this order that in some cases can become unfolded so we have an explicate electron (that is accessible to our instruments). The electron in Bohm's scheme is not just that which can be said to be explicate now, it can be said to exist in an intrinsically implicate order, i.e. an order which cannot unfold all at once. It is the implicate order that in a way necessitates, or determines the explicate electron's behaviour. (cf. Pylkkänen, 2007, ch.2):

Instead of focusing on the relationships of unfolded elements in the explicate order (particles and/or fields), we ought to be focusing on the relationships between enfolded structures in the implicate order. The idea is that what happens in the observable arena of the explicate order is determined by relationships at the level of the implicate order. (Pylkkänen, 2007, p.75).

The implicate order is to be viewed at as an order in holomovement. This order is not directly accessible to us but it somehow necessitates the explicate order and we can get a sense of it by studying the explicate order. It is the implicate order which determines the behaviour of the explicate order. The implicate order would in a sense be responsible for Einstein's relativity theories as well as

quantum theory. The idea is that they both could be derived from a more general theory which would prevail in an implicate order.

Lets now turn to a bit more complex objects than simple particles:

A particle, in the implicate order framework, thus ought to be seen as “a recurrent stable order of unfoldment”. The basic proposal is that biological organisms are basically similar (Pylkkänen, 2007, p.85).

There is no fundamental difference between inanimate and animate objects, their explicate 'existence' are both derived from an implicate order, and it is useful to talk about the objects existing in an implicate order:

What “inanimate matter” and “living matter” have in common is their “mode of existence” – for whether we talk about an inanimate entity (e.g. an electron) or a living entity (e.g. a tree), there has to be a certain recurrent stable order of unfoldment. The difference between an inanimate entity and a living entity then has to do with the information that acts on the order of unfoldment. (Pylkkänen, 2007, p.86).

What we see as a living entity is, from an implicate order perspective, a relatively stable order of unfoldment from the implicate order. This order is abstracted and viewed as if it was a separately existent entity (a tree).

in its totality the holomovement includes the principle of life as well. Inanimate matter is then to be regarded as a relatively autonomous sub-totality in which, at least as far as we now know, life does not significantly manifest. That is to say, inanimate matter is a secondary, derivative, and particular abstraction from the holomovement (as would also be the notion of a “life force” entirely independent of matter). (Bohm 2002, p. 247).

Bohm presents the idea that inanimate matter and animate matter are ultimately one and the same thing. We might experience them as two completely different things, but they should instead be regarded as different relatively stable sub-totalities which all spring from a common source (i.e. the holomovement). This idea of different sub-totalities is important and can be extended beyond animate and inanimate matter. All such sub-totalities then have its own laws;

The domain of the physical world in which the laws of classical physics apply is one example of such a sub-totality; inanimate matter more generally is another one; and life is yet another. Each such abstracted sub-totality then has laws that operate within it. (Pylkkänen, 2007, p.88).

5.3 Personal identity

Finally we have arrived at the concluding stages of this essay. We will here try to sum up what has been said previously and try to use this to get a sense of how something as complex as a person should be thought of in Bohm's scheme. But first let us quickly take a look at Whitehead's idea of a person.

5.3.1 *'A person' in Whitehead's philosophy*

“I am an historic route of occasions culminating in the contemporary me.” (Emmet, 1932, p.188). Emmet here points out the importance of a person's history to Whitehead's idea of a person. This history of occasions is indeed central in Whitehead's thoughts of persons:

The “enduring object” as a whole can then be said to sustain a character (the primary meaning of “person”). This character is inherited throughout the whole of an historic route of occasions. (So, as Whitehead pleasantly puts it, we may define a “person” as one who inherits the wealth of all his relations.) But the notion of serial or personal order is extremely general, and nexus with this kind of personal order may of course be more and less complex. (Emmet, 1932, p.189).

Here clearly the past is very important and to my understanding 'a person' is in a way seen as something which inherits previous relations. It is not the present body that is most important, this is only capable of sustaining character. A person is something more, it is in a way a progressing history of occasions.

5.3.2 *'A person' in Bohm's implicate order scheme*

Now we can turn back to Bohm and try to use all that has been said in this essay to work out what 'a person' should be understood to be in Bohm's implicate order scheme.

First we must recognize that since everything is one movement and objects, events etc. always are abstractions from the holomovement, any object eludes a definite description. So we cannot expect to define once and for all what a person is, but this should not however turn us down. As long as we do not forget that we are dealing with abstractions these abstractions are still enormously useful. However, one is left with an approximate identity. There is only one substance so to speak and that is movement, this is the only thing with independent existence. In the flux we can recognize different patterns. When we recognize a person as a certain person we in fact recognise such a pattern in the flux. A person is always an abstraction, as such the concept have pragmatic importance, but a person do not have any independent ontological status. One can only approximate structures in the flux and treat them as if they were continuous and separate, but strictly speaking they never are. Thus a person in Bohm's scheme cannot clearly be demarcated from the flux. Any attempt to define a person will leave out important aspects and any definition will have limited applicability.

A person is an abstraction from holomovement in Bohm's scheme, it has different features such as material aspects, mental aspects, life-force aspects, etc. We do not have to choose to define a person either as a material being or as a mental being, for in Bohm's scheme these two aspects would be included in an attempt to define 'a person'. The mental and the physical aspects do not exist in opposition to each other rather they are to be seen as different sub-totalities projected from the multidimensional holomovement. It is an advantage that we can include such phenomena into the definition of a person. Most of us feel that these are important parts of what being a person is all about.

In Bohm's scheme 'a person' can be said to be existing as an intrinsically implicate order which is unfolding in different ways thus producing different explicate aspects (or sub-totalities such as mental and physical aspects). As such all the aspects which are now present (and thus explicate) never are the whole story, for there is always more to a person than what is now explicate. In fact the 'explicate person' can in principle be derived from a more general order, i.e. the implicate order. The implicate order as we have seen necessitates or determines the explicate order. In a way one could say that everything that ever happened to a person is in a very real sense part of that person, previous events and relations still can be said to exist enfolded into an implicate order. These events and relations are thus parts of what determines the unfoldment. Thus all events of a persons life is part of that person. Even if they cannot be remembered they can still exist enfolded into the present being.

If I more precisely try to define what 'a person' in Bohm's implicate order would be, I would say it is something like a multidimensional intrinsically implicate order in the flux. It is this intrinsically implicate order that unfolds into different aspects of a person and thus becomes explicate. Since it is intrinsicall our experience of a person at any given time can never tell the whole story of what a person is. This intrinsically implicate order then determines the relatively stable unfoldment which is accessible to us and which we can recognise. This recognised order of unfoldment is percieved and abstracted as a person.

It is an advantage that we don't have to leave important aspects of persons out if we accept Bohm's implicate order scheme. However we are left somewhat in darkness, because even if we could include many important aspects it does not tell us what to exclude. I think we have to turn to ourselves and ask whether a certain aspect or event is of relevance or not. This is so at least when it comes to such complex objects as persons. When it comes to simpler objects such as physical particles, it is perhaps possible to define e.g. an electron as an object of an intrinsically implicate order which necessitates its measurable behaviour (at least this is one of Bohm's main claims).

If I try to sum up my interpretation of personal identity in Bohm's scheme I would say that we exist as persons in the flux. We are beeing who elude precise definition, any definition would leave important aspects out and could only be applicable in a limited context. Bohm's idea of defining objects in an implicate order which would necessitate their explicate appearance is interesting, however I can not see how this practically could be done for something as complex as a person. Even so this idea can still affect our sense of what it means to be a person and we can get a sense of how different aspects could be connected.

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