

An Object Is a Thought in the Mind

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2018-12-07

Source: <http://www.shiningworld.com/site/satsang/read/3734>

Sam: Hi, Arlindo. Could you please elaborate on the statement “your wife is only the thought of your wife”? Of course the thought “wife” is only an example. From what I understood, it is the same logic with regards to all other objects – but “my wife”! 😊

Arlindo: Hello, Sam. I understand your perplexity. To accept one’s own wife to be no other than a “thought” is a bit confusing. But that does not mean that your wife does not exist. Thanks to *Maya*, she surely seems to exist. If you have any doubt, try not giving her any attention and see what happens. You will have a very tangible “wife experience.” 😊

You may argue that what characterizes the reality of your wife is the fact that she is your most intimate source of love and security – that she is unique, reliable, your best friend, etc. But at times the same wife turns bitter, irritable and nasty, and wants a divorce. In that case she no longer provides you with love and security but with conflict and concern. All good qualities of your wife are subjected to change. They are not always present. In fact they are never really objectively present but only subjectively experienced in your mind as any other thought-object.

We can explore the meaning of the statement “your wife is only the thought of your wife” from various angles. “Wife” enjoys only a relational and dependable reality. It exists but only in relation to a “husband,” another relational entity. Wife and husband are only roles humans play in *samsara*. Your very wife is not a wife in relation to your children, her mother, her sister, etc. She is only “wife” in relation to you. In truth, the person you love and share your bed with is just another human being, not a wife.

The notion “wife” is only a superimposition on the person you have established this relation husband-wife. Wife exists but its status is “relational.” A more fundamental status of the wife-entity is a “human being.” In this case your wife was resolved into a human being, which is closer to her fundamental status as the self. Following the same logical analysis, all human being-notions are resolved into self, or pure awareness.

Another way to look into this statement is that a thought of an object and the object itself is one and the same. How so? A thought is the result of knowledge. Knowledge is the result of awareness in contact with an object. Objects are the result of *Maya/avidya*. Now, what came first, the object or the knowledge of the object? In other words, does the *vasana* for a desirable object produce the object or the desired object produces the *vasana*? The “thought” of the object and the “object” are one and the same. The “object” exists in the thought of the object as “potential object” or “seed object.” The “object” is the “thought of the object” manifested by *Maya/avidya*.

The egg and the chicken, the seed and the tree, the wife-thought and the wife – they all coexist simultaneously as two apparent suborders within the “one” *mithya*. They seem to be separate but they are not. They seem to be two but they are one and the same. There is no question of time or causality when we carefully look into the

experiences produced in *mithya*.

When in your dream your “dream wife” appears, she is not separate from your mind; the thought-*vasana* “my wife” projects the “dream wife.” If you wake up, the dream wife disappears on the spot because she existed only as a thought in your mind and not separate from the mind. The same is the case with the “wife thought” you experience in the waking state. You only experience your wife when the wife-thought is held in your mind. I know from direct experience: sometimes my wife is physically present and talking to me, but I do not experience her, because I am holding another thought in mind. It is the same with all objects: they exist in the mind, which means they exist in consciousness alone as a thought. Take it easy and enjoy your wife-thought.