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## **The Explicative Route And The Momental Step:A Comparison Of The Pluralistic Focus In Leibniz And Whitehead.**

Richard L. Brougham

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THE EXPLICATIVE ROUTE AND THE MOMENTAL STEP:  
A COMPARISON OF THE PLURALISTIC FOCUS IN LEIBNIZ AND WHITEHEAD

By  
Richard L. Brougham

A Thesis  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
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## CHAPTER I

### THE THESIS

There is little danger of disagreement if one states that Leibniz and Whitehead are two of the most significant "hylozoic"<sup>1</sup> pluralists in Western philosophy. Both thinkers are concerned with the definite, final unities of being. Both philosophers attempted to ground their multiple individualities in a wider ultimate reality, and at the same time attempted to maintain the import and distinctness of these units as the ultimate components of that reality. The crux of Whitehead's philosophic endeavour was to "retain the balance between the individuality of existence and the relativity of existence."<sup>2</sup> But there is an important divergence in the manner that Leibniz and Whitehead "retain the balance" of their pluralistic systems. To study this divergence, this exposition will employ the notion of Pluralistic Focus. This Focus is that aspect of the pluralistic unit which both accounts for the totality of being, and at the same time accounts for the individuality of the unit. The expression "Pluralistic Focus" will refer to that point in the nature of the unit

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<sup>1</sup>The term "hylozoic" will be employed to indicate those characteristics of all "real things" which can be considered equivalent to "life." The Leibnizian "monad" and the Whiteheadian "actual entity," even those of the "lowest" order, are conceived as having properties manifested by those entities conventionally termed "living." This "hylozoic" qualification distinguishes Leibniz and Whitehead from Democritus, for example.

<sup>2</sup>The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, Edit. by Paul Schilpp, Library of Living Philosophers, (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1941), p. 687.



where the "individuality . . . and the relativity of existence" are "balanced." Both Leibniz and Whitehead would agree that, in the words of Leibniz, "what is not truly one being is also not truly a being."<sup>3</sup> The Pluralistic Focus is on that which makes the pluralistic unit "truly one being," which "makes a difference" in its composition.

But before we begin to concern ourselves with the difference in Pluralistic Focus, we should explore some of the common ground of the two philosophers. This will be the aim of the next two chapters.

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<sup>3</sup>C. J. Gerhardt, The Philosophical Writings of G. W. Leibniz, v. II, p. 97, quoted Russell, op. cit., p. 242.



## CHAPTER II

### LEIBNIZ AND WHITEHEAD AS PLURALISTS

Both Leibniz and Whitehead thought that the nature of things was a system of a multiplicity of "reals," and both were temperamentally opposed to "monism." For the terms "pluralism" and "monism," this exposition will use the definitions given in the Vocabulaire de la Philosophie, edited by André Lalande:

(monism) A term applied to any philosophical system that reduces the entirety of things to an essential unity. . . . This term is quite commonly used to designate the English idealism which stems from Hegel, notably the doctrine of Mr. Bradley. He acknowledges the unity of the world; the existence of an Absolute; the basic intelligibility of being; and the purely apparent and superficial character of sensible multiplicity, discernible individuality, and disjunctive time. 'Monism' is opposed, in a sense, by 'pluralism' which sees reality as basically made up of separate disjunctive individualities. Also, there is a real becoming which does significantly alter things, and disallows any exact prediction of future events.<sup>1</sup>

It will be obvious before the discussion goes much further that there is no exact concurrence with the above definition of "pluralism" by

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<sup>1</sup>(monism) Se dit de tout système philosophique qui considère l'ensemble des choses comme réductibles à l'unité. . . . Il est très usuel pour désigner l'idéalisme anglais d'origine hegelienne, notamment la doctrine de M. Bradley, en tant qu'il admet l'unité du monde, l'existence de l'absolue, l'intelligibilité essentielle de l'être, le caractère purement apparent et superficiel de la multiplicité sensible, de l'individualité, et de la durée. Il s'oppose en ce sens au 'pluralisme' qui met au fond des choses la discontinuité, la multiplicité individuelle, la réalité d'un devenir qui altère les êtres, l'imprévisibilité du futur." Pp. 484-486, Vocabulaire, Technique et Critique de la Philosophie, (ed.) André Lalande, Société Française de Philosophie, (Paris: 1938).



either Leibniz or Whitehead. Moreover, one of the disclosures of the discussion will be that Leibniz, in particular, holds to principles which are not in keeping with a pluralistic stance. It will be the assumption of this paper, however, that both philosophers aim at adherence to the "spirit" of the definitions above. Whitehead, for example, quite definitely rejects any static, "substantial" reality grounding a derivative accidental world:

The attraction of Spinoza's philosophy lies in its modification of Descartes' position into greater coherence. He starts with one substance, causa sui, and considers its essential attributes and its individualized modes. . . . The gap in the system is the introduction of the 'modes.' And yet, a multiplicity of modes is a fixed requisite, if the scheme is to retain any direct relevance to the many occasions in the experienced world. . . . In all philosophical theory there is an ultimate which is actual in virtue of its accidents. . . . In monistic philosophies, Spinoza's or absolute idealism, the ultimate is God. . . . In such monistic schemes, the ultimate is illegitimately allowed a final, 'eminent' reality, beyond that ascribed to any of its accidents.<sup>2</sup>

. . . in defiance of the most obvious deliverances of our intuitive 'prejudices'--every respectable philosophy of the subject-predicate type is monistic.<sup>3</sup>

The problem of any systematic pluralism is to prevent the "system"-- "the relativity of existence"--from ingesting the pluralistic unit completely into itself. The divergent ways in which the two philosophers

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<sup>2</sup>A. N. Whitehead, Process and Reality, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1929), pp. 10-11.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 208-209.



coped with this problem is the subject of our discussion.

Leibniz, although he does have a "philosophy of the subject-predicate type," is at least temper<sup>a</sup>mentally a pluralist, and finds monistic "solutions" as unacceptable as does Whitehead:

Tatian says, in his Oration to the Greeks, that there is a spirit dwelling in the stars, the angels, the plants, the waters, and men, and that this spirit, although one and the same, contains differences in itself. But this doctrine I do not approve. It is the error of the world-soul universally diffused, and which, like the air in pneumatic organs, make different sounds in different organs. . . . But we must know that there are as many incorporeal substances, or if you will, souls, as there are natural, organic mechanisms.<sup>4</sup>

Leibniz attempted to construct a system which would account for these "incorporeal substances," and yet maintain their connection in the "relativity of existence." To study these basic units, this paper will ascertain where Leibniz and Whitehead concentrated their Pluralistic Focus.

Before the exposition attempts to grapple more fully with the specifics of the Pluralistic Focus, it is helpful to peruse the backgrounds of the two schemata; we will scan briefly some of the salient similarities of the two philosophies.

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<sup>4</sup>Leibniz Selections, Edit. by Philip P. Wiener, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), pp. 490-491. This passage does not strictly relate to "monism," but it does indicate the tenor of Leibnizian thought.



### CHAPTER III

#### SIMILARITIES OF THE TWO PHILOSOPHIES

There has been a number of comparative studies of the two philosophers, but most of them have not penetrated to any depth, nor have they dealt with specific central features of the two schemata. Professor Hartshorne speaks of Whitehead's metaphysics as "modified Leibnizianism,"<sup>1</sup> but he does not elaborate on this to any great extent. Whitehead's own writings show some obvious influences by Leibniz. For example, he borrows the term "appetition" directly from the Monadology of Leibniz,<sup>2</sup> and defines it as follows:

Appetition is at once the conceptual valuation of an immediate physical feeling combined with the urge towards realization of the datum conceptually prehended. . . . Appetition is immediate matter of fact including in itself a principle of unrest, involving realization of what is not and may be.<sup>2</sup>

In Whitehead's notion of "appetition," there is a "principle of unrest" which accounts for the thrust of "here-now" events beyond themselves. But this drive to the future does not override the present. The focus is always on some definite developing moment, "involving realization of what is not and may be." The stress is on the moment, and on what can be "realized" as one definite thing. Let us compare this notion of appetition with the original definition given by Leibniz:

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<sup>1</sup>The Relevance of Whitehead, Edit. by Ivor Leclerc, (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1961), p. 41.

<sup>2</sup>Whitehead, op. cit., pp. 47-48.



The action of the internal principle which causes the change or the passage from one perception to another may be called appetition.<sup>3</sup> (Underlining Leibniz's.)

Here we find that the stress is on the "change or the passage" from one experiential moment to another. The "appetition" is directly related to some permanent pattern of the route of temporal experiences, which is striving to manifest itself. This divergence is central to our discussion, and will be returned to again. But we must pass on, and complete our cursory survey of similarities.

"Appetition," for Whitehead, is a "conceptual prehension . . . of some possibility as to how actualities may be definite." For Leibniz, it is the striving to complete some underlying, "substantial" pattern. For both philosophers, process is dependent on permanent forms, conceived as in the Platonic tradition.<sup>4</sup> In the Whiteheadian metaphysics these forms--or "eternal objects"--are what give events their character and "definiteness;" the comings-and-goings of these "forms of definiteness"<sup>5</sup> are what give reality its pattern. "There is no character belonging to the actual apart from its exclusive determination by selected eternal objects,"<sup>6</sup> Whitehead says. And in the

<sup>3</sup>G. W. F. von Leibniz, "Monadology," paragraph 15, Wiener, op. cit., p. 535.

<sup>4</sup>Whitehead, op. cit., pp. 63-64.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 366.



Leibnizian philosophy the "realm of forms" plays an even more central role: its "existence" is assumed, and then the assumption is employed as an auxiliary proof of God's existence:

But, you will say . . . possibilities and essences prior to existence or outside of it are only fancies or fictions in which the reason of existence cannot be sought. I answer, that neither these essences nor the so-called eternal truths regarding them are fictions, but that they exist in a certain region of ideas, if I may thus speak, that is in God himself, the source of all essences and of the existence of all else. . . . For since the reason of the series (of created, temporal things) is not found in itself, . . . but must be sought in metaphysical necessities or eternal truths, and since that which exists can only come from that which exists, . . . eternal truths must have their existence in a certain subject, absolutely and metaphysically necessary, that is in God, through whom those things which otherwise would be imaginary, are . . . realized.<sup>7</sup>

Leibniz not only assumed the reality of a "reservoir" of potential forms, some of which are not manifest in the existent world, but he conceived this realm as closely interlocked with God's existence.

Whitehead also thinks that the realm of forms is closely intermeshed with the existence of God. Because of the "Ontological Principle" --which Leibniz anticipates above in the phrase, "that which exists can only come from that which exists"--the eternal forms must "be" somewhere; everything "real" must be either an actuality, or be rooted in an actuality:

. . . the reasons for things are always to be found in the composite nature of definite actual entities--in

---

<sup>7</sup>Wiener, op. cit., pp. 349-350.



the nature of God for reasons of highest absoluteness, and in the nature of definite temporal actual entities for reasons which refer to a particular environment.<sup>8</sup>

If the forms are to be a "general systematic complex of mutual relatedness,"<sup>9</sup> then they must be "part" of one actual entity, the "aboriginal instance"<sup>10</sup> of the nature of things--God. For both philosophers, the "systematic complex" is not a "product" of God, or a mere set of persistencies: it is there, part of the ultimate reality, "objective" for each entity, including God:

Accordingly, the differentiated relevance of eternal objects to each instance of the creative process requires their conceptual realization in the primordial nature of God. He does not create eternal objects; for his nature requires them in the same degree that they require him.<sup>11</sup>

Leibniz holds virtually the same position; the "essences" are "co-eternal"<sup>12</sup> with God, and "we must not . . . imagine . . . that eternal truths, being dependent upon God, are arbitrary and depend upon his

<sup>8</sup>Whitehead, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>9</sup>A. N. Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, (New York: Mentor Books, New American Library, 1925), p. 145.

<sup>10</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 344.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 392.

<sup>12</sup>Wiener, op. cit., pp. 485-486.



will . . . necessary truths depend solely upon his understanding, and are its internal object."<sup>13</sup>

Closely related to Whitehead's "Ontological Principle," described above, is his "reformed subjectivist principle," which states that "apart from the experiences of subjects there is nothing, nothing bare nothingness."<sup>14</sup> Both philosophers are hylozoic pluralists: what is "real" is "active," "vital," "experiencing," there is no "vacuous actuality."<sup>15</sup> The "subjective immediacy" that is ordinarily attributed to the "higher" living organisms is characteristic of all real centers of being; "there is nothing fallow, nothing sterile,

<sup>13</sup>P. 224, The Philosophical Works of Leibniz, Edit. by George M. Duncan, Tuttle Morehouse and Taylor Co., 1890--quoted p. 248, A Critical Exposition of the Philosophy of Leibniz, Bertrand Russell, George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., (London: 1900). Leibniz and Whitehead assume an "objective," unalterable facet of the nature of things. This matrix of possible patterns accounts for the structural constants in actuality. The resemblance to Plato is no coincidence. Leibniz was deeply interested in Platonic doctrine. See p. 149, The Great Chain of Being, A. O. Lovejoy, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1936.) Also, pp. 62, 213, Leibniz and the Seventeenth Century Revolution, R. W. Meyer, (Cambridge, England: Bowes and Bowes, 1948); and v. III, p. 637, v. VI, p. 503, The Philosophical Writings of G. W. Leibniz, Edit. by C. J. Gerhardt, 1875-1890. It is well-known that Whitehead considered all of Western philosophy to be a "series of footnotes to Plato," (p. 63, Process and Reality). See also Process and Reality, pp. 67-68, 70, 126, 128, 140, 142-147, 318-319, and 381. Platonic influence permeates Adventures of Ideas, especially pp. 136, 138, 151-156, 170-172, and 189-191.

<sup>14</sup>Whitehead, op. cit., p. 254.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 43.



nothing dead in the universe . . .,"<sup>16</sup> Leibniz says, Inert, "passive," "material" substance is alien to both systems:

There are only substantial atoms, that is to say, real unities . . . they might be called metaphysical points: they have something vital and a kind of perception.<sup>17</sup> (Underlining Leibniz's.)

This "perception" that Leibniz mentions in the preceding passage, is "perception" of every "real" in the universe. Each "substantial atom" is not only an experiencing unit, but it experiences the whole universe. Whitehead calls this interrelatedness the "principle of universal relativity":

The principle of universal relativity directly traverses Aristotle's dictum, '(a substance) is not present in a subject.' On the contrary, according to this principle an actual entity is present in other actual entities. In fact, if we allow for degrees of relevance, we must say that every actual entity is present in every other actual entity.<sup>18</sup>

Every particular "real" effects every other "real" in the universe: if ultimate reality is pluralistic, then each ultimate item of that "collection" must effect, influence every other item in some manner. If this were not true, then the supposed "ultimates" would reduce to "manifestations" of some more intrinsically "real" being(s).

<sup>16</sup>Monadology, paragraph 69, quoted Wiener, op. cit., p. 547.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>18</sup>Whitehead, op. cit., p. 79.



This interrelatedness does not lead to the "subordination" of the constituent "unities"; both philosophers see this interrelatedness as the reverse side of the innate recalcitrancy of each pluralistic unit. As Leibniz says, "the minutest part resists the efforts of all the rest, and this could not happen unless each received the impression of all."<sup>19</sup> There is something "absolute" about each disjunctive ultimate. Each is a summation of all being, and, in a sense, is as "complete" as the totality of things:

Every mind being like a world apart, sufficient unto itself, independent of any other creature, containing the infinite, expressing the universe, is as enduring, as subsistent, and as absolute as the very universe of creatures.<sup>20</sup>

Since there are no more "ultimate" beings than the pluralistic unities, Leibniz above expressed his conviction that each pluralistic unity "mirrored" not only every other "real" in the universe, but "mirrored" also the completeness and finality of the whole: in fact, each is a finality and completeness of the whole. Whitehead conceives his pluralistic ultimate as having a similar "absoluteness":

Each creative act is the universe incarnating itself as one, and there is nothing above it by way of final condition.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>H. Wildon Carr, Leibniz, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1929), Letter to Electress Sophia, quoted p. 52.

<sup>20</sup>New System of Nature, (paragraph 16), quoted Wiener, op. cit., p. 116.

<sup>21</sup>Whitehead, op. cit., p. 375.



'Actual entities' . . . are the final real things of which the world is made up. There is no going behind actual entities to find anything more real. They differ among themselves; God is an actual entity, and so is the most trivial puff of existence in far-off empty space. But, though there are gradations of importance and diversities of function, yet in the principles which actuality exemplifies all are on the same level.<sup>22</sup>

Each disjunctive center of being, then, sums up the totality of things from a certain standpoint of "subjective immediacy." But, though both philosophers use terms that would suggest that each pluralistic unit is "conscious," "aware," and contains psychic elements analogous to human "mentality," the characteristic of consciousness is restricted to the "higher" beings in the continuum extending from the "most trivial puff of existence" to God.<sup>23</sup> For Leibniz, all the "monads" have "perceptions," but they are not to be considered equivalent to consciousness:

The fleeting state which encloses and represents a manifold in the unity . . . is not other than what we call perception. We must . . . distinguish perception from apperception or consciousness. . . . It is here that the Cartesians have gone wrong. They have supposed that the perceptions we do not

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 27-28.

<sup>23</sup>Leibniz seems to assume that "apperception" or consciousness is the criterion for the placement of the "monads" (his pluralistic units) on a hierarchic scale topped by the omniscience of God. All monads "below" God, since they are not God (the "full" being), lack, by "privation," the complete cognitive awareness. This "privation" increases with descent on the scale. Whitehead thinks of consciousness as just another mode of achieving "intense contrast" in the make-up of the "actual entity;" (p. 83, Process and Reality). It is not a "necessary" higher mode--as it seems to be with Leibniz--or a characteristic upon which ultimate value can be put.



apperceive count for nothing and this is why they  
suppose that only minds are monads . . . .<sup>24</sup>

Consciousness, then, is not a prerequisite of the Leibnizian "experiencing" real unity. The basic characteristic of monadic life is more akin to what we mean by "tendency and action," drive or directed force:

If we ascribe to our own minds an intrinsic power of producing immanent action . . . 'tis no way unreasonable to allow that there is the same power in other souls or forms, or . . . in the natures of substances.<sup>25</sup>

For Whitehead also, the basic characteristic of his "actual entity" is analogous to "tendency and action." The "experiencing" of the actual entity is a "felt" accommodation and "adjustment" to the thrust and pressure of "external" force; the "cognitive" reaction is rare indeed. "Consciousness is only the last and greatest of such elements by which the selective character of the individual obscures the external totality from which it originates and which it embodies."<sup>26</sup> Most "subjective immediacy" corresponds to our "visceral," physiological "feelings":

The philosophy of organism holds that in order to understand 'power' we must have a correct notion of how each individual actual entity contributes to the datum from which its successors arise and to which they must conform. . . . The philosophy of organism abolishes the detached mind. Mental activity is one

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<sup>24</sup>H. Wildon Carr, The Monadology of Leibniz, (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Studies, 1930), paragraph 14.

<sup>25</sup>H. G. Alexander, (ed.), The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, (London: Manchester University Press, 1956), p. 129.

<sup>26</sup>Whitehead, op. cit., p. 22.



of the modes of feeling belonging to all actual entities in some degree, but only amounting to conscious intellectuality in some actual entities. This higher grade of mental activity is the intellectual self-analysis of the entity in an earlier stage of incompleteness.<sup>27</sup> (Underlining Whitehead's.)

For both metaphysicians, the pluralistic unit is "atomic," "microscopic,"<sup>28</sup> and is "known" on the level of "gross," ordinary perception only by its "effects." Among these manifestations are abstract space and time. Leibniz thinks that space and time have no "real" existence of their own; they are merely the relations between the "reals." Time is the "order of successions,"<sup>29</sup> and space is the "order of co-existences."<sup>29</sup> Without the related "reals"--the monads--space and time are only ideal, mere constructions of the mind. An abstraction can have "reality" only as an aspect of a "real"; and "things which are uniform and contain no variety are never anything but abstractions, like time, space, and all the other entities of pure mathematics."<sup>30</sup> This is another rejection of "vacuous actuality," or of a "sterile" reality. But Whitehead's quarrel with the "reality"

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>29</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 223.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.---(Note John Dewey's comment: "There is no nearness or remoteness among monads; to say that they are gathered into a point or are scattered in space is to employ mental fictions, in trying to imagine what can only be thought." (Underlining Dewey's.) (P. 139, Hilliary House Publishers, Ltd., 1888). Also note the statement of Wildon Carr: "It is vain to look for real units in space and time for . . . (they) . . . are principles of multiplicity." (P. 32, The Monadology of Leibniz, H. Wildon Carr, (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Studies, 1930)).



of abstract space and time is slightly different. He thinks that there is a "real" time, in which each "succession" does "make a difference"; it is not the passage of abstractly identical "instances." Each moment is relevant because it "completes" and "adds to" the world. To use the words of Leibniz, ". . . as every present state of a simple substance is naturally the consequence of its preceding state, so its present is big with the future."<sup>31</sup> The "present state" must entail the future, and the spatial proximity of items must indicate a meaningful proximity, and not a mere side-by-side occupation of adjacent volumes of space:

What I mean by matter . . . is anything which has this property of simple location. By simple location I mean one major characteristic which refers equally both to space and time . . . material can be said to be here in space and here in time . . . in a perfectly definite sense which does not require for its explanation any reference to other regions of space and time. . . . In fact, as soon as you have settled . . . what you mean by a definite place in space-time, you can adequately state the relation of a particular material body to space-time by saying that it is just there. . . . Furthermore, this fact that the material is indifferent to the division of time leads to the conclusion that the lapse of time is an accident, rather than of the essence of the material. . . . The transition of time has nothing to do with the character of the material.<sup>32</sup>

Whitehead's emphasis on the "transition of time" brings us to the point where the two philosophers begin to separate. In Whitehead's

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<sup>31</sup>Monadology, paragraph 22, quoted, Wiener, op. cit., p. 537.

<sup>32</sup>Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, op. cit., pp. 50-51.



"Organic" philosophy, real time is "of the essence" in the composition of real things. But in the Leibnizian system, time seems to remain merely the "order of succession"; temporal passage is not "of the essence." The difference in the two pluralistic schemata is a matter of Pluralistic Focus. The next chapter will take up this matter.



## CHAPTER IV

### FUNCTION OF THE TWO BASIC UNITS WITHIN

#### THE TWO SYSTEMS

The thesis of this paper is that the Pluralistic Focus is widely divergent in the two schemata, and that this divergence had important consequences to the two systems, and to their pluralistic stances. We will proceed to describe the "place" of the two basic units in their respective systems. This should reveal the Focus of the two philosophies.

The focus of the Organic philosophy of Whitehead is on the momental<sup>1</sup> step, or the "specious present."<sup>2</sup> Each "moment" is a "real"; it is one of the basic units that constitute the universe. Its becoming/"perishing" involves what time really is; the Organic philosophy "takes time seriously." The moment is the cumulative/capping of the entire universe; it is the universe at that point. All that is "antecedent" to it, is summed up in one fixed grasp of the disjunctive world:

This is a theory of monads; but it differs from Leibniz in that his monads change. In the organic theory, they merely become. Each monadic creature is a mode of the process of 'feeling' the world, of housing the world in one unit of complex feeling, in every way determinate.

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<sup>1</sup>This writer uses the term "momental" with intended ambiguity. It is to indicate not only the temporal unit, with its "arrest"/fullness before passage, but it is intended also to suggest the crucial "cumulative" arrival at an important point of "decision."

<sup>2</sup>A. N. Whitehead, Modes of Thought, (New York: Macmillan Co., 1938), p. 122.



Such a unit is an 'actual occasion'; it is the ultimate creature derivative of the creative process.<sup>3</sup> (Underlining Whitehead's.)

The Whiteheadian "real" has no career in time; it is time! Its only development is "microscopic." No matter how complicated its "inner" process is, that development is considered as one unit of time--time is composed of its quanta. Each "pulsation" or "budding" is one of the "atomic" constituents of what time really is. The actual entity (or actual occasion)<sup>4</sup> is not "eternal," as is the Leibnizian monad; nor can it be considered as "enduring." "Actual entities perish, but do not change,"<sup>5</sup> Whitehead says. Although these occasions "perish" as developmental quanta, the particular "fix," grasp, or "incarnation" of the world survives as a permanent part of the "ground" of the future; the future must deal with it in some fashion. The universe, then, is a constantly accumulating "solidarity"<sup>6</sup> of "stubborn fact"<sup>7</sup> which becomes a base for all emergents. Since the basic units are temporal, "momental" creatures, the interrelational transactions with the sum of things takes place in its "antecedent" phases:

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<sup>3</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 124.

<sup>4</sup>"Actual occasion" and "actual entity" can be used interchangeably--"actual entity" is the general term, covering God as well as the temporal "occasions." (Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 135.)

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 197.



The data for any one pulsation of actuality consist of the full content of the antecedent universe as it exists in relevance to that pulsation. They are this universe conceived in its multiplicity of details.<sup>8</sup>

Both the unity and the diversity of the world find their reconciliation in the actual entity, and this entity forms the quantum, the experiential unity of time. This momental step is an emergent from the "given" world, and in turn adds to that "givenness" with its "momentary" fulfillment. Leibniz, too, is concerned with the "wholeness or completion" of his "real" being, the monad. But his basic unit is not "momental"; it is something that underlies moments--there is some "essential," "substantial" connection between these moments. The temporal "parts" are entailed rigidly, and are strictly subordinate to the "substantial" pattern of the whole route. This pattern endures to eternity,<sup>9</sup> continuing to generate consequences from itself. We will designate this Focus as the "explicative route." The Whiteheadian "momental step" is connected to the "relativity of existence" through its "antecedent" phase. But the Leibnizian basic unit is a non-temporal being, an eternal "routing" of moments. With Whitehead, the "relativity" and the "source" are one: the "antecedent" world both generates the emergent, and accounts for its connection with the items of the universe, since "every actual entity is . . . essentially social . . . these data

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<sup>8</sup>Whitehead, Modes of Thought, op. cit., p. 131.

<sup>9</sup>". . . there is no conceivable way in which a simple substance (a monad) could perish naturally." (P. 34, The Monadology of Leibniz, H. Wildon Carr, (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Studies, 1930))--God, of course, can end the "natural" order anytime he chooses.



(the antecedent world) are not extrinsic to the actuality; they constitute that display of the universe which is inherent in the entity.<sup>10</sup> The Leibnizian monad is a non-temporal unity: if there is to be a "tie-in" with the "relativity of existence," it must be "outside" time. This is why the interrelatedness and the "source" of the monad are in God's nature, "for it appears clearly that all other substances depend upon God just as our thoughts emanate from our own substance."<sup>11</sup>

The non-temporal standpoint of the monad accounts for all its "operations"; the temporal development of the "simple substance"<sup>12</sup> is an explication of the underlying concept. Bertrand Russell describes this in his work on Leibniz:

For since my predicates have always belonged to me, and since among these predicates are contained all my states at the various moments of time, it follows that my development in time is a mere consequence of my notion, and cannot depend on any other substance.<sup>13</sup>

If the monads are "complete" in themselves, and if the "individual notion of each person involves once for all everything that will ever happen to him,"<sup>14</sup> then the interrelatedness of the diverse

<sup>10</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 309.

<sup>11</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 336.

<sup>12</sup>The terms "monad" (paragraph 1, Monadology), "Simple substance," "entelachy" (Paragraph 18, Monadology), "metaphysical point," "substantial atom," and "active principle" can be considered as equivalent designations for the Leibnizian basic unit. Also, he uses the terms "notion," "subject," and "concept" to express the essential "nature" of the monad. These terms are more general than "soul," (paragraph 19, Monadology), "mind," or "spirit" (paragraph 29, Monadology). The latter terms are used to designate those monads higher in the cosmic hierarchy.

<sup>13</sup>Russell, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>14</sup>Gerhardt, op. cit., V. II, p. 15--quoted Ibid., p. 44.



basic units must be formulated non-temporally, i.e., in the divine nature. This non-temporal interrelatedness is what Leibniz means by "Pre-Established Harmony." God has chosen out of the infinite "possibles" which are the "internal object" of his divine understanding, those concepts which "best" mesh together, which are "compossible." He "creates" ("releases"?)<sup>15</sup> that set of fully articulated notions as one:

God never takes a resolution about the ends, without resolving at the same time about the means, and all the circumstances . . . properly speaking, there is but one decree for the whole universe, whereby God resolved to bring it out of possibility into existence.<sup>16</sup>

. . . there is nothing . . . which does not need, for its perfect concept, the concept of every other thing in the universe. . . .<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Leibniz seems to conceive of his monads as being "released" notions: they are not to be thought of as "created," constructed, put together, etc. The divine act of creation merely "releases" to "temporal" activity what is already fully "actual" in the divine "understanding." Dr. Ruth Saw calls attention to this aspect of Leibnizian thought: "To create a being is not to add a further property to the concept of a possible being but to allow it to develop the possibilities enfolded in it. He (Leibniz) seems to have the queer picture in mind of all possible beings waiting to have the bar to the exercise of their powers removed." Ruth Saw, Leibniz, (London: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1954), p. 83. André Cresson notes this same feature: "Dieu permet au plus parfait de passer de la simple possibilité à l'existence comme l'eclusier en ouvrant sa vanne détermine l'écoulement de l'eau." (God permits the most perfect of the simple possibilities to pass into existence in the manner of a lockkeeper controlling the flow of water by opening the lock.) (P. 49, Leibniz, André Cresson, (Paris: Presses Universitaires De France, 1947).)

<sup>16</sup>Alexander, op. cit., p. 78.

<sup>17</sup>Gerhardt, op. cit., V. II, p. 226.



Thus the "compossible" set of notions have their source in God's nature, and this set is a fully articulated matrix in which the temporal inter-relationships are "established" a priori. Each "real" unit in the world is essentially an eternal a priori concept, and this concept has its "place" in the "compossible" system of essences. Every temporal manifestation of the concept is a result of the non-temporal "placing" of itself in the grand coordination of notions "existing" a priori in God's nature.

But each of these monads, even if it is "rooted" in the non-temporal "fullness" of the Absolute, must manifest itself in time. This manifestation is composed of "fleeting states" called "perceptions." These perceptions are the momental steps<sup>18</sup> along the route, but they are fully dependent on the underlying notion; they are consequential steps rather than decisive steps. As Russell says, "thus a substance is not, for Leibniz, identical with the sum of its states; on the contrary, those states cannot exist without a substance in which to inhere."<sup>19</sup> These consequential steps, taken in their entirety, are the full explication of the individual notion. Starting with one manifestation

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<sup>18</sup>Das (pp. 41-42, The Philosophy of Whitehead, James Clarke and Co., Ltd., (London), 1937) has commented in passing on the similarity between the Leibnizian "perception" and the Whiteheadian "actual entity," but he does not stress the importance of the shift in "Pluralistic Focus" concealed in this "similarity." This paper will emphasize that. The difference between the two lies in the nature of the "actual entity" as a cumulative emergent, a temporal "part" which "makes a difference," and it is causa sui; in contrast, the "perception" is a mere explication of its notion, a consequence of its "substance."

<sup>19</sup>Russell, op. cit., p. 49.



of the concept, the other manifestations are entailed as rigorously as in a theorem of geometry<sup>20</sup>--"my development in time is a mere consequence of my notion."<sup>21</sup> Even though the temporal manifestations are mere consequential steps, these manifestations are the "individuating detail of changes . . . , the specification and variety of the

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<sup>20</sup>John Merz throws valuable light on this feature in his interpretation of Leibnizian thought: "As the different properties of a triangle, of a circle, of any geometrical figure, though always present, nevertheless seem to follow each other necessarily; if one of them is stated, so the mind passes from one state to another through an intellectual necessity. . . . The whole essence of the soul is always present; but it is not and in the same degree brought into the focus of consciousness." P. 145, John T. Merz, Leibniz, (New York: Hacker Press, 1948).

<sup>21</sup>See f.n. 14--The temporal development of the notion seems to have several sides. First, each temporal "individual" which is a "true" individual (i.e., a monad) must have one complete concept underlying its temporal states--"what is not truly one being is also not truly a being." Whenever causal chains are apparent, if they are to indicate a "real" process, they must be subsumable under one a priori notion. Second, there are no unlinked, isolated, and "chaotic" states in nature; they gain their "being" from their sequential union in the explication of some "simple substance." Third, every monad must develop temporally and reveal its "active principle" in its "fleeting states." All of these points illustrate a central assumption of Leibniz: no temporal manifestation can be complete (or a "true being"), and all complete beings are essentially a priori notions. As shall be more apparent below, Whitehead did not accept this assumption. For him, "true being" is the temporal "atom," and although each extensive temporal "individual" (or "enduring society") has to disclose some common form which makes it that "individual," that common form is reiteratively "renewed" at each "true" moment of time. Second, he does uphold the existence of chaotic, isolated "blips" of temporal being, unrelated to any underlying "substantial" a priori "true being." (P. 142, Process and Reality.) Whitehead's temporal unities impose (in the ultimate sense) their "being" upon each other, and this results in "enduring societies."



simple substance."<sup>22</sup> This "individuating detail" is what Whitehead would consider significant in development; it is what makes up his momental steps. And Leibniz does not reject the idea of temporal wholes; the "fleeting state" does "enclose . . . a manifold in the unity," and is a distinguishable "part" of the temporal flow.

So we can see that the perceptions<sup>23</sup> are transient "units" which make up the temporal career of the monad. Viewed in a certain way, the monad is "nothing but" a string of perceptions, for ". . . in the simple substance the one and only thing we would find would be perception, that is to say, perceptions and their changes. All internal actions of simple substances can only consist in perception."<sup>24</sup> But although the "fleeting states" of unity are the "individuating detail" of the temporal route, and although a substance

<sup>22</sup>Monadology--quoted Wiener, paragraph 12, op. cit., p. 535.

<sup>23</sup>One should not make the mistake of emphasizing the "psychic" connotations of the term "perception." As Leibniz uses the term, it stands for a unit of internal action with both "psychic" and physical characteristics--an attempt, like Whitehead's "actual entity" with its "mental" and "physical poles," to traverse the "bifurcation of nature" (P. 30, The Concept of Nature, A. N. Whitehead, (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Ann Arbor Books, 1920).) Professor H. Wildon Carr attempts to rectify this "psychic" connotation: "Perception, as Leibniz defines it, is not a psychical activity superimposed on a physical activity; it is itself physical in the sense that it is the aspect of activity when we conceive activity not as mechanical movement but as inherent force. . . . Activity must assume two aspects accordingly as we have regard to its source in the nature of the monad, or its expression in the development of that nature, and the two are correlative. This is what Leibniz means by perception." (Pp. 48-49, The Monadology of Leibniz, (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Studies, 1930).)

<sup>24</sup>The Monadology of Leibniz (Carr), op. cit., paragraph 17.



"may become very different,"<sup>25</sup> the "detail" and the changes need a substantial base. This substantial base is, as we have seen, non-temporal. Since the changes are reliant on the non-temporal base, these changes, as with the interrelatedness of the monad to other monads, must be "installed" in its "complete concept." All temporal occurrences are consequences of its "initial positioning," one might say.

When God creates the world, he "allows" this "initial positioning" (the non-temporal notion) to become an "active principle," dynamically turning its "latent energy," as it were, into kinetic movement.<sup>26</sup> As Cresson has commented (footnote 15 above), "God

<sup>25</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 339.

<sup>26</sup>There are a number of passages in Leibniz's writings employing illustrations of the mechanical "release" of energy. Couturat comments on this to some length: ". . . il (Leibniz) professe que les essences possibles existent dans l'entendement divin aussi réellement que les choses créées, et y luttent suivent des lois analogues à celles de l'équilibre mécanique. . . . Voir un curieux fragment où Leibniz veut prouver que les possibles existent dans l'entendement divin, par la considération d'un liquid pressé qui tend à sortir de tout parts, et 'chosit' pour sortir la voie la plus commode: ce choix suppose en effet la présence de tous les autres possibles à l'état de tendances." (Pp. 225-227, La Logique de Leibniz, Louis Couturat, Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, (Hildesheim, Germany), 1901.) (. . . he (Leibniz) professes that the possible essences exist in the divine understanding with as much reality as created things, and struggle there, according to laws analogous to those of mechanical equilibrium. . . . Note a curious fragment where he attempts to illustrate the existence of the possibles in the divine understanding by using the example of a fluid under pressure that tends to escape on all sides, and "choosing" to escape the easiest way: this choice supposes, in effect, the presence of all the other possibles in the condition of pressure.) Also, note footnote 15, above.



permits . . . the possibilities to pass into existence as a lock-keeper controlling the flow of water. . . ." The water has its own "nature," its latent energy, ready to "assert" itself when "released" --the monads have a thrust, a power of their own; God merely "lets them loose"--the "essences" have a "real" structuring which "operates" when "released," and "real powers are never simple possibilities. There is always tendency and action."<sup>27</sup> The world has a thrust and pressure of its own: once it is "initiated," the nature of things leads "dynamically" to inevitable conclusions.

Whitehead would agree that the "real" things have thrust and "tendency"; the "stubborn," persistent, pressing "facts" of the antecedent world insist upon their definitive valuation in the emergent "present":

We are also carried on by our immediate past of personal experiences; we finish a sentence because we have begun it. . . . There need be no well-worn association between the sounds of the earlier and the later words. But it remains remorselessly true, that we finish a sentence because we have begun it. We are governed by stubborn fact.<sup>28</sup> (Underlining Whitehead's.)

"Causal efficacy" is the term Whitehead gives to this impetus which drives the world to continual revaluation; what has been accomplished is "reiterated"<sup>29</sup> in the emergent: in fact, the emergent is the

<sup>27</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 410.

<sup>28</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 197.

<sup>29</sup>Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, op. cit., p. 99.



"product" of the imperious need of past achievement to reassert "itself," but not "in" itself. Its reassertion is the reaffirmation of its accomplishments in a new "subjective immediacy," for "process is the rush of feelings whereby second-handedness attains subjective immediacy."<sup>30</sup> This "rush of feelings" is the reproductive "tendency and action" of Whitehead's cosmos: it is what drives attainment beyond itself to new "housings of the World," which includes itself as the floor.

This impetus is an aspect of the ultimate nature of things; it is Whitehead's "Category of the Ultimate":

'Creativity' is the universal of universals characterizing ultimate matter of fact. It is that ultimate principle by which the many, which are the universe disjunctively, become the one actual occasion, which is the universe conjunctively. It lies in the nature of things that the many enter into complex unity . . . the ultimate metaphysical principle is the advance from disjunction to conjunction, creating a novel entity other than the ones given in disjunction. . . . The many become one, and are increased by one. . . . These ultimate notions of 'production of novelty' and of 'concrete togetherness' are inexplicable either in terms of higher universals or in terms of the components participating in the concrescence. . . . The sole appeal is to intuition.<sup>31</sup>

This is the core of Whitehead's metaphysics; his system either stands or falls here; so it is important for us to attempt to understand it as well as possible.

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<sup>30</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 235.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-32.



Let us express this central category in a different manner: "Creativity" is the rhythmic process of cumulative "capping" of the entire universe, and this "capping" leaves a "solid" fixity for the future. It is a rhythmic process because it is the nature of things to "repeat" this disjunctive/conjunctive reiteration. It is termed "rhythmic"<sup>32</sup> so as to stress the on-going, non-coercive, "affective" aspect of the process. The process is "cumulative" since the entire relevant world of attainment becomes "part" of the emergent; it is the "universe incarnating itself." The importance of the past to the present is directly "felt"; every past fixity is brought to bear: "everything" is "telescoped" into the moment. It is not a matter of a temporal "succession" of events, with each event linked to its antecedent and consequent by some "principle"; such succession broadens the Pluralistic Focus to the entire route. Instead, Whitehead's Focus is on the step, as it occurs. Each step "contains" the "massive insistency of our total experiences"<sup>33</sup>—each step is a crucial step. It is not a derivative "unfolding" or emanation from some central non-temporal principle: it is the immanation of the

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<sup>32</sup>"A rhythm involves a pattern and to that extent is always self-identical. But no rhythm can be a mere pattern; for the rhythmic quality depends equally upon the differences involved in each exhibition of the pattern. . . . A mere recurrence kills rhythm as surely as does a mere confusion of differences." (Dorothy M. Emmet, Whitehead's Philosophy of Organism, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1932), p. 112.)

<sup>33</sup>A. N. Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, (New York: Mentor Books, 1932), p. 220.



totality in the moment. The "force" and significance of the entire universe is "present." As with the physiological urgencies of the physical body, the structurings and orientations of the past are not to be denied: they must be coped with in some manner. The entire weight of the universe is behind each particular inheritance--the past "is" what the emergent "is," only in need of a final "rounding" and summation:

In the philosophy of organism an actual occasion . . . is the whole universe in process of attainment of a particular satisfaction.<sup>34</sup>

This "particular satisfaction" is the "capping" of the universe, the summation or "decision" which fixes an evaluation on that total. Each "real" is this "arrest" in a determinate attitude towards the whole, which in turn becomes part of the base or "body" for the future. The universe proceeds by "steps," and these "steps" do not emanate from some timeless core of things: its only "core" is the whole inheritance of momental "fixings," such as it is, in its "particular satisfaction." This whole inheritance is the "ground of obligation"<sup>35</sup> of the emergent; it is "rooted" in it, and must conform to its determinations:

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<sup>34</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 305.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 44.



The only intelligent doctrine of causation is founded on the doctrine of immanence. Every occasion presupposes the antecedent world as active in its own nature.<sup>36</sup>

But in spite of this cumulation, this "weight" at each real moment of time, each real moment is "real" by reason of its "subjective immediacy," its satisfaction/decision of its inheritance. There is no "perfect reenactation"<sup>37</sup>---the universe is "rhythmic": there is repetition, but each moment puts its unique "fix" on the flow of events. "Nothing in realized matter of fact retains complete identity with its antecedent self."<sup>38</sup>

If something "survives," it is because the emergent "values" it, because the emergent has made it its own; and in the process of making it its own, it is made into an "unrepeatable,"<sup>39</sup> unique "valuation,"<sup>40</sup> a valuation which "makes a difference" in the universe:

<sup>36</sup>A. N. Whitehead, Nature and Life, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), p. 42.

<sup>37</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 362.

<sup>38</sup>Whitehead, Modes of Thought, op. cit., p. 129.

<sup>39</sup>George L. Kline, (ed.), Alfred North Whitehead: Essays on His Philosophy, (Englewood, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 139.

<sup>40</sup>According to Whitehead, even in the most "inorganic," physical, "mechanical" reiteration, there is some "valuation" that takes place (pp. 379-380, Process and Reality). There is either "valuation up" or "valuation down" (pp. 368-369, Ibid.), as the repetition is either reaffirmed intensely or "attenuated." "Valuation down" may account for what the physicist calls "entropy," Whitehead suggests, (p. 365, Process and Reality).



Value is the outcome of limitation. The definite finite entity is the selected mode which is the shaping of attainment; apart from such shaping into individual matter of fact there is no attainment . . . the endurance of things has its significance in the self-retention of that which imposes itself as a definite attainment for its own sake.<sup>41</sup>

This "intrinsic reality" of the momental occasion is the "outcome of limitation." The "subjective immediacy" is the winnowing-down of the insistent "given<sup>n</sup>" of the world, by means of the "mediating" "forms of definiteness," until a final "satisfying" fit is achieved. This "fit" is the universe at that point. "This subject-superject is the universe in that synthesis, and beyond it there is nonentity."<sup>42</sup>

"Creativity" does not give us any final stability; even God is considered a "derivative notion."<sup>43</sup> Whitehead's universe is one of Heraclitian "eternal flux," an on-going process without beginning and without end. This depiction of a teeming, aimless welter of chaotic events disturbs some commentators on the Organic philosophy.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>41</sup>Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, op. cit., p. 89.

<sup>42</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 41.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., pp. 46-54--God's relation to the Pluralistic Focus will be studied later.

<sup>44</sup>"I feel that it is a defect that he did not more explicitly discuss the question of the infinity of the past, which he seems to take for granted. . . ." (Professor Hartshorne, p. 43, The Relevance of Whitehead, edit. by Ivor Leclerc, George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., (London), 1961.)



The "Category of the Ultimate" does not guarantee some kind of "order" in the universe: rather it is the generic statement of universal condition applicable to all actuality. The on-going system does not emanate from an "outside" source, which "explains," gives order, or points to a certain end; there is no "sufficient or final reason . . . outside of the sequence or series of this detail of contingencies . . .,"<sup>45</sup> as in Leibnizian philosophy. Instead, everything which is "real" must be a part of this process:

In the Timaeus the origin of the present cosmic epoch is traced back to an aboriginal disorder, chaotic according to our ideals. This is the evolutionary doctrine of the philosophy of organism. Plato's notion has puzzled critics who are obsessed with the Semitic theory of a wholly transcendent God creating out of nothing an accidental universe. . . . Until the last few years the sole alternatives were: either the material universe, with its present type of order, is eternal; or else it came into being, and will pass out of being, according to the fiat of Jehovah. Thus, on all sides, Plato's allegory of the evolution of a new type of order based on new types of dominant societies became a daydream puzzling to commentators. . . . Also, for the Timaeus, the creation of the world is the incoming of a certain type of social order.<sup>46</sup>

For Whitehead, time is an "actual" infinity extending antecedently, as well as into the future.<sup>47</sup> Whatever is existent, occurs within this

<sup>45</sup>Monadology, par. 37, quoted Wiener, op. cit., p. 540.

<sup>46</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

<sup>47</sup>Compare with the Leibnizian cosmos, in which all types of "actuated" order are articulated and meshed into one "perfect system." This interlocking totality of "compossible" things is "actuated" as one universe. This "actuation" allows things to "run their course," as "time" begins: "Though the extension of matter were unlimited, yet it would not follow that its duration would be also unlimited; may even it would not



rhythmic recapitulation of cumulative "capping"---this is the bedrock of reality, and any "non-temporal" influence by God and his "eternal objects" must occur within the "flux," as we shall see more clearly later.

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follow, that it had no beginning. If it is the nature of things in the whole, to grow uniformly in perfection, the universe of creatures must have had a beginning. And, therefore, there will be reasons to limit the duration of things, even though there were none to limit their extension. Besides, the world's having a beginning does not derogate from the infinity of its duration a parte post." (Underlining Leibniz's); (5th paper, The Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence, op. cit.). Once the Leibnizian cosmological order is "initiated," it continues its temporal development to eternity, probably because it is the "perfect" order, and the only feasible order including all the "possibles" which can be actuated in one system. But the system of order ("cosmic epochs") of Whitehead's metaphysics are multiple (p. 128, Process and Reality), can be overlapping, and are exhaustible (p. 139, Ibid.). The only permanent characteristic of the nature of things is "Creativity," which can be organized in an infinite number of ways. The Whiteheadian cosmos is a "perilous" one, in which things can "go wrong," since the universal process is not "rooted" in "perfection."



## CHAPTER V

### THREE MODES OF APPROACHING THE PLURALISTIC FOCUS

In this chapter, we will explore three avenues of approach to the focal points of the two philosophies. We have already discussed to some extent the functioning of the two kinds of basic units as "parts" of the wider reality, the total system of the cosmos. Now we will study the pluralistic unities as microcosms, as uniting their "parts." Following that, the discussion will turn to the application of the Leibnizian principle of the "Identity of Indiscernibles" to the problems of Pluralistic Focus. And finally, this chapter will close with an analysis of the three-phase "rhythm" of the two systems.

#### A. The Microcosm and Its Parts

As has been briefly mentioned earlier, the focal point of the two pluralistic systems is "midway" between two extremes: the infinite totality of events, and the constituent "parts" of the basic unity itself. The pluralistic unit should adequately "hold apart" these two "infinities," and keep from being "swamped" by either or both of them. We have had a glimpse at how the actual occasion of Whitehead "holds together" the infinity of items in the universe; now we need to explore the other extreme of the pluralistic "mediation"--the "parts" of the actual entity. Since the temporal actual entity is a "momental"



occasion, it can have no true "temporal" parts, as the "changing" monad does. Its "diversity" is confined to its "initial phase," which is the "antecedent world" in its relatively "raw" state. This "diversity" is the "many" of the "creative" process. The relation of the emergent with each of these disjunctive items is called a "prehension":

. . . I have adopted the term 'prehension' to express the activity whereby an actual entity affects its own concretion of other things. The 'prehension' of one actual entity by another actual entity is the complete transaction, analyzable into the objectification of the former entity as one of the data for the latter. . . .<sup>1</sup>

The actual occasion is solely made up of these "prehensions"; they are its "parts":

The actuality is the totality of prehensions with subjective unity in process of concrescence into concrete unity.<sup>2</sup>

The analysis of an actual entity into 'prehensions' is that mode of analysis which exhibits the most concrete elements in the nature of actual entities. . . . A prehension reproduces in itself the general characteristics of an actual entity. . . . In fact, any characteristic of an actual entity is reproduced in a prehension.<sup>3</sup>

Since the "principle of universal relativity" states that each actual entity "has a perfectly definite bond with each item in the universe,"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., pp. 81-82.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 359.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 66.



it has prehensions of everything in the universe, even if much the greater part of these are "negative prehensions,"<sup>5</sup> or total rejections.

Thus the "infinitesimal" which makes up the constitution of the "atomic" pluralistic unit, is the prehension. What, then, "holds together" this totality of "parts"? In the preceding chapter we found that the "subjective immediacy" of the emergent is its winnowing-down and evaluating of the diverse urgencies which make up its antecedent world/initial phase. This "sifting" arrives at a final "particular satisfaction," which is the "outcome of limitation"--everything has been put in "place." The "buzzing confusion" has been given a "subjective unity," and a "decision" has been "fixed" for the future:

The partial nature of a feeling, (prehension) other than the complete satisfaction, is manifest by the impossibility of understanding its generation without recourse to the whole subject.<sup>6</sup>

The "subjective immediacy" in its "particular satisfaction" is the "rounding," the emergent concrescence of the bundle of prehensions which is its "initial phase." Any one of these prehensions is "real"; it has "partial" existence, and "is," in a sense, what it "transmits" --the affective import of its "datum," the item of the inherited past

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 338.



of which it is the "grasp." But though "real," it is "incomplete"; it carries forward a portion of the "massive insistency" of the world, but its disjunctiveness needs to be "placed" and "satisfied" in an "emotional unity":

It (a prehension) might have been a complete actuality; but, by reason of a certain incomplete partiality, a prehension is only a subordinate element in an actual entity. A reference to the complete actuality is required in respect to its subjective form. This subjective form is determined by the subjective aim at further integration, so as to obtain the 'satisfaction' of the completed subject . . . final causation and atomism are interconnected philosophical principles.<sup>7</sup>

The prehension, then, is both the element of interrelatedness ("the perfectly definite bond"), and the element of composition of the actual entity. The actual entity, by resolving its "partial" feelings in one affective unity of "satisfaction," is able to "mediate" between the two "infinities." The actual entity is the "real" which holds the universe together by holding itself together, by "being" just what it is. Its unity and completion lies in its "internal" adjustment to the totality, and this totality is equivalent to its component infinitesimals. This adjustment is an "emotional" placing of a multiplicity of feelings into one "satisfaction." "Satisfaction," then, is the focal point of the Organic system: it determines the distinctive oneness of the Whiteheadian pluralistic unit. The "balance" of the "relativity of existence" and the "individuality of existence" is at "satisfaction":

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 29.



both are subsumed in the "emotional unity" of the moment. It both unites the multiple, and distinguishes itself from it.

It is important that any pluralistic system determine what constitutes "one" real unit; there has to be some criterion, from the perspective of its system, to discern the "unity" of the unit. John Herman Randall, Jr., in connection with his study of Aristotle, has discussed this problem in some detail. He finds that the Greek philosopher has one essential criterion for deciding the "limits" of a thing:

We know that we are dealing with a single motion or process when it has been completed . . . for anything that can be said to be a unity is always completed and whole. It is this feature of reaching a goal or end that makes a process self-delimiting.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>John Herman Randall, Jr., *Aristotle*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 204. This is the passage in full: "How can we determine when a motion is 'one' and what are the limits of any particular motion? This has always been a problem for any attempt to analyze process. What constitutes a single process? This has perplexed Whitehead both in his early analysis into 'events' and his later analysis into 'actual occasions.' And it is equally a problem for the analysis into 'situations.' How can we delimit an 'event,' and 'actual occasion,' and a 'situation'? A notion can be said to be 'one,' Aristotle points out, in many ways: it can be one generically, or specifically, or substantially, or numerically. But we can say that a motion is one in the simple sense . . . if it is one in substance . . . and in number . . . that is, it must be the change of a single thing that remains identical in kind through a continuous interval of time. We know that we are dealing with a single motion . . . (see above) . . . makes a process self-delimiting. In contrast, the selection of any particular 'event' is always made by an external observer, and involves an element of arbitrary choice." The "eternal species" (classes, "natures," kind, etc.) are the "pluralistic units," one might say, of Aristotle's system. The "balance" of the "relativity of existence" and the "individuality of existence" is at the "completion" of the "process" which reveals the "process" as having a certain "nature." This "nature" links the "process" to an "eternal" kind; it "places" it in the scheme of things. Also, the end of the "process" delineates the "individual." Aristotle also has a clear-cut, "gross" criterion of discernment; his "unit" is not "microscopic," as is the Leibnizian monad and the Whiteheadian occasion.



For Aristotle, a "nature" is defined by the culmination of its "process," and this completion is grossly discernible. When a thing "moves" to such an end, it is of that "nature." So its "process" to end determines what "kind" of thing it is--thus establishing its interrelatedness or "place" in the nature of things; and the culmination also reveals it as "one" thing, (see footnote 8). The "natures" of Leibniz and Whitehead, however, are not grossly apparent. Whitehead's "momental" whole is discernible as "one" only in terms of the theoretical perspective of his system. In terms of the Organic system, the "self-delimiting" fixation of the "rush of feeling," is an "emotional unity." It both unifies the "relativity" and distinguishes the "individual."

Leibniz's pluralistic whole is also discernible only in terms of his speculative system. His monad is essentially a non-temporal "notion" which explicates itself to eternity. It never arrives at its cognitive "fullness." Temporally, this notion is known only through its changes, or "fleeting states," which are its manifestations. The Leibnizian monad is not "grossly" discernible: it is a "metaphysical point," a non-temporal being whose "perfect concept" can be discerned only in its "placing" in the completeness of the system of "compossibles." The discernment of the individual, then, entails a complete knowledge of the articulated system.<sup>9</sup> If "full" knowledge of the

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<sup>9</sup>"Most important of all is the fact that individuality involves the infinite, and only he who understands the latter can have first-hand knowledge of the principle of individuation of this or that thing; this arises from the influence (conceived rightly) of all things in the universe on one another." (Wiener, op. cit., p. 451.)



compossible system is necessary to the real delineation of a notion, then only God can "know" the monad.<sup>10</sup> The compossible system is "part" of the "internal object" of God: only the divine "knows" the full interrelations of that non-temporal realm of interlocking concepts; therefore, only he can know the "perfect concept," or the "place" of the individual in the system. It would seem, then, that the discernment of the monad is cognitive,<sup>11</sup> rather than "affective," as is the "nature" of the Organic entity.

As is stated above, the unit in a pluralistic system must "mediate" between the wider reality of the totality of items, and its infinitesimal components. Roughly, Leibniz deals with the "parts" of the microcosm in the same manner as Whitehead: the components of the unit "represent" the larger totality. Each fleeting state of the simple substance corresponds to some aspect of the compossible world. This is the converse of the statement that "there is nothing . . .

<sup>10</sup>"God alone has a distinct knowledge of all, for he is the source of all." (Ibid., p. 530.)

<sup>11</sup>"Cognition: The act or process of knowing in the broadest sense; specifically: an intellectual process by which knowledge is gained by perception or ideas--distinguished from affection and conation." (Webster's Third New International Dictionary, 1961.) Let us note Leibniz's comments on the "understanding" and the "intellect:" "Dans mon sens l'entendement répond à ce qui chez les Latins est appelé intellectus et l'exercice de cette faculté s'appelle intellection, qui est une perception distincte jointe à la faculté de réfléchir, qui n'est pas dans les bêtes." (Bk. II, Ch. 21, para. 5, New Essays--quoted Vocabulaire . . . Philosophie, op. cit.) (By understanding I mean that which corresponds to the Latin term intellectus, and the exercise of that faculty named intellection, which consists of a distinct perception combined with the faculty of thinking--all of which is not found in the beasts.)



which does not need, for its perfect concept, the concept of every other thing in the universe"; the intrinsic individuality of the monad is composed of "the concepts of the other things." The arrangement, order, and clarity of these other concepts varies from monad to monad--- in this "limitation" and "differentiation" consist the "principle of individuation" of the monads:

They (the monads) all tend confusedly toward the infinite, toward the whole; but they are limited and differentiated by the degrees of their distinct perceptions.<sup>12</sup>

The monad is distinguished by "privation" of the complete system, the true matrix that only God possesses. The notion of the individual is the complete articulated system, "approached" from a unique "angle."<sup>13</sup> This unique approach is the individuality of the monad.<sup>14</sup> The monad is limited by the narrowness of its "distinct perceptions"--those perceptions which give a glimpse of its true "nature," which is intermeshed with the complete compossible whole.

<sup>12</sup>Monadology, paragraph 60, quoted Wiener, op. cit., p. 545.

<sup>13</sup>"And as the same city looked at from different sides appears entirely different, and is as if multiplied perspectively; so also it happens that, as a result of the infinite multitude of simple substances, there are as if it were so many different universes, which are nevertheless only the perspectives of a single one, according to the different points of view of each monad." (Paragraph 57, Monadology --quoted Wiener, op. cit., p. 544.) (Underlining Leibniz's.)

<sup>14</sup>The "privation" of the monad is also disclosed in the fact that its temporal development never reaches its "perfect concept." If it did, then it would be God. The "infinite progress" of the monad is an eternal asymptotic approach to the "fullness" of the divine being, including the compossible system.



Here again, on its "infinitesimal" side, the monad is what it is, because of cognitive characteristics; its cognitive discernment of the true matrix of essences determines what it is, and its "place" in the system determines its "perspective." The "fleeting states," or "parts" of the notion are aspects of the "place" of the monad in the system, and, in turn, the "place" of the monad is an aspect of the complete system. In the words of Philip Wiener, what the individual is, is the result of its non-temporal "location," derived from the complete configuration of compossibles:

. . . so long as Leibniz explained his notion of an individual by comparing the latter to a place in a mathematical series or continuum, the substance or essential nature of each individual is determined by relations of the individuals to one another.<sup>15</sup>

But the "essential nature" of Whitehead's temporal actuality is not determined by any systematic non-temporal "formula." Its "living aim as its own self-constitution"<sup>16</sup> is the categorical requirement that it "round" itself in a "decisive moment of absolute self-attainment as emotional unity."<sup>17</sup> This "emotional unity," or "satisfaction," is what makes a difference in Whitehead's system; it determines the character and the "nature" of the "enduring" things. This is the reason time is "taken seriously" in Whitehead's metaphysics; "endurance" is "renewal" at each momental step, and the "particular

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<sup>15</sup>Wiener, op. cit., XLI.

<sup>16</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 373.

<sup>17</sup>Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, op. cit., p. 227.



satisfactions" fix the "nature" of reality at each "instance." But in the Leibnizian system, "time" is a manifestation of what is fixed non-temporally, and what the individual "is," is "determined by the formula of the series."

### B. The Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles

Leibniz's test for what "makes a difference" was his "Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles":

It even follows from this that there cannot be two singular things which differ only numerically; for it must be possible to give a reason why they are diverse, which is to be sought in some difference between them.<sup>18</sup> (Underlining Leibniz's.)

An application of this Principle can be found in the Fourth Paper of the Leibniz-Clarke Correspondence:

To say that God can cause the whole universe to move forward in a straight line, or in any other line, without making otherwise any alteration in it, is another chimerical supposition. For, two states indiscernible from each other, are the same state, and consequently, 'tis a change without any change.<sup>19</sup> (Underlining Leibniz's.)

Applying the Principle from the viewpoint of Organic philosophy, one might declare that endurance without significant "reiteration" of characteristics at each momental step, is an example of "two states indiscernible from each other." Leibniz might reply that it is only

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<sup>18</sup>P. 519, Opuscles et Fragments Inedits de Leibniz, Louis Couturat--quoted Russell, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>19</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 230.



that which is permanent which is significant: only the non-temporal characteristic of each "route" is truly discernible. "God . . . will never choose among indiscernibles,"<sup>20</sup> he says: each actual "route" has its own distinct "place" in the nature of things:

. . . everything substantial, whether soul or body, has its own peculiar relation to each of the others; and the one must always differ from the other by intrinsic characteristics.<sup>21</sup> (Underlining Leibniz's.)

What identifies a true "discernible" for Leibniz is the fact that in a succession of events, one underlying pattern is "disclosed" cognitively.<sup>22</sup> This disclosed pattern reveals "what is truly one being," and without this conceptual apprehension of a non-temporal "route," there is "not truly a being":

What doth not act, what wants active power, what is void of discernibility, what wants the whole ground of subsistence; can no way be a substance.<sup>23</sup> (Underlining my own.)

<sup>20</sup>Duncan, op. cit., p. 273.

<sup>21</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 409.

<sup>22</sup>This feature of "disclosure" indicates an agreement of Leibnizian metaphysics with the definition of "monism" presented at the beginning of this exposition--" . . . l'intelligibilité essentielle de l'être." Man and "being" are cognitively attuned: some of its formal patterns are discernible to him. In this sense, it is not just God who comprehends the "realm of essence"; man also shares in this "realm" to the extent that he can discern some of the patterns underlying some of the "routes." The emphasis of Whitehead is different. There are "eternal objects," or permanent patterns, but these are not installed in the on-going universe; they are "forms of definiteness" of this universe: they are the definitives for fixing "emotional unities." The stress is more on the employment of the "forms," rather than on their "discernment." This aspect of our comparison will be more intensively explored below.

<sup>23</sup>Alexander, op. cit., p. 131.



A mere "moment," in and of itself, has no "being"; the "moment" must be linked as a consequential step to an underlying non-temporal route, which is the "true being" of the "succession" known as time. Momental "satisfaction," so central to Whitehead's Pluralistic Focus, is a mere partial disclosure, a "fleeting state" of the complete notion.

### C. The Three-Phase Rhythm of Development

But the Leibnizian non-temporal notion does have its temporal "routing," its explication which comes asymptotically closer to its "perfect concept." Regardless of its significance, temporal development is a fact of his system. Moreover, both philosophers conceive the universe as developing with a three-"beat" rhythm. Whitehead specifically refers to this rhythm in one passage:

The facts of nature are the actualities; and the facts into which the actualities are divisible are their prehensions, with their public origins, their private forms, and their private aims. But the actualities are moments of passage into a novel stage of publicity.<sup>24</sup>

The attained, "complete" world of "stubborn fact" exists in "objective immortality" as a givenness for every emergent. It is "public" for every "becoming" entity. The emergent is that "privacy" (or "subjective immediacy") which attempts to cope with this "public" givenness. Its "private" assimilation of that public world becomes a new bit of givenness for the future--it gains "objective immortality" in the public world.

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<sup>24</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 444.



This rhythm of public/fixed; to private/process; and return to public/fixed--is found in an analogous form in Leibnizian metaphysics. In God, the system of compossible essences exists in all its "fullness"; here, in its non-temporal "perfection," it is complete in God's "wisdom." The divine understanding, then, gives the "perfect" world a kind of "publicity," a fullness of attainment and a completeness of interrelationship:

God alone . . . is the cause of this correspondence of their phenomena, and causes what is private to one to be public to all, otherwise there would be no connection.<sup>25</sup>

But considered from the aspect of its temporal explication, the monad "forgets" its "place" in the complete matrix of compossibles, and must pursue a fragmented "subjective" career.<sup>26</sup> Compared with the complete

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<sup>25</sup>Gerhardt, *op. cit.*, v. IV, p. 440. There is a passage from John Merz's work on Leibniz stressing the divine "publicity" of God's understanding: "If the connection of things is of an intellectual nature, there must exist a supreme intellect, a mind of perfect knowledge and wisdom, in which the connection exists as an infinite and infinitely interwoven chain of clear thought. . . . The intellectual order, the harmony of all things, presupposes their mutual interdependence. . . . As the apparent extension of real things in space had to vanish before the clearer view of reason, so likewise the apparent interdependence and interaction of real things must yield to a purely intellectual connection. Left to themselves, the real things of this world have no intercourse, they are powerless to act or to react on each other; they are solitary and self-sufficient. Their connection with each other exists merely in the mind of their Creator." (Merz, *op. cit.*, p. 149.)

<sup>26</sup>See Whitehead's comments on the "private life" of the developing monad: "Leibniz . . . approached the problem of cosmology from the subjective side. . . . He explained what it must be like to be an atom. Lucretius tells us what an atom looks like to others, and Leibniz tells us how an atom is feeling about itself." (Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, *op. cit.*, p. 136.)



cognitive subsumption of God's nature, the temporal development is a comparatively "non-cognitive" process; the monad is partially blind to the "true picture," and it does not "understand" the interrelatedness of things. But its development is a clarification of its underlying notion, which in its "perfect" state, includes the complete system. By a "perpetual progress,"<sup>27</sup> the monad asymptotically approaches the "full" cognition of its source. Thus the Leibnizian "rhythm" is similar to that of the Organic system: the "public," non-temporal existence of the complete system in God's nature; the temporal development of the "fragmented" aspects of this system, with each aspect attempting to extricate itself from its limiting "privacy" and regain the full "public" vision of the system of interrelatedness, and its "place" in it.

As we have seen above, closely allied with this "public-private-public" rhythm of the Leibnizian schema, we find a "cognitive-noncognitive-cognitive" rhythm. There is an analogous developmental pattern in the Organic schema too, only the "public" phase (the antecedent world) is "non-cognitive": there, the cumulative press of the entire universe results in a "vague," disordered, relatively chaotic interrelatedness. But this "press" is not to be denied: it is a "massive insistency" demanding the fulfillment as an embodiment in the "simplified," rounded version of the completed entity. These "vague percepts, . . . not to

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<sup>27</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 354.



be controlled,"<sup>28</sup> brings to mind Leibniz's "confused perceptions":

We can also see that the perceptions of our senses even when they are clear must necessarily contain certain confused elements, for as all the bodies in the universe are in sympathy, ours receives the impressions of all the others, and while our senses respond to everything, our soul cannot pay attention to every particular. . . .<sup>29</sup>

But those two kinds of "confusion" are different. The "confusion" of the Leibnizian monad is "part" of its temporal routing; it is that factor of "privation" which constitutes the "limitation and differentiation" of the substance. The "public" background of this private "confusion" is the fully articulated non-temporal system of interrelationships. The monad's temporal "confusion" is a "privation" of the full cognition, a condition that the monad is trying to rectify. The rhythm of this development, then, is "cognitive-noncognitive-cognitive."

But the "public" background of the actual entity is not a realm of eternal, perfectly interconnected, "distinct" and "clear" ideas. Instead, by the categorical demands of the Organic schema, the "public" background is "non-cognitive"--it is something to be organized, adjusted, "simplified":

The whole notion of our massive experiences as a reaction to clearly envisaged details is fallacious. The relationship should be inverted. The details are a reaction to the totality. They add definition.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Whitehead, Modes of Thought, op. cit., p. 27.

<sup>29</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 339.

<sup>30</sup>Whitehead, Modes of Thought, op. cit., p. 149.



The actual entity is always a "simplification"<sup>31</sup> of a "vague" background, "heavy with emotion."<sup>28</sup> This "non-cognitive" area is not to be considered "privative": the amorphic "massiveness" and urgency of the inherited world is just as essential to the "balance" of existence as is the "cognitive" definition of the emergent's final "fix":

Every abstraction derives its importance from its reference to some background of feeling.<sup>32</sup>

In the course of the "creative advance," each occasion puts a "fix" on the jumbled impetus of the world, and then becomes an addition to that very "massiveness." The temporal advance is not a process of "disclosure" of what underlies the temporal route; it is a series of "cognitive" simplifications of that flux.

To clarify the "cognitive/non-cognitive" aspect of the two systems, it is necessary to discuss briefly what Whitehead termed "Appearance and Reality."<sup>33</sup> "Appearance," as Whitehead uses the term, refers to that "incredibly simplified edition of reality,"<sup>34</sup> introduced by the emergent. It is that which makes coherent the "vague massiveness" of the antecedent world; it is the "emotional unity"

<sup>31</sup>Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, op. cit., p. 213.

<sup>32</sup>Schilpp, op. cit., p. 679.

<sup>33</sup>The main Whiteheadian presentation of these notions is to be found in the chapter so labeled in Adventures of Ideas, op. cit..

<sup>34</sup>See footnote 31.



which "satisfies" and results in an emergent something. "Reality" is that antecedent "stubborn fact": imperious, demanding, but "finished," "complete," "given." "Reality" and "appearance" are relative terms: both shift, depending upon the temporal "position" of the Pluralistic Focus. What is "appearance" becomes "reality," when "complete." In Leibniz, they are not relative terms, since there is one true reality--the complete system subsumed in God's nature. "Appearance," for Leibniz, is always "privative" and incomplete, a "confusion" of the true nature of things. In a sense, what is reality in Leibniz is "appearance" in Whitehead, and conversely. For Leibniz, the "clear, distinct" concepts--what Whitehead calls "appearance"--are the basic ingredients of experience: they may be submerged, concealed, or "confused" in sense-experience awaiting "explication," but they are there. For Whitehead, the "confusion" of experience is what is "solid" and "real,"--it insists on being accounted for.

For Leibniz, then, the real is always "there," just what it is, and "changes" are "privative" approaches to this reality by the "limited" monads. In the Organic system, however, "Reality" is always being "made"--it is cumulative and "expanding." "Appearance"--the "mode of emphasis" put on the cumulative "confusion"--itself becomes part of the total, and helps reshape the nature of "Reality":

The present occasion in this personal life (of a human being) inherits with peculiar dominance the antecedent experiences in this succession. But these antecedent experiences include the 'appearances' as in those occasions. These antecedent appearances are part of the real functioning of the real actual world as it stands in the primary phase of the immediate present occasion.



It is a real fact of nature that the world has appeared thus from the standpoint of these antecedent occasions of the personal life. . . . In this way, there is an intimate, inextricable fusion of appearance with reality and of accomplished fact with anticipation.<sup>35</sup>

Thus what is inexorable explication of an underlying permanent "nature" in Leibniz, is in Whitehead an "expanding tradition," continually being re-evaluated at each moment. The "nature of things" instead of being one fixed constant, is merely the total "weight" of all the attained "fixings."

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.--Although the passage is strictly directed to the relations of "appearance" and "reality" in human experience, this writer has employed it as applicable to all modes of development in the Organic philosophy.



## CHAPTER VI

### THREE PROBLEMS OF THE TWO SYSTEMS

There are three distinct problems of the two schemata which will be studied below. Each concerns some aspect of the Pluralistic Focus of the two systems. The first problem is that of environmental "weight" and the self-creation of the actual entity. Next we will explore the problem of "momental solipsism" in the Organic philosophy; and, finally, we will study the problem of the coherence of the non-temporal notion and its temporal "moments."

#### A. Environmental "Weight"

As was mentioned at the end of the preceding chapter, "Reality" is composed of the total "weight" of the "fixities" of the antecedent universe. The nature of things is such that the "massiveness" of the past forms a "givenness" which must be accounted for, in the emergent. This is "causal efficacy"; "Reality" has a "tendency and action" to cause the reiteration of the characteristics it has adopted. But can this "weight" become overwhelming? Can the accumulation of a narrow range of "forms of definiteness" make this "environment" compulsive? It seems to be possible that the reiteration of a certain select type of "definiteness" may "swamp" the emergent, make its categorical "self-creation" negligible. If such could be the case, then Whitehead's Pluralistic Focus could be broadened in some situations to the "enduring" route, and the distinction between his philosophy and the Monadic schema



would be lessened. As Leibniz says, "there is always a particular disposition to action, and to one action rather than another."<sup>1</sup>

"Tendency and action" are the mark of "real powers." Somehow Whitehead must adequately account for the "tendency and action" to re-iterate the "same" form. There are different "kinds" of things--- how does this fact fit into Whitehead's system?

The Organic metaphysics "derives" its "gross," "enduring" objects from its "actual entities" by the notion of "society":

The point of a 'society' as the term is here used is that it is self-sustaining; in other words, that it is its own reason. . . . To constitute a society, the class-name has got to apply to each member, by reason of genetic derivation from other members of that same society. The members of the society are alike because, by reason of their common character, they impose on other members of the society the conditions which lead to that likeness.<sup>2</sup>

Any "enduring" thing is a "society."<sup>3</sup> Societies are produced by temporal "interbreeding" of a group of occasions: certain characteristics are "passed on" to the future; other "incompatible" characteristics are genetically devaluated, gradually pushed into oblivion, and the group becomes "one thing." Our interest here is the situation when a society

<sup>1</sup>Wiener, op. cit., p. 409.

<sup>2</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 137. A "nexus" is a collection of actual entities which have relevant relations with each other (Process and Reality, pp. 29-30). A "society" is a "nexus" in which some definite common characteristic has been genetically distributed among its members.

<sup>3</sup>Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, op. cit., p. 262.



becomes "overwhelming," when the emergent's environment<sup>4</sup> becomes "saturated" with a narrow class of "eternal objects." It would seem that the occasion has no "choice" but to "be" a certain thing. If the momental step is reduced to a mere conformative "instant" in the "endurance" of a dominant society, then how are the categorical requirements for the causa sui of the occasion satisfied?

In spite of these categorical demands, there seem to be vast areas of the Whiteheadian cosmos where the actual entity is reduced to a mere transitional mode of the dominant environment. We have, for example, the enduring societies that we term "matter":

When memory and anticipation are completely absent, there is complete conformity to the average influence of the immediate past. There is no conscious confrontation of memory with possibility. Such a situation produces the activity of mere matter.<sup>5</sup>

Besides "mere matter," the far greater part of the occasions making up "living tissue" evinces merely conformal behavior. The living organism, no matter of how complex a structure, has only a few "originative"<sup>6</sup> or "non-conformal" entities in its organic hierarchy. We see this in Whitehead's discussion of nerve impulse transmission:

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<sup>4</sup>"Environment" can be equivalent to "society," when the term is used to designate the system of "order" sustaining individual occasions. Or it can mean the next "higher" system of "order" prevailing over a "society." In any case, it is the sustaining background for the "organism" in question (p. 138, Process and Reality).

<sup>5</sup>Schilpp, op. cit., p. 695.

<sup>6</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., pp. 158-160.



. . . in touch there is a reference to the stone in contact with the hand, and a reference to the hand; but in normal, healthy, bodily operations the chain of occasions along the arm sinks into the background almost to complete oblivion.<sup>7</sup>

If we stress the "social" aspects of Whitehead's schema, it would seem that there is an ever increasing conformation and subordination of the occasion to its "routes of inheritance": "species," it would seem, would persist at the expense of the "subjective immediacy" of the emergent:

. . . the uniformity along the historical route increases the degree of conformity which that route exacts from the future. In particular each historical route of like occasions tends to prolong itself, by reason of the weight of uniform inheritance derivable from its members.<sup>8</sup>

Since the "weight of uniform inheritance" would seem necessarily to increase, since extremely "chaotic" novelties would be ignored or bypassed,<sup>9</sup> it would appear that the "uniformity" of societies would reach "dead-ends," unable to generate new approaches. Only an environmental catastrophe, or an "act of God," it would seem, can extricate Whitehead's Organic evolutionism from an inevitable

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 184.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 341.



"crystallization"<sup>10</sup> in an extremely rigid universe.

It would seem pertinent, then, to find out how important the development of "order" is to Whitehead's schema, and how pervasive one determinate system of order can be. In one passage he claims that the generation of "orderly" societies is a primary drive of the universe:

The growth of a complex structured society exemplifies the general purpose pervading nature. The mere complexity of givenness which procures incompatibilities has been superseded by the complexity of order which procures contrasts.<sup>11</sup>

If the "complexity of order" becomes such that the "nature" of the component occasions is determined by the environmental "structure," then what happens to the "self-determination" of the occasion? A

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<sup>10</sup>The expression is that of Charles S. Peirce: ". . . in the beginning--infinitely remote--there was a chaos of unpersonalized feeling. . . . This feeling, sporting here and there in pure arbitrariness, would have started the germ of a generalizing tendency . . . the tendency to habit would be started; and from this with the other principles of evolution all the regularities of the universe would be evolved. At any time . . . an element of pure chance survives and will remain until the world becomes an absolutely perfect, rational, and symmetrical system, in which mind is at last crystallized in the infinitely distant future." (Pp. 158-159, Values in a Universe of Chance, Charles S. Peirce, edit. by Philip P. Wiener, Doubleday Anchor Books, 1958.) Since Peirce starts with assumptions similar to those of Organic metaphysics, it is significant that they reach different conclusions about the probability of a "far-off divine event/to which the whole creation moves." Whitehead termed this notion "fallacious." (P. 169, Process and Reality.)

<sup>11</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 153.



"social order" exists for two reasons: first, it is a result of the genetic interrelations of a group of occasions--the "decisions" of the individuals are the basis for the "order." But, secondly, the "order" is a regulative inheritance which the individual must cope with; with the increase of the predominance of this regulation, the "social order" becomes more and more a part of the very "being" of the individual--it cannot be denied. Whitehead seems to want to counteract this second aspect of "order" by emphasizing the role of the "atomic" component, but in the following passage he apparently cannot deny social "pressure" on the pluralistic unit:

. . . society is only efficient through its individual members. Thus in a society, the members can only exist by reason of the laws which dominate the society, and the laws only come into being by reason of the analogous characters of the members of the society.<sup>12</sup>

Whitehead has probably employed the term "society" with some intention at analogy to human society. But this employment might not give proper due to the existence of human societies, natural and "artificial," which can be extremely "overwhelming," and "condition" the individual's every response. In such cases, there seems to be little the member's "personal" action or "inner transformation" can do to change the order.

This problem of environmental "weight" is a very real problem, but in terms of the Organic schema there are several related replies. First, the major emphasis of the Organic philosophy is on the momental

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 139.



step: they are the collective "substratum" of societies. Whatever the "weight" of the environment, that "weight" has its reality in some collection of "emotional unities," and these "satisfaction-decisions" are always a "valuing" by the occasions of the environment. "Reiteration" is always to be considered as "renewal." The "weight" is increased or diminished, depending upon the value put upon it by the "subjective immediacy":

Every actual entity is 'in time' so far as its physical pole is concerned, and is 'out of time' so far as its mental pole is concerned. It is the union of two worlds, namely, the temporal world, and the world of autonomous valuation. The integration of each simple physical feeling with its conceptual counterpart produces in a subsequent phase a physical feeling whose subjective form of re-enaction has gained or lost subjective intensity according to the valuation up, or the valuation down, in the conceptual feeling.<sup>13</sup>

The determination of the fate of the environmental "order" starts here; "there is always a remainder for the decision of the subject-superject";<sup>14</sup> it is never completely "overwhelmed."

"Reiteration" is "renewal"---the "nature" of the environmental weight is always changing, since the individual members of that society "perish," and are replaced by new emergents which reconstitute that society. The society is continually being "capped" by new versions of that very society, and these new versions can eventually transform its very "nature":

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 380.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 41.



The self-identity of a society is founded upon the self-identity of its defining characteristic, and upon the mutual immanence of its occasions. But there is no definite nexus which is the nexus underlying that society, except when the society belongs wholly to the past. For the realized nexus which underlies the society is always adding to itself, with the creative advance into the future. For example, the man adds another day to his life, and the earth adds another millenium to the period of its existence. But until the death of the man and the destruction of the earth, there is no determinate nexus which in an unqualified sense is either the man or the earth.<sup>15</sup>

Also helping to mitigate environmental weight is the fact that " . . . no two actual entities originate from an identical universe":<sup>16</sup>

Each actual occasion defines its own actual world from which it originates. No two occasions can have identical worlds.<sup>17</sup>

One actual occasion may be "earlier" or later than another, and the "later" occasion would have in its "world" the additional elements added by time. Two "contemporary"<sup>18</sup> occasions are fellow emergents in process of defining their respective "actual worlds," and no two occasions can be identical.

Another mitigating circumstance is the fact that there is no one completely "dominant" order in any nexus of occasions. A particular

<sup>15</sup>Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, op. cit., pp. 205-206.

<sup>16</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., pp. 33-34.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 298-299.

<sup>18</sup>"Contemporary" actual occasions are those that are "in causal independence of each other." (P. 192, Process and Reality). None of them are "genetically" related, i.e., form part of the "past" for the others.



order may be extant, and future development can make it more general, more specific, suppress it, or amalgamate it in a new "system":

. . . there is necessity that the importance of experience requires adequate stability of order.  
 . . . There are always forms of order partially dominant and partially frustrated. . . . There is transition within the dominant order. . . . Such transition is a frustration of the prevalent dominance. And yet it is the realization of that vibrant novelty which elicits the excitement of life.<sup>19</sup>

In other words, a particular "order" is dependent upon how it enhances the "emotional unities" which assume it for their own "satisfaction." A society is a mere "scaffolding" which sustains a certain line of achievement, and keeps the occasions from scattering into chaos. Other types of order are always available, and when they will enhance a certain line of individual achievement, they are adopted and the old orders are dropped. This may have to be a "gradual" diminuation of the "old" and assumption of the "new," in line with the requirements for no disruptive "breaks" in development, but the change still takes place according to the necessities of individual, "particular satisfaction"--this is central.

Even God's role in the nature of things is concerned with the Pluralistic Focus on the momental "satisfaction." All "enduring" structures are mere transient instruments of the central task: the strengthening and nurturing of the momental "emotional unities":

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<sup>19</sup>Whitehead, Modes of Thought, op. cit., pp. 118-119.



Thus God's aim in the creative advance is the evocation of intensities. The evocation of societies is purely subsidiary to this absolute end.<sup>20</sup>

It has already been established in the earlier discussion that God sustains the realm of forms, the "general potentiality of the universe."<sup>21</sup> This "proximate relevance" serves as the "lure" for each occasion. God, then, supplies the "conceptual" spark which initiates the winnowing process resulting in a final "satisfaction." Since God seeks the "evocation of intensities," it would appear that his role as the "principle of concretion,"<sup>22</sup> puts even greater emphasis on the momental step.<sup>23</sup>

The problem of environmental "weight" is alien to Leibniz. What each of his "substances" will do is "laid out" non-temporally, and temporal manifestations are merely inevitable unfoldings of its a priori "fix." Any apparent environmental "pressure" is only a result of a non-temporal "positioning" in the matrix of essence. The "relation" to the relating entity, appearing as a temporal event, is "really" a consequence of the eternal "placing" of the notion of the individual monad relative to the "real" components of that "environment." In the

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<sup>20</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 161.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 374.

<sup>23</sup>"Thus an originality in the temporal world is conditioned, though not determined, by an initial subjective aim supplied by the ground of all order and of all originality." (P. 164, Process and Reality.)



Leibnizian system, there can be no question of the growth of general "order" to the point of "crystallization"--his system is already "crystallized" outside of time, and the "particular disposition . . . to one action rather than another" is what this "crystallization" entails. The individual is superordinated by the articulated totality "at the start"; "each possible individual . . . contains in its notion the laws of the world."<sup>24</sup> It is a "real" individual, but its individuality, its actions, and all of its relations in temporal passage, are constituted by its "place" in the a priori system.

There are two ways of looking at this a priori routing of the temporal "creature." The first is to consider the "pattern" or the concept as "outside" time, with time acting as a mere derivation from the a priori formula. The second is to consider the route as "finished," and by retrospection, to see its "pattern" of attained routing as one complete thing. The Leibnizian arrangement would seem to be almost exclusively the first. An example of the second approach is Lucio Chiaraviglio's<sup>25</sup> attempt to reduce Whitehead's "eternal objects" to aspects of the actual temporal world. He conceived the momental succession of actual entities as the exemplification of whatever characteristic that succession reveals; this "routing" is then considered an

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<sup>24</sup>Gerhardt, op. cit., v. II, p. 40--quoted Russell, op. cit., p. 210.

<sup>25</sup>George L. Kline, (ed.), Alfred North Whitehead: Essays on His Philosophy, (Englewood, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963, pp. 82-90.



"eternal object":

The form of definiteness D of an actual entity b is the union of all the physical routes of transmission to which b belongs. The statement "b belongs to D" does not specify how b is related by prehensions to the other members of  $\bar{D}$ . Since the nexus D includes all of b's past and future, such a statement fully describes b's definiteness to complete abstraction from b's position in D. Also, note the nexus D is eternal.<sup>26</sup>

This interpretation would make the nexus D very similar to the Leibnizian monad; the characteristic of b would be the characteristic of the "non-temporal route D." But such an approach would nullify the Pluralistic Focus of Whitehead's schema. The central concern of Organic philosophy is the cruciality of the actual entity: b's "position" temporally and particular prehensions help determine what b is, momentarily. They decide if D "stays" D, or becomes non-D. The assumption of D's "eternity," of its "routedness" as complete, emasculates Whitehead's metaphysics. If each "eternal object" is, in its temporal completeness, a monadic "routing," then considered sub specie aeternitatus, b is a dependent Leibnizian "perception." But this is not Whitehead's Pluralistic Focus. It is a version of Leibniz's.

#### B. Momental Solipsism

This brings us to another very real problem of the Organic metaphysics. Whitehead's focus on the "moment" has been criticized by

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 89.



several commentators, even by some sympathetic to the tenor of his thinking. These critics generally feel that his stress on the "completion," the "arrest," and the "satisfaction" of the temporal entity scatters his system into a kind of "momental solipsism";<sup>27</sup> if "satisfaction/decision" is central, then what maintains the impetus of process beyond "fixed" attainment? One critic of this "solipsism" calls it "horizontal incoherence":

He (Whitehead) has insisted that in each actual entity the process of creativity is completed, but is, however, committed in his system to an overlasting on-goingness of succeeding actual occasions. The question is, does not this commitment involve what I shall refer to as horizontal incoherence? Does not the epochal theory of actuality fail to provide a coherent reason, i.e., a reason inherent in its own first principles why any given actual occasion must be succeeded by a fresh actual occasion in order that the universe not lose its dynamic character and become static, evaporating without a trace . . . ?<sup>28</sup>

It "evaporates without a trace" because it "perishes"---its subjective "immediacy" or inner turmoil is gone, and it is one "fixed" thing. This "fix" is "objective": it has no "subjective" being. And yet, somehow, this objectivity, which is "dead," effects the future, or rather, "causes"

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<sup>27</sup>See Whitehead's own statement; Process and Reality, op. cit., pp. 125-126.

<sup>28</sup>Donald W. Sherburne, A Whiteheadian Aesthetic, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 14. Das (The Philosophy of Whitehead) states the problem in a slightly different way: "His (Whitehead's) settled fact seems to be no fact, and his objective immortality appears to be enjoyed by actual entities only when they are no longer actual and are reduced to nothing." (P. 180, The Philosophy of Whitehead, R. Das, James Clarke and Co., (London, 1937.)



the emergence of new "subjective" "churnings" which are "actually" the only real things. How does this transition take place?

But let us suppose that the "thrust" of events subordinates momental completeness. Then we find that several of Whitehead's categories, especially the "Subjectivist Principle," are not satisfied. John Blyth, one of the most trenchant critics in this area, approaches the problem from this side, finding the Organic philosophy lacking:

According to the subjectivist principle, apart from the process of feeling or experience there is nothing, nothing, bare nothingness. The nature of an actual entity is to be in process. It becomes and never really is. But if process is the only actuality, actual entities as process can never be in a state of complete determination. They can never achieve a state of determinate 'satisfaction.' Whitehead expresses this contradiction in his system in the cryptic sentence; 'Time has stood still--if it only could.' (P. 233, *Process and Reality*.) But time does not stand still and the actual entity is never satisfied. This difficulty is fatal. . . . Even that which actual entities were supposed to feel has disappeared in a welter of flux. We see now that there can be no past actual entities to be felt as settled facts.<sup>29</sup>

Even Leibniz seems to have something to say along these lines:

That which does not act does not merit the name of substance. If the accidents are not distinct from the substances; if the created substance is a successive being, like movement; if it does not endure beyond a moment,

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<sup>29</sup>John W. Blyth, *Whitehead's Theory of Knowledge*, V. VII, (Providence, R. I.: Brown University Studies, 1941), p. 17. Again, Das has pertinent remarks on this subject: "But when a feeling as feeler has perished, in what sense can we say that it still persists as a felt object." (Das, op. cit., p. 182.)



and does not remain the same (during some stated portion of time) any more than its accidents; if it does not operate any more than a mathematical figure or a number: why shall we not say, with Spinoza, that God is the only substance, and that creatures are only accidents or modifications?<sup>30</sup>

For Leibniz, and to a certain extent for the contemporary critics, all temporal manifestations must have a connecting principle other than the "moments" themselves; something has to remain "distinct from the accidents" as "accidents"---something must "remain the same," accounting for the whole route of "successive being." In fact, most Western thinkers demand that the "welter of flux" be accounted for in some kind of underlying unifying principle. If the persuasion of these thinkers is pluralistic, then they usually demand that the Pluralistic Focus be broadened so that there is some kind of a "substantial" base for temporal, "fleeting states," a unitary route which stays the same during change. That which does not stay the same cannot be "real," they assume, or it must be "explained" by what is permanent.

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<sup>30</sup>Theodicy, paragraph 393, G. W. F. Leibniz, edit. by Austin Farrer, transl. by E. M. Huggard, (Yale University Press, 1952). It is interesting to note that the critical comments of Pierre Bayle that precipitated the Leibniz-Bayle exchange, leading eventually to the publication of Theodicy, is somewhat pertinent to the present topic. The passage levels at Leibniz the same charges of "fragmentation" of reality that we find in the above Leibnizian passage, the same kind of charge that has been directed at Whitehead by some of his contemporaries: "It would be possible to understand that it (parallelism) should be so, were we to suppose that a man's soul is not a mind but a legion of minds, each with its own functions which begin and end precisely as the changes which go on in the human body, call for them, but . . . man's soul would be an ens per aggregationem, a mass or heap of substances just as material bodies are. What we find to be, however, is a unique being which produces now joy, now sorrow, what we do not find is several beings one of which produces hope, another despair." (P. 6, Ibid.)



There is one possible answer to these critics, and that is to refer them to that in the Organic schema which "does not change"--the "Category of the Ultimate," or "Creativity"--as Whitehead says in his Science and the Modern World, "Creativity" is the only "underlying substantial activity"<sup>31</sup> of his system. It is a useless search to look for "mechanisms"<sup>32</sup> of "transmission," or to seek "reasons" for the "transmission." The nature of reality, ultimately speaking, is that past attainment is not "lost," but is "cumulated" into the emergent moment, which, in itself, is the "same, yet different." This "substantial activity" is at the core of Whitehead's system, and its rejection doubtlessly entails the rejection of the system.<sup>33</sup> The notion

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<sup>31</sup>Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, op. cit., p. 115--see also pp. 101-102.

<sup>32</sup>The desire for some kind of visualizable "transmission" between the "antecedent" and "present" occasions--a desire probably at the roots of the objections of some of the more unsophisticated commentators--is probably the result of the failure to realize that Whitehead is not dealing with a schema that can be imagined in terms of "stuff." Das makes this quite clear below: "The most important thing to understand about the nature of an actual entity is that it is not made up of some 'stuff' . . . our ordinary thought is so dominated by the notion of substance that we find it difficult to conceive how an entity can actually exist without being identified by some stuff. But however difficult the conception may be, if we are to understand the nature of an actual entity aright, we must try to conceive it after the manner of a passing process, and not as a standing being." (Das, op. cit., p. 32.)

<sup>33</sup>It is fitting to note Whitehead's comments on the "adequacy" of philosophical systems: "Philosophers can never hope finally to formulate these metaphysical first principles. Weakness of insight and deficiencies of language stand in the way inexorably. Words and phrases must be stretched towards a generality foreign to their ordinary usage . . . they remain metaphors mutely appealing for an imaginative leap . . . . But the conditions for the success of imaginative construction must be rigidly adhered to . . . this construction must have its origin in the generalization of particular factors discerned in particular



of "Creativity" is an "intuitive" notion, an "insightful," "imaginative leap." "Creativity" is a particular "intuition" of temporal passage, that has been expanded into a "descriptive generalization" of the nature of things.

In spite of the "deficiencies of language,"<sup>33</sup> Whitehead does his best to communicate what he means by "Creativity." Certain terms and phrases are employed to capture the conception of thrust and impetus in the on-going "flux." We will study some of them below:

"ground of obligation"<sup>34</sup>

"reproduction"<sup>35</sup>

"conformation"<sup>36</sup>

"vector feeling"<sup>37</sup>

"impersonation"<sup>38</sup>

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topics of human interest . . . the success of the imaginative experiment is always to be tested by the applicability . . . beyond the restricted focus from which it originated. . . . Thus the first requisite is to proceed by the method of generalization . . . ." (Process and Reality, op. cit., pp. 6-8.) At the core of any respectable metaphysical system, then should be a "generalization" of particular experience. This core-intuition should be "tested" by the "applicability" and "adequacy" of its system--"that there are no items incapable of . . . interpretation."

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 362.



"reiteration"<sup>39</sup>

"cumulative"<sup>40</sup>

"solidarity"<sup>41</sup>

"appropriation of the dead by the living"

"Stubborn fact"<sup>42</sup>

All of these are attempts to delineate some aspect of the thrust, urgency, "insistency," and fixity of the wave-like advance of "time": each existent "fact" in the universe "piles" into the emergent. The whole universe cannot be denied, especially the "direct route of inheritance." Ground of obligation expresses the "givenness" of the past; it is there, "solid," "part" of the emergent's very "being." Reproduction stresses that certain definite features of the past must be repeated: what has been "fixed," is "fixed" for the future. Con-formation emphasizes the "fixing" from the point of view of the emergent "subjectivity"; the relevant past is not only part of its "being," but the emergent seeks to be a clearer, "sharper" version of this somewhat confused imperative.

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<sup>39</sup>Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, op. cit., p. 99.

<sup>40</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 363.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 65.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 197.



Each of these expressions attempts to give the reader the "intuitive" notion of the "atoms" of on-goingness.

Other expressions try to communicate the "reactive," self-constructing, emergent "self-hood" of the actual occasion:

"re-enactation"<sup>43</sup>

"sympathy"<sup>44</sup>

"reincarnation"<sup>45</sup>

"housing the world"<sup>46</sup>

These expressions point to the "emotional unity" which "caps" the "insistent" thrust of causal efficacy. It defines itself in the "microscopic" process of winnowing, "fixing," and making coherent the urgent "massiveness" which is "itself" before it "simplifies" its experience. Re-enactation indicates the propensity of the emergent to "re-do" what has already been done, only with the compulsion to sharpen the experience and to eliminate the unfitting. Sympathy reveals the "emotional resonance" of the emergent to the past; it "feels" the same, only it is "different." Reincarnation tells us that the nature of things is to save the real "vibrancy" of being by re-embodying it in a new structuring. The housing of the world expresses the "subjective" "immediacy's" giving the whole of things a

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 374.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 375.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 124.



fixed structure; the actual entity is the only unity of the universe --each "pulsation" of the advance is the full summation of being in one determinate, unambiguous, fixed "something."

Besides the use of "imaginative" language, there are also Whitehead's systematic metaphysical formulations to help us clarify what he meant by the need to surpass the attained. One such answer to the problem of "momental solipsism" is given in his address to the Sixth International Congress of Philosophy:

Time requires incompleteness. A mere system of mutually prehensive occasions is compatible with the concept of a static timeless world. . . . Physical memory is another exemplification of the category of incompleteness. In occasion B there is a physical memory of each antecedent occasion, such as A. Since A is antecedent, B prehends A into itself as contributing a measure of determinate completion. . . . This transaction (of A and B) exhibits A as relatively determinate, except for its indeterminations arising from the indetermination of B in the converse anticipatory objectification of B in A. Thus the full transaction between A and B . . . constitutes A and B as poles in a linkage. A, in its function of a constituent member of this linkage A and B, is more complete than A in abstraction from the linkage. For the indetermination of B in A, which clings to A in abstraction, is removed by the actual concretion in the full linkage. . . . A has thereby an added meaning.<sup>47</sup>

The full determination of the determinate A requires its being "determined" again from a new temporal "perspective," which is the emergent B. A's role in B helps "fix" its "fixity." Part of the "completion" of A is its "anticipation" of its role in B; in a sense, the reason

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<sup>47</sup>Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Philosophy, (Longmans, Green and Co., 1927), pp. 59-64.



for the "definiteness" of A is its role in B. The real "completeness" of an actual entity demands its reiteration in the new "perspectives" of emergent "subjective immediacies."<sup>48</sup>

The only answer, it seems, to the criticisms of Whitehead's "Creativity" is the "sole appeal to intuition."<sup>49</sup> But Whitehead does his best to facilitate the "imaginative leap" that will enable one to understand this intuition. Another such a way for delineating this core intuition is by a kind of "psychological introspection," by an examination of what our inner life consists. We have already seen indications of this in the use of expressions like "sympathy," "vague," "massive," etc. But in other passages Whitehead seems concerned to capture the very "feeling" of "Creativity," to reveal the very rhythm of "being" itself:

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<sup>48</sup>Each emergent, then, is a new temporal "angle of vision" on the whole, just as each non-temporal monad of Leibniz is a perspective on the static system. There are an infinite number of these Leibnizian "perspectives," and they constitute the full continuum of the possibilities of compossible existence. This full continuum extends from the highest monad (God) to inconceivable infinitesimals with the rudiments of "being." The articulated totality, then, is an "exhaustion" of compossible being. Whitehead's "creative advance" is a temporal version of the Leibnizian infinitude of perspectives; and the limited momental perspective of the occasion needs an infinitude of other perspectives for its "completion"--thus the infinitude of time. This is a prime example of what A. O. Lovejoy meant by the "temporalization" of the "great chain of being." (See pp. 242-287, 314-333, The Great Chain of Being, A. O. Lovejoy, Harvard University Press, 1936.)

<sup>49</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 32.



But we must--to avoid 'solipsism of the present moment'--include in direct perception something more than presentational immediacy. For the organic theory, the most primitive perception is 'feeling the body as functioning.' This is a feeling of the world in the past; it is the inheritance of the world as a complex of feeling; namely, it is the feeling of derived feelings. . . . Just as Descartes said, 'this body is mine'; so he should have said, 'this actual world is mine.' My process of 'being myself' is my origination from my possession of the world.<sup>50</sup>

There is a constant reference in Whitehead's writings to "true" inner experience--not of the "clear and distinct" perceptions, but of the "vague," urgent, and "massive" feelings of the "viscera and the memory,"<sup>51</sup> of the "rush of feelings." He urges that we should pay attention to the "massive insistency of our total experiences."

One answer, it seems, to the charges of "momental solipsism" is to point to the "Category of the Ultimate," and to attempt to facilitate an "imaginative leap" to this "intuition" by analogies, by "psychological inspection," and by the conceptual ramifications of his system. Whitehead emphasized the individuality of the momental step by a conceptual focus, and tried to hold these "moments" together by an "imaginative construction" based on "intuition," and illustrated by analogy and "introspection." The Leibnizian metaphysics takes an opposite course. His conceptual focus is on the non-temporal route,

<sup>50</sup>See footnote 27.

<sup>51</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, p. 186.



the underlying substance, and calls on intuition and introspection to reveal the momental steps (the "perceptions"). For Whitehead, the "rush of feelings" is the "substantial activity" and is what is really known by experience; the fixing "arrest" of the actual entity is only known conceptually, after the "imaginative construction" of a schema. For Leibniz, the "fleeting states" are known by experience, and cognition discloses the substantial underlying route.

But Leibniz seemed on occasion to want to stress the importance of the "fleeting state." We repeat again a passage given earlier, in which Leibniz stresses the role of the perception:

. . . in the simple substance the one and only thing which we could find would be perception, that is to say, perceptions and their changes. All internal actions of simple substances can only consist in perception.<sup>52</sup> (Underlining mine.)

But, unlike Whitehead's "prehensions," which must integrate in the final momental "satisfaction," the perception has no definite "completion" in time: it is a transitory manifestation of an infinite explication. But Leibniz still seems drawn to give importance to their role, and to give them a kind of "completion." Let us review again the Leibnizian definition of "appetition":

The principle which brings about internal change in the monad itself, or makes it pass from one perception to another, is appetite. Appetition strives toward

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<sup>52</sup>See Footnote 24, Chapter IV.



the completeness of perception and though it may fail to attain it, something is always gained and there is continual advance to new perceptions.<sup>53</sup>

This "completeness of perception" is thought of in "cognitive" terms; it is a detailed "clear and distinct" intellectual comprehension of the complete "concept," which, of course, means the compossible system itself. But, since the perception is a temporal, "privative" state, its grasp of the "perfect concept" always has some "confusion" in it. There is some "satisfaction" of the moment, however: "something is always gained." In spite of the assumptions of his system, it seems as if Leibniz felt obliged to give some kind of fulfillment to the momental step.

### C. The Notion and Its Infinite Explication

As we have seen above, the base of the pluralistic notion is the "perfect concept": this "concept" "mediates" between the total system and its temporal "parts." In Leibnizian metaphysics, "cognition" is what determines the "balance" between the "relativity of existence" and the "individuality of existence." The "perfect concept" is what remains a "true" unit, and yet is effectively "meshed" with the total system and effectively unites its temporal parts. Cognition<sup>54</sup> can, at least for a "perfect" being, reveal the "place" of the notion

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<sup>53</sup>See Footnote 2, Chapter III.

<sup>54</sup>See Footnote 11, Chapter V.



in the compossible system, and cognition can disclose the "perfect concept" which links and subsumes all the infinite perceptions of the individual. But does this "perfect concept" effectively unite its parts? If the "complete notion" discloses itself temporally as an unending series of partial comprehensions of itself, then this series seems to result in a kind of "fragmentation" of the route. Is the Leibnizian monad "one being" or is it an infinite collection of "states"/consequences? The "perpetual progress" of the notion seems to pull it apart. "No substance perishes, though it may become very different," Leibniz says. If it becomes "very different," then what constitutes its "oneness?" This tendency to fragmentation disturbed Bertrand Russell:

When we come to the Identity of Indiscernibles, we shall find that Leibniz himself, by holding that a substance is to be defined by its predicates, fell into the error of confounding it with the sum of these predicates . . . if this were the case, predications concerning actual substances would be just as analytic as those concerning essences or species, while the judgment that a substance exists would not be one judgment, but as many judgments as the subject has temporal predicates.<sup>55</sup>

What is it that is cognitively "discernible" in the "perfect concept" that unites these infinite "parts?" How would it be possible to make "one judgment" subsuming this temporal multiplicity when this multiplicity is continually being added to, and when each temporal state is "discernible"---each "makes a difference" in the temporal advance?

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<sup>55</sup>Russell, op. cit., p. 50.



If the series is continually becoming "very different," then the problem of "discerning" "one judgment" becomes insurmountable. The notion pulls apart; the cognitive criterion gives us no basis for "one being."

But it might be said that the "perceptions" are subordinate manifestations of the "perfect concept." The temporal process is an explication of the notion: its routing of consequences is the result of its non-temporal "placement" in the complete compossible system. To cognitively discern the "perfect concept," one does not study the "fleeting states," or their linkage, or even large stretches of the route: one must, by cognitive means, approach the notions underlying these routes non-temporally. Such an approach would entail comprehension of the complete compossible system. Of course, only God fully comprehends this system, and only God really "knows" the individual, since the individual is a "place" in this interrelatedness. But man, even though he is a temporal creature, is capable of a limited but expanding knowledge of this realm, and thus of the individual notions. But in the complexity of the non-temporal interrelatedness, the individual remains "obscured," except to God. So if one is to escape the problems of determining the "balance" of the Leibnizian pluralistic unit in its temporal manifestations, then one must necessarily seek its "balance" at the divine source.

But this does not resolve the problem of "balance." The monad should account for the interrelatedness of being, and the diversity of its "parts," as well as its own uniqueness. There should be one "focal



point" accounting for all three of these. But in the Leibnizian system, the "location" of this "focal point" becomes problematic. Employing the criterion of cognitive discernment, the monad is either obscured in the indefinite interminability of its temporal parts, or it is obscured in the interrelatedness of the compossible system. Determining what the monad is, becomes a matter of indefinite cognition.

In the Organic philosophy, this focal point is the "satisfaction," the final "rounding" of the "rush of feelings" forming an "emotional unity." In terms of its schema, the Whiteheadian individual is not obscured or lost in indefinite cognition; it is what it is because of an intrinsic "emotional" "decision," and it is not discerned in an interminable analysis:

The process whereby an actual entity, starting from its objective content, attains its individual satisfaction . . . expresses how the datum, which involves the actual world, becomes a component in one actual entity. . . . It must be remembered that the objective content is analyzable into actual entities under limited perspectives involve eternal objects in grades of relevance. If the 'process' were primarily a process of understanding, we should have to note that 'grades of relevance' are only other eternal objects in grades of relevance, and so on indefinitely. . . . Accordingly there is here a vicious regress, if the process be essentially a process of understanding. But this is not the primary description of it. The process is a process of 'feeling.' In feeling, what is felt is not necessarily analyzed, insofar as it is understood. Understanding is a special form of feeling. Thus, there is no vicious regress of feeling, by reason of the indefinite complexity of what is felt.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 233.



The focal point of the actual entity is an aesthetic "decision"-- "decision" in the sense of "cutting off." It is not, except derivatively, a cognitive whole; the cognitive aspect is merely the final phase of the "microscopic" development of the occasion: it supplies the "simplification" and "definiteness" which allows an "emotional unity" to be formed. Thus Whitehead avoids the "vicious regress" of cognitive discernment, which tends, in the Leibnizian schema, to lose "hold" of the individual in two directions.



## CHAPTER VII

### GOD AND THE PLURALISTIC FOCUS

There appears to be a clear relationship between the Pluralistic Focus and the nature of deity in both of the schemata under study. As we have already seen to an extent, the pluralistic unit of Leibniz's system is especially dependent on God--"all other substances depend upon God just as our thoughts emanate from our own substance." But as we have seen earlier in the paper, there is a real problem posed by the existence of a "full," complete God, "needing no other," and the existence of a dependent realm of temporal manifestation. Just what "difference" can the temporal manifestations of the monad make in the nature of things when there exists a "full" deity? In the Organic philosophy, the actual entity not only "makes a difference" to the world, but also to God. We will see later that Whitehead has constructed a "circulating," "reciprocal" universe, in which no "actuality" has a "derivative" role. But first, we must explore the implications of the Leibnizian deity.

There seem to be three ways of interpreting the relationship of God and the world in Leibniz's system. First, it could be said that the temporal world "makes a difference" to the nature of things, and that God (somehow) "needs" the temporal activity. While God and the "co-eternal" realm of essence would be fully real, some demand



of being would result in the "infinite series" of temporal things. God would somehow "want" the compossible realm, which is complete in itself, to temporalize itself. We find a passage in Leibnizian writing, that hints at such a God-world relationship. For example, there is his distinction between "necessary" and "contingent," and his identification of "contingency" with "existence." Conceivably, the "contingent" notions "need" temporal existence to "fully" explicate themselves:

There is a difference between analysis of the necessary and analysis of the contingent: the analysis of the necessary, which is that of essences, going from the posterior by nature to the prior by nature, ends in primitive notions, and it is thus that numbers are resolved into units. But in contingents or existents, this analysis from the subsequent by nature to the prior by nature goes to infinity, without a reduction to primitive elements being ever possible.<sup>1</sup>

There are other passages<sup>2</sup> which seem to reveal a "need" for an arena for the complete application of the "contingent" notions which make up the compossible system. God, then, would either be "deficient in actuality" in the Whiteheadian sense,<sup>3</sup> or the temporal development would be, somehow, "part" of the divine "fullness." But this first interpretation cannot be seriously considered: Leibniz would never consider

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<sup>1</sup>Gerhardt, op. cit., v. III, p. 582--quoted Russell, op. cit., p. 221.

<sup>2</sup>Russell, op. cit., pp. 221-222 (Appendix).

<sup>3</sup>Whitehead's God, though "conceptually" complete, is "deficient in actuality"--he "needs" the actual temporal development to "fix" and make "concrete" the existent. (P. 344, Process and Reality.)



any idea that would derogate from the absoluteness of the divine nature, or that would identify the world and God. Besides, he positively states that the "contingents" are subsumed by the divine understanding non-temporally--the temporal process "adds" nothing to his nature:

And thus the certainty and the perfect reason of contingent truths is known to God only, who embraces the infinite in one intuition.<sup>4</sup>

Although the infinitely explicable notion is subsumed as non-temporal concept, Leibniz would reject any consideration of the actual temporal explication as "part" of God. His antipathy to monism and his adherence to orthodox Christianity results in his insistence on the distinction between God and his temporal creation.

The second possible interpretation is that Leibniz conceived of the God-world relationship as emanative. The divine nature, including its subsumption of the compossible system, is the only "real" being. This completeness, however, because of God's moral "perfection," "releases" or "actuates" the compossible system: each "possible" is allowed subjective enjoyment, or active application of its aspect of the compossible system. Thus there is a difference between the completeness of God including his "co-eternal" realm, and the individual subjectivity or activity of each "isolated" compossible. Creation allows each

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<sup>4</sup>Gerhardt, op. cit., v. VII, p. 309--quoted Russell, op. cit., pp. 221-222.



individual aspect of the interrelatedness of the perfect system to "experience" that system from its "perspective." But this career of subjectivity is privative; the individual angle of vision can never comprehend the complete system, since it is not God. It must continually readjust and modify its "picture" of things. This leads to the temporal passage of "perceptions." But if the "isolated" possible is inferior to the compossible system, the "fleeting state" is even more more "privative." The temporal manifestation is a further step away from "fullness." Thus the nature of things "runs down," from the "fullness" of God, to the "privative" individual "possible," to that possible's momental "fleeting states." The temporal world has its source in God, but it is an inferior emanation, and must relate back to its source to regain its "meaning" or "reality."

There is evidence that Leibniz at times pictured the nature of things in this vein. But the emanative arrangement has its theological complications. "Emanation" carries the connotation of "effusion," as well as "diffusion." Although the world is "second-class," it is still "of" God's nature. In the created world, each of the "parts" of the compossible perfection is operating in "isolation," and some of these notions in and of themselves, out of their "place" in the system, must be called "evil":

. . . whence does evil come? . . . it must be sought in the ideal nature of the creature, insofar as this nature is contained in the eternal verities which are in the understanding of God, independently of his will.



For we must consider that there is an original imperfection in the creature before sin, because the creature is limited in essence. . . .<sup>5</sup>  
 (Underlining Leibniz's.)

The complete interrelatedness of the compossible system is not evil; the whole is "perfect." True evil is confined to the disjunctive, isolated aspects of the articulated totality. But the temporal world is this completeness in its "isolated" aspects: it can be considered "evil." To speak of "emanation"<sup>6</sup> would be to partially identify the "active," "imperfect" notions with the "perfect" system, which is "part" of God. This would be unacceptable to the Christian Leibniz. It would seem, then, that another alternative should be explored.

The third proposed interpretation will be called the duplicative relationship. Apparently, Leibniz does not think of the temporal world as a "part" of the essential nature of things, as something that "makes a difference." Also, it cannot be considered an "emanation," since the divine nature is perfect, complete; whereas the divisive, temporal world is "imperfect" and contains evil. The temporal world, it seems, is a collection of limited "perspectives," a disjunctive

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<sup>5</sup>Theodicy, op. cit., paragraph 20.

<sup>6</sup>Dr. Ruth Saw has some pertinent remarks on the term "emanation": "Leibniz uses the word 'fulguration' to express the way in which created Monads take their rise from God, in order to avoid two extremes. 'Creation' would seem to suggest too great an independence on the part of the finite Monads. People think of a created world as though it were made and then pursued its independent way. On the other hand, 'emanation' makes the created world almost a part of the Divinity, and it is difficult to think of its imperfections as other than within the Divine Nature itself." (P. 35, Leibniz, op. cit., Ruth Saw, Penguin Books, 1954.)



"copy," as it were, of the complete system. The temporal world is a "second-class" representation, "created" on the "model" of the fully articulated system. But, if this is the Leibnizian position, then it is in conflict with his Principle of the Identity of Indiscernibles. There would be no "discernible" difference between the "model" and its "copy," except that one is "static" in the fullness of God's being, and the other is temporally "active."<sup>7</sup>

So we arrive at a real problem: the temporal world cannot really "make a difference," since this would distract from God's "fullness"; and, if it does not "make a difference," then the arrangement conflicts with the Identity of Indiscernibles. And, Leibniz would object to identification of the two realms. Whatever the answer, the cognitive discernibility of the pluralistic basic unit becomes difficult. The discernment of the monad must either relate to the complete system, in which case only God can be said to "know" the individual, or it must relate to the temporal explication of the notion, in which case its "identity" is dissipated in its infinite "incompleteness." And in any case, the temporal routing cannot be said to "make a difference" to the composition of reality.

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<sup>7</sup>Let us refer to Dr. Saw again: "A new problem now begins to appear; possibilities can have the same statements made about them which could be made about them if they became actual, and there seems too little difference between the actual and possible world. Each possible world now has the status of a system of essences present to the mind of God, and it is difficult to see the difference for God between a sequence which has actually unfolded itself and a sequence which has not. The sequence which remains a possibility has all the elements in the same relationships which it would have if it became actual." (Ibid., p. 84.)



But in Whitehead's metaphysics, the temporal world does "make a difference." The individual temporal actuality "fixes" the nature of reality at each step, and God and the world are reciprocally dependent on one another:

The true metaphysical position is that God is the aboriginal instance of this creativity, and is therefore the aboriginal condition which qualifies its action. . . . But, of course, there is no meaning to 'creativity' apart from its 'creatures,' and no meaning to 'God' apart from the creativity and the temporal creatures, and no meaning to the temporal creatures apart from 'creativity' and 'God.'<sup>8</sup>

The nature of things in Organic philosophy is not one in which a "full," complete divine nature is "related" to an incomplete, temporally divisive reflection of itself. Instead, the nature of things can be described as circulating. We will briefly trace this "circulation" below.

Whitehead characterizes God as the "non-temporal accident," the "primordial created fact,"<sup>9</sup> or the "stable element"<sup>10</sup> in the universe. It is the "condition for order," and it sets the conditions for "order" by acting as the "non-temporal valuation,"<sup>11</sup> the complete

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<sup>8</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 344.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 47.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 46.



grasp of the realm of potentiality. It "envisages"<sup>12</sup> the "characters" that the "flux" can adopt. As in Leibnizian thought, the divine nature is the existential base for the realm of forms. God is the "divine element in the world by which the barren inefficient disjunction of abstract potentialities obtains primordially the efficient conjunction of ideal realization."<sup>13</sup> But, although God has one "full" conceptual grasp of all the "possibles," it is not a "complete" being-- it is "deficient in actuality." Something other than God "fixes" the nature of existence. This is the temporal world of momental "arrests," the "temporal creatures" of the on-going flux. But without the "forms of definiteness" which give "character" to the flux, it is "nothing." God is the "principle whereby there is initiated a definite outcome from a situation otherwise riddled with ambiguity,"<sup>14</sup> because it is the source of the "patterns" for any outcome.<sup>15</sup>

But although God supplies the impetus to the "microscopic process" leading to the "fixity" of the "rush of feelings," the

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 523.

<sup>15</sup>God's role as the "principle of concretion" is fulfilled by the presenting of an "initial aim" to each actual entity. This is open to two interpretations. God can be conceived as selecting a particular aim "relevant" for that occasion at that "time." Or the divine can be seen as presenting a "general" lure to "definity." Whitehead compares this role of God with the Aristotelian notion of the "Unmoved mover." (Ibid., pp. 522-523.) This indicates that the second interpretation is probably correct.



occasion is causa sui.<sup>16</sup> But the occasion is not limited to "fixing" the nature of the "substantial activity." It also helps to "fill out" the "deficiency" of God. The actual world is the "givenness" for divinity. It becomes the "physical pole" for God; Whitehead calls this the "consequent" side of divinity:

The primordial nature is conceptual, and the consequent nature is the weaving of God's physical feelings upon his primordial concepts.<sup>17</sup>

God, then, as every other actual entity, must deal with the givenness of the world. Something has been attained, and the divine is obliged to take its "fix" on the on-going "flux." God is as much a part of the process of Creativity as any other entity, for the divine is "not . . . an exception to all metaphysical principles, but is their chief exemplification."<sup>18</sup>

Since it is the "chief exemplification" of Creativity, it too must return its "emotional unity"--the "coordination of achievement"<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 374. Also, we should note Leclerc's comments in his Whitehead's Metaphysics: "As Whitehead points out, 'every philosophy recognizes in some form or other, this factor of self-causation in what it takes to be ultimate actual fact.' In monistic theories this is evident. Most pluralistic theories, either explicitly or by implication, reserve the factor of self-causation to one unique actuality, and then . . . become involved in incoherence and the fallacy of misplaced concreteness by regarding other entities as 'actual.' The only way for a pluralistic theory to avoid these difficulties is to ascribe self-causation to each of the many actual entities. This is what Whitehead explicitly does in holding that the 'process' which is a generic metaphysical feature of all actual entities is basically an act of self-creation. (P. 82, Macmillan Co., (N.Y.), 1938).

<sup>17</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 524.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 522.

<sup>19</sup>Whitehead, Modes of Thought, op. cit., p. 128.



which is itself an achievement--to the world. Whitehead calls this the "superject" aspect of God. The actual world is "reshaped" by the divine, and returned to the world, as an influence in the "flux":

For the perfected actuality passes back into the temporal world, and qualifies this world so that each temporal actuality includes it as an immediate fact of relevant experience. For the kingdom of heaven is with us today. The action . . . is the love of God for the world. It is the particular providence for particular occasions. What is done in the world is transformed into a reality in heaven, and the reality in heaven passes back into the world. By reason of this reciprocal relation, the love in the world passes into the love in heaven, and floods back into the world.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, the God-world relationship is "reciprocal" and "circulating." God is as much a part of the "Ultimate" flux as any other actuality. Each entity attains some kind of "completeness." God's completeness is "conceptual": it is the non-temporal grasp of the formal "possibles" of existence. But, unlike the Leibnizian deity, it does not give "full body" to, or exhaust these "possibles." The "systematic complex"<sup>21</sup> is utilized by every actuality, but it is not exhausted. The divine receives its "fullness" of actuality after the pluralistic units have "solidified" it. Then God remedies the "deficiency" of his being. The "attained" is "coordinated," and "recirculated" into the temporal flux. The nature of things is "circulating," and the focus of the schema is on the moment, which gives structure to the "rush of feelings."

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<sup>20</sup>Whitehead, Process and Reality, op. cit., p. 532.

<sup>21</sup>Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, op. cit., p. 145.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE COMMON LAW UNIVERSE AND THE STATUTE LAW UNIVERSE

It must be quite readily apparent by now that the individual constituents of Whitehead's cosmos play a part in the determination of the nature of reality. They play this part as temporal creatures seeking to give coherence to the "immediate" disjunctive "confusion" of their environment. As temporal creatures, they achieve their grasp of the "rush of feelings," and "perish." They seek to give an "emotional unity" to their immediate problems here-now. Since each of these emergents "effects" the cumulative nature of reality, each is crucial to the outcome. The situation is "perilous" in the Organic system: things can "go wrong." The individual constituents of the Leibnizian universe also play a role in the determination of reality. But each of these constituents plays its role as a subordinate "part" in an articulated system in which it has its "place." "Position" or "place" is everything in the determination of what that individual is, and the total configuration determining the "places" fixes the nature of things completely. The system is non-temporal, and is the only system that can be. The temporal developments do not "make a difference," for "full" reality has already been achieved. It cannot "go wrong."

In the Organic philosophy, no "complete" system is possible, for "time requires incompleteness," and time is "taken seriously."



The "Ultimate" Category of Creativity demands that the momental "definition" of attained actuality must be more "fully" defined by a later emergent. Thus attainment is being continually "redefined" by emergents which become attainments themselves, and the nature of actuality is perpetually altered.

One way of clarifying this essential difference between Leibniz and Whitehead is the employment of a legal analogy. It seems to this writer that the Organic philosophy presents a Common Law Universe, and that the Leibnizian philosophy presents a Statute Law system. The Common Law system is the predominant legal tradition of the English-speaking nations of the world. In this legal tradition, the judges in each individual "case" are given a great deal of freedom in the particular "decision" involved. But the great mass of antecedent "decisions," the "precedents" of old cases, carry a great deal of weight in the decision of the case. The "ideal" common law judge attempts to keep his "decision" rooted in the relevant tradition of the law as much as possible. With due consideration for the problems presented by the unique human situation at hand, he attempts to "line up" his decision with the precedents of the past, and with its implications in the future. Each individual judge must not ignore the "imperative" line of precedents which have to be adhered to, and yet he must expand or narrow the law to "fit" the peculiar circumstances of the present unique situation. Also, he must consider the future consequences of his decision, since it becomes part of the "givenness" of the law for



the future. The "focus" of the Common Law system is on the "case"-- on the legal problem at hand in all its complexity. This present case feels the weight of the past relevant cases, but its particular uniqueness redistributes that weight. The future may deal only with certain aspects of that case, but--unless it is a "bad" case, outside the mainstream of legal development--it cannot be ignored. The Common Law tradition, then, is a continual concern with past accomplishment and with future implications, both of which rely on the present case as their "conrescence."

The Statute Law tradition does not put its emphasis on the "crucial" present case. Instead, it starts with a set of statutes created beforehand by a legislature. "Ideally," this set of statutes is able to cover every possible contingency in the scope of the statutes, and the "system" is as articulated and as complete as possible. The reference of the Statute Law judge is to the complete frame, and, theoretically, he is not supposed to interpret this law freely. The Statute Law procedure is to "fit" the case to the law, and not the law to the case. In fact, the law creates the case--without the law, there would be no legal problem in the situation of the case. If characteristics of the case do not correspond to features of the statute system, then these characteristics are "irrelevant." The unique situation either has a "place" in the matrix of the system, or it does not "exist" as a legal problem. The system of statutes is, in a sense, a priori, theoretically complete, self-sufficient, and each particular item of law is subsumed in the system, and, in a sense, "exists" only as related



to the other "parts." There can be "development" of statute law, but if this development is to be within the system, it must be a matter of explication, of "discovering" what is already there implicitly.

This analogy seems fruitful. For example, in a Statute Law system, the "discernment" of the individual case of law is always a "cognitive" procedure, taking place in terms of the formal characteristics of the complete system. The individual is determined by its "place," and the total system of relations determines its "place." The individual becomes an aspect of the whole, and it is not "known" until the system is completely "known." Or, the individual can be "analyzed" indefinitely into all the systematic relations of which it is "composed." But this can lead to a "vicious regress," and the cognitive discernment arrives at no "definity." But in the Common Law tradition, the case "defines" the law, and the law only partially sets the conditions for the case. The criterion for determining the "decision" of the case when it is completed, is its "satisfaction": the way the case "solves" an immediate problem, with due deference to an "insistent" cumulation of precedents, and to its role as a precedent for the future. The actual entity--and the Common Law case--is concerned with solving a specific problem now. Its essential imperative is "rounding" events, in making a decision that will resolve the various elements of the situation. The Statute Law system sees the individual case as an aspect of the a priori system. The case is



cognitively reduced to a "place" in the system, and is determined accordingly. Just so with each temporal manifestation in the Leibnizian metaphysics. Cognition "discovers" the notion to which it is subsumed, and this notion itself is "placed" in the total articulated system. This "place" explains the reason and the individuality of that notion.



## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSIONS

In summation, it can be said that there is a wide difference in Pluralistic Focus between Leibniz and Whitehead. Leibniz is led to conceive his pluralistic unit as permanent and cognizable, and to conceive the temporal world as a manifestation of these permanents. The routes of events are "laid out" non-temporally, and each momental step is a consequence of its route. The "fleeting state" is subsumed in the non-temporal route, and the route, in turn, is subsumed in the compossible ordering of all essences, the matrix of form. To "find" the pluralistic unit, one must locate its "place" in the system. One discerns this individual only by cognition, and cognition is the key to its character. Whitehead's actual entity, however, is a momental step; it is a component of time, an "atom" of temporal advance, and it "makes a difference" to what has gone before and what will follow. The series of steps determine the route; the route is merely the "path of travel" chosen by the steps. This route may disclose some one pre-dominate characteristic which apparently "imposes" itself on the moments. But, this is "apparent"; the "character" is present because of the individual "satisfaction" that character gives each step on the route. All regularities are because that which is regulated chooses to be regulated, for its own "subjective" benefit. The momental step is the only mode of "fixity"; what is "definite" in the universe is



because of some "microscopic" "emotional unity" established by some "subjective immediacy." The world is an advancing line of "redefinitions" of itself.

These "redefinitions" are supplied with their "forms of definiteness" by the "Primordial" or "Conceptual" side of God's nature. But their "evaluations" of these forms stems from something intrinsic to the "microscopic processes." Each determines what reality will be. God, as a non-temporal actual entity fully a part of the on-going process of Creativity, must "evaluate" the totality itself, and its evaluation stands as a fact among facts, to be "accounted for" in the future. The only possible place in the Whiteheadian metaphysics for the notion of "fullness" ("completeness," "absoluteness," "perfection," etc.) is in the final constitution of the temporal actual entity.<sup>1</sup> And even that "fullness" is continually being "transcended" by the "ultimate" need for "redefinition," which leads to temporal passage.

But Leibnizian metaphysics has one complete, "full" actuality: God and its "internal object," the "realm of essences." The temporal world can only be an incomplete "duplication" of this "fullness." Since it is an incomplete "duplication" of the complete, it "naturally"<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The "non-temporal" actual entity cannot be considered as ever "complete," since its "conceptual" side is never fully integrated with actuality. Also, God is continually "re-evaluating" the world. It does not reach one "definite" end, or "final constitution," as does the "temporal creature."

<sup>2</sup>God may choose to annihilate the world at any time, but as it "non-temporally" exists, as the "perfect" system it will "naturally" run to eternity.



extends in time to infinity. To find the "reason" for any "fleeting state" of this infinite temporal extension, one must refer to its non-temporal route, or the notion which is its support. In turn, the route must be referred to the "perfect" system, subsumed in the God-head itself:

For it appears clearly that all other substances depend upon God just as our thoughts emanate from our own substance.

Using the cognitive discernment criterion, the monadic pluralistic unit either recedes into the interrelatedness of the "perfect" system or it becomes a collection of "predicates" with no discernible resolution, such as mentioned by Randall above.<sup>3</sup> Aristotle thought that any actuality of the temporal world reveals its "place" or "form" by the "completion" or "end" of its motion (change). For Leibniz, this is not discernible temporally, since the temporal route of any monad is infinite. Thus one must refer to the non-temporal "complete system" to discover its "place" or "form." But each monad does have its non-temporal "place": without that particular inclusion, the whole of reality would be very different. Each monad is "perfectly" articulated into the compossible system; its discernment requires the "full" knowledge of the totality, and there is only one best system--but each "part" of this system is necessary to that system. The monadic individual, like the actual entity, does "make a difference" to the nature of things. But

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<sup>3</sup>See Chapter V, Footnote 8.



this is not the only unobvious similarity in the two systems. Both Leibniz and Whitehead appear to have the same three-phase rhythm of temporal development in their schemata: all real things move from a state of objective complete "publicity," to a state of "subjective" "private" "process," and then return to "publicity." Along with this rhythm, there is a similar "cognitive/non-cognitive" beat, although the "phases" are different in the two.

Both Leibniz and Whitehead attempted to construct schemata which, in Whitehead's words, "retain the balance between the individuality of existence and the relativity of existence."<sup>4</sup> It seems as if the Pluralistic Focus of Leibniz was unable to "retain this balance," and that his thought leaned in the direction of the "relativity of existence." Whitehead was better able to retain this balance, but only by making time an ultimate, and by reducing the "enduring" to a derivative of the "fleeting." But his system does conceptually bolster our recurrent sense that the real is "here-now," and that the "here-now" is "important" and "crucial."

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<sup>4</sup>See Chapter I, Footnote 2.



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