


Godehard Brüntrup | Benedikt  
Paul Göcke | Ludwig Jaskolla (Eds.)

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PANENTHEISM  
AND PANPSYCHISM

Philosophy of Religion Meets  
Philosophy of Mind

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## Panentheism and Panpsychism

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Volume 2

Godehard Brüntrup, Benedikt Paul Göcke,  
Ludwig Jaskolla (eds.)

# Panentheism and Panpsychism

*Philosophy of Religion meets Philosophy of Mind*

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# Introduction

*Godehard Brüntrup SJ, Benedikt Paul Göcke, Ludwig Jaskolla*

## 1. Panentheism and Panpsychism

Two great forms of unity metaphysics enjoy energetic discussion in the current debates of philosophy and theology. Firstly, panpsychism as a naturalistic, non-reductive ontology of mind has gained ground in the analytic philosophy of mind over the last 25 years.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, and dating back to early 20th century, panentheism has found use in theology and the analytic philosophy of religion to describe the relationship between God and the world.<sup>2</sup>

This volume is the first attempt to create an anthology of the more recent history of philosophy and theology, and aims to bring these two research directions together in an interdisciplinary conversation.

Our aim is to examine the benefits which panpsychism and panentheism offer to one another; which problem-solving proposals are made possible by a synthesis of the two; and where the limitations of their interplay need to be demarcated.

One could of course wonder if the commonalities and potential connections between panpsychism and panentheism do not in fact end with the common prefix »Pan«. We would beg to differ: In the history of philosophy and theology, great thinkers have repeatedly combined panpsychism and panentheism in their systematic designs. The philosophical systems of Karl Christian Friedrich Krause<sup>3</sup>, Alfred North Whitehead<sup>4</sup> and Charles Hartshorne<sup>5</sup> all contain panpsychistic and panentheistic motifs.

However, this is not primarily a historical anthology. Rather, we are concerned with the systematic question of the explanatory potential which the combination of panpsychism and panentheism holds for current debates in philosophy and theology.

Although panpsychism and panentheism *prima facie* refer to different areas of subject matter, they exhibit astonishing structural similarities: Both panpsychistic and panentheistic approaches generally mediate between dualistic

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1 Brüntrup and Jaskolla 2017.

2 Cf. Peacocke 2004.

3 Cf. Göcke 2018.

4 Whitehead 1929/1978.

5 Hartshorne 1967.

and monistic theories by avoiding a complete ontological separation of God and the world, or mind and matter. The rejection of reductionism and the legacy of unity metaphysics can also be seen as common ground. God and world, as well as mind and matter, are regarded as different but nevertheless intrinsically related to each other.

The present volume is divided into two major thematic areas: The first section focuses on articles that examine the relationship between panpsychism and panentheism from a philosophical perspective. The second section focuses on articles that examine the relationship between panpsychism and panentheism from a theological perspective. Our aim in compiling the articles was to assemble a clearly interdisciplinary anthology, containing both philosophical and theological approaches. Our objective is to encourage the debate with each other's discipline in order to enable new insights beyond established boundaries.

We hope that we can make a contribution with this volume to a debate whose conceptual potential is not just far from exhausted, but rather just beginning to establish itself as a promising approach in philosophical theology.

The editors would like to thank the following institutions and individuals for their contributions to the creation of this volume:

The research upon which this volume is based was carried out by the DFG Emmy Noether junior research group »A scientific theology? Naturalism and Philosophy of Science as Current Challenges of Catholic Theology (Grant ID 295845819)«, and was made possible by the project »Analytic Theology and the Nature of God« sponsored by the John Templeton Foundation.

Friedrich Sieben, Stephen Henderson, Max Brunner and Tobias Keweloh have made major contributions to the production of the printed version of this volume.

## 2. Summaries

In his essay *Interdisciplinary Convergences with Biology and Ethics via Cell Biologist Ernest Everett Just and Astrobiologist Sir Fred Hoyle* Theodore Walker tries to show that biology and ethics can supplement theology. According to cell biologist Ernest Everett Just (1883-1941) ethical behaviors »evolved« from our very most primitive origins in cells. Evolution includes evolving ethical behaviors. Hence, for a significant portion of the panpsychist spectrum, from cells to humans, ethical behavior is necessary for evolutionary advances. This insight contributes to solving the problem of relating ethics to nature. Ethical behavior *is* natural. Also, natural ethics and cell biology coupled with

human-mind-body-cell analogy can supplement ontological panentheism (all-in-God-ism) by adding a corresponding spatial metaphor (all-*inside*-God-ism). God is the all-inclusive whole of reality, and we are parts of reality included inside the all-inclusive divine body, somewhat like cells inside our bodies. Furthermore, according to astrobiologist Sir Fred Hoyle (1915-2001), life-favoring providence (ethical behavior) extends far beyond planet Earth. Hoyle advanced theories of stellar evolution (we are evolved stardust) and cosmic evolution guided by all-inclusive divine intelligence.

In his *Panpsychism and Panentheism* Benedikt Göcke works out a plausible version of the panpsychist thesis before two arguments for panpsychism are examined for their soundness. In a next step, two arguments against the developed panpsychist thesis are discussed, which, *prima facie*, pose theoretically insurmountable aporia for it. In a final step, it is argued that panpsychism as located in analytic philosophy can overcome these problems when it is included in the wider theoretical framework of panentheism, as it is paradigmatically set out in the classical German philosophy of the panentheist Karl Christian Friedrich Krause and his pupil Arthur Schopenhauer.

In her *Deploying Panpsychism for the Demarcation of Panentheism* Joanna Leidenhag addresses the problem that if panentheism cannot be clearly defined and demarcated from neighbouring theological positions, then it is in danger of becoming a vacuous term, devoid of any purpose or promise within theological discourse. Leidenhag helps panentheists avoid this dismal fate in two ways. First, she provides a model of the kind of definition and demarcation necessary, by outlining the family of positions known as panpsychism in philosophy of mind. Second, she tests the correspondence of specific versions of panpsychism to panentheism's two central claims: (a) that the world is the body of God, and (b) that the world is in God. She concludes that a cosmopsychism that posits a non-constitutive relation between the one cosmic subject and the many individual subjects, may be a useful, even necessary, ontology for panentheists to adopt if they are to deliver on the promise of a middle path between classical theism and pantheism.

According to David Skrbina's *God as World-Mind: Some Theological Implications of Panpsychism*, the two perhaps most important concepts in the history of philosophy are God and mind. Though there is a vast literature on each, their intersection is much less examined, and his work seeks to further this discussion in light of a broadly panpsychist metaphysics. Panpsychism in conjunction with a monist ontology suggests that mind is present at all levels of physical systems, from the smallest subatomic particles up to the universe as a whole. Ultimately Skrbina postulates a sort of minimalist panentheism, one on which God is a cosmic mind. On this view, God's relation to the universe

is parallel to that between our own mind and body—no more, no less. According to Skrbina, this theory offers a concrete and tractable model on which to conceive of God, and it leads to broader conclusions about the nature of both subjects and objects. He concludes that viewing God as a universal mind has clear religious and ethical implications, ones which are positive in their own right.

In his paper *Universal Consciousness as the Ground of Logic* Philip Goff first argues that mystics in many cultures throughout history claim to have experiences in which it is apparent (to the mystic undergoing the experience) that there is a kind of non-dual ›universal consciousness‹ underlying all of reality. In a second step, Goff then presents an argument for something like the view of reality suggested by these experiences, based on its potential to account for the metaphysics and epistemology of logical truth.

In his paper *Naïve Panentheism* Karl Pfeifer attempts to present a coherent view of panentheism that eschews Pickwickian senses of ›in‹ and aligns itself with, and builds upon, familiar diagrammed portrayals of panentheism. The account is accordingly spatial-locative and moreover accepts the proposal of R.T. Mullins that absolute space and time be regarded as attributes of God. In addition, however, it argues that a substantive parthood relation between the world and God is required. Pfeifer's preferred version of panpsychism, viz. pan-intentionalism, is thrown into the mix as an optional add-on. On this account, God is conceived of as a »spiritual field« whose nature can be made more intelligible by regarding »God« as having a mass-noun sense in some contexts. Pfeifer closes with the suggestion that we look to topology and mereology for further development of the position outlined in his paper.

In his paper *What a Feeling? In Search of a Metaphysical Connection between Panpsychism and Panentheism* Uwe Voigt raises the following question: Even if panpsychism and panentheism are logically independent from one another, could there be a metaphysical connection between them? As in the Kripkean parallel case of water and H<sub>2</sub>O, Voigt looks for the foundation for that eventual metaphysical connection in a certain kind of experience: the experience what it is like to be a microsubject. The disclosure of that experience starts from a closer look at the combination problem of panpsychism, whose core can be seen in the question how phenomenal bonding is possible. One promising possibility, according to Voigt, is to understand mental states, as *New Phenomenology* does it, as spatially extended ›atmospheres‹. From a panentheist point of view, God could then be conceived of as the mental inside of the space which encompasses the whole of a panpsychist universe, and herein panpsychists could see the reason why microsubjects are ›lured‹ to combine with one another in the first place.

In his paper *God or Space and Nature? Henry More's Panentheism of Space and Panpsychism of Life and Nature* Christian Hengstermann argues that Cambridge Platonist philosophy of religion as a whole left a decisive mark on the history of panentheism and panpsychism. As to panentheism, they have been credited with seeking to precipitate a »pantheism controversy« more than a century before the outbreak of the historic debate of that name in Enlightenment Germany. Theirs is a religious philosophy that may well be qualified as a »Spinozism of freedom«, i.e. a system of thought that views God as informing and suffusing all of reality, while also emphasizing man's capacity for libertarian choice. Like the more well-known dispute between Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi and Moses Mendelssohn about the late Lessing's Spinozist creed, the controversies about Cudworth's account of Platonist, Patristic and Egyptian ancient theology pivoted around God as *hen kai pan*. As to panpsychism, it is thanks to their staunch resistance both to Cartesian mechanism and Spinozist panpsychism that the Cambridge Platonists are accorded a pivotal role in the history of this contentious doctrine.

In his *Varieties of Panpsychism* Philip Clayton argues that, at first glance, the panpsychism debate appears to be a question of all or nothing, just as the thief either takes all of William's money or he doesn't. Clayton, however, suggests that we need to think our way beyond this way of approaching panpsychism. Particularly in the context of panentheism, panpsychism should be more complex than the thesis that all levels of evolution can be summarized under the heading of pan-*psyche* or, following David Ray Griffin, pan-*experience*. Instead, Clayton argues, the discussion of God, evolution, and psyche needs to be expanded to include the full variety of qualities, including awareness, intention, goal-directed behavior, mental representation, cognition, and consciousness. Clearly this shift has implications for understanding the nature and scope of metaphysics and theology, a topic to which Clayton returns at the end of the discussion.

Uwe Meixner's essay *Orthodox Panentheism: Sergius Bulgakov's Sophiology* explores the panentheistic ideas within a system of thought which is basically theologically *orthodox*, a system which is without *impersonalistic* tendencies, upholding, instead, a *personal* god: the sophiological theology of Sergius Bulgakov (1871-1944), inspired by Platonism, Byzantine Christianity (in the guise of Russian Orthodoxy), and German Idealism. The essay also shows that Bulgakov's *orthodox* panentheism is connected with an *orthodox* panpsychism.

In their chapter *Panentheism and Panexperientialism for Open and Relational Theology* Thomas Jay Oord and Wm. Andrew Schwartz argue that a particular form of theism—»open and relational theology«—has an affinity for panentheism and panpsychism. The open and relational theology Oord and Schwartz

recommend includes several attractive features. It affirms belief in a personal/relational God, which offers a host of advantages to those who believe that God interacts with creation. According to Oord and Schwartz, their theology furthermore has the advantage of solving at least the theoretical aspect of the problem of evil. Oord and Schwartz finish by arguing that open and relational theologies that adopt panpsychism and panentheism can also overcome other theoretical problems in contemporary thought that alternative theologies cannot.

In his essay *A panpsychist panentheistic incarnational model of the Eucharist* James Arcadi discusses the conception of the Eucharist as a special locus of the divine presence. In virtue of the consecrated elements' status as the body and blood of Christ, and in virtue of Christ's status as himself God, these objects are taken to be an instance of »God with us.« Arcadi's essay attempts to make sense of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist within a panpsychist panentheism. Arcadi conjoins a causal explication of panentheism with a panpsychism whereby God supplies the mental component of the cosmos to arrive at a conception of orthodox Christology that then funds an incarnational model of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

Ayon Maharaj's chapter *Panentheistic Cosmopsychism* provides the first detailed examination of the views on consciousness of Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), the famous nineteenth-century Indian monk who introduced Hinduism and Vedānta to the West. Maharaj first presents Vivekananda's metaphysical framework of panentheistic cosmopsychism, according to which the sole reality is Divine Consciousness, which manifests as everything in the universe. He then goes on to argue that Vivekananda's panentheistic cosmopsychism combines elements from the classical Indian philosophical traditions of Sāṃkhya and Advaita Vedānta as well as the teachings of his guru Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886). Once this is done, Maharaj reconstructs Vivekananda's sophisticated arguments in favor of panentheistic cosmopsychism. Maharaj argues that Vivekananda's panentheistic cosmopsychism, in light of its distinctive features and its potential philosophical advantages over rival theories of consciousness, deserves to be taken seriously by contemporary philosophers of mind and religion.

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**PART I**

*Panentheism and Panpsychism in Philosophy*



# Interdisciplinary Convergences with Biology and Ethics via Cell Biologist Ernest Everett Just and Astrobiologist Sir Fred Hoyle

*Theodore Walker Jr.*

Biology and ethics (general bioethics) can supplement pansychism and panentheism. According to *cell biologist* Ernest Everett Just (1883-1941) ethical behaviors (observable indicators of decision-making, teleology, and psychology) evolved from our very most primitive origins in cells. Hence, for an essential portion of the pansychist spectrum, from cells to humans, ethical behavior is natural and necessary for evolutionary advances. Also, biology-based mind-body-cell analogy (Hartshorne 1984) can illuminate panentheism. And, consistent with pansychism, *astrobiologist/cosmic biologist* Sir Fred Hoyle (1915-2001) extends evolutionary biology and life-favoring teleology beyond planet Earth (another Copernican revolution) via theories of stellar evolution, cometary panspermia, and cosmic evolution guided by (finely tuned by) providential cosmic intelligence, theories consistent with a panentheist natural theology that justifies ethical realism.

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\* This deliberation is a significant reworking of »Advancing and Challenging Classical Theism with Biology and Bioethics: Astrobiology and Cosmic Biology consistent with Theology,« a 10 August 2017 paper presented at the Templeton Foundation funded international conference on Analytic Theology and the Nature of God: Advancing and Challenging Classical Theism (7-12 August 2017) at Hochschule für Philosophie München [Munich School of Philosophy] at Fürstenried Palace, Exerzitienhaus Schloss Fürstenried, in Munich, DE—Germany. Conference speakers included: John Bishop, University of Auckland, New Zealand; Joseph Bracken SJ, Xavier University Cincinnati; Godehard Brüntrup SJ, Munich School of Philosophy; Anna Case-Winters, McCormick Theological Seminary; Philip Clayton, Claremont School of Theology; Benedikt Göcke, Ruhr University Bochum; Johnathan D. Jacobs, St. Louis University; John Leslie, University of Guelph; Gesche Linde, University of Rostock; Klaus Müller, University of Münster; Ken Perszyk, University of Waikato; Andrew Pinsent, Oxford University; Thomas Schärfl-Trendel, University of Regensburg; Johannes Stoffers SJ, Munich School of Philosophy; Giovanni Ventimiglia, University of Lucerne; Theodore Walker Jr., Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University; coordinated by Prof. Dr. Godehard Brüntrup SJ and Dr. Tobias Müller; with Niklas Ernst, Fredrich Sieben, and others.

## 1. Biology and Ethics—From Cells to Humans—E. E. Just

### 1.1 *Interdisciplinary Convergences with Biology*

Obviously, deliberating about »panpsychism and panentheism« requires attending to psychology and theology. And it may be that logic and argumentation can demonstrate that panpsychism is correct.

Nevertheless, Benedikt Paul Göcke finds that logically valid arguments showing »that panpsychism is correct« do not address »how it is possible that panpsychism is correct« (2018: 231). Also, logically valid arguments do not address empirical questions about actuality. Attempts at »empirical justification« are discouraged by various factors, including »the idea that panpsychism is useless speculation,« the »epistemic asymmetry between mental and physical properties,« the lack of »direct access« to other minds, and the seemingly »completely alien to us« nature of extreme low level phenomena or »proto-mentality« (Brüntrup and Jaskolla 2017: 4). Furthermore, empirical questions are not addressed because logical arguments from panentheist theology, transcendental metaphysics, and transcendental phenomenology are indeed methods appropriate to demonstrating that panpsychism has positive truth-value.

Nevertheless, Göcke's finding stands. Logically valid arguments do not address *how* panpsychism is possible. And, for addressing how *our* psychism came to be actual, transcendental deductions need to be inferentially and synthetically related to actual examples, including examples from our nonhuman relatives.

In metaphysics, exemplification does not prove, demonstrate, or justify. Nevertheless, examples can illustrate and illuminate metaphysical truths (logically necessary truths about existence as such). To be sure, actuality describes its part of possibility; and analysis, synthesis, extrapolation, and speculation can describe various other parts of possibility. And, any actual or any conceivable counter-example would demonstrate that a putative metaphysical claim is not a genuine metaphysical claim, even if said claim described a factual/contingent truth. Hence, in addition to studying logic, transcendental metaphysics, theology, and transcendental phenomenology, for the sake of illustrating and illuminating panpsychism and panentheism, along with studying physics and psychology, we should study biology.<sup>1</sup>

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1 We should study biology, including »general biology« (Just, April 1940) and »*Theoretische Biologie*« [theoretical biology] (Uexküll 1926; and 1934). Also, interdisciplinary convergences with biology in the research university are treated in *Undisciplining Knowledge*:

And perhaps not obviously, studying broad-spectrum evolutionary biology, ranging from humans to cells, brings us to yet another discipline: moral theory/ethics.

### 1.2 *General Biology and Bioethics*

In cell biology, Ernest Everett Just (1883-1941) was a pioneer. He was first to observe and describe the »wave of negativity« spreading around the surface of an egg cell from the entrance point of the fertilizing spermatozoon (thereby repulsing other sperm) and first to describe »fast and slow blocks to polyspermy« (Byrnes 2010). In addition to authoring more than seventy articles, and co-authoring with Frank R. Lillie the chapter on »Fertilization« in *General Cytology: A Textbook of Cellular Structure and Function for Students of Biology and Medicine* (1924); Just authored *The Biology of the Cell Surface* (1939a), and *Basic Methods for Experiments on Eggs of Marine Animals* (1939b), plus numerous unpublished deliberations on general biology and ethics.

E. E. Just advanced »basic methods« (1939b) rigorously attentive to the specific environment that is normal for living specimens. Prior to Just, marine biologists were habitually making uncritical use of specimens (often killed-and-fixed) extracted from their normal-natural environments. Just criticized and corrected findings and concepts derived from such faulty methods. And he encouraged attention to development within normal-natural environments. Today, in ecological development biology (eco-dev biology), integrative systems biology, and embryo morphogenesis, Just's contributions are described as pioneering.<sup>2</sup>

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*Interdisciplinarity in the Twentieth Century* (2015) by Harvey J. Graff. And see »Biology, social science, and history: interdisciplinarity in three directions« (2016) by Chris Renwick.

- 2 Following Just's pioneering lead, in biology, studying the »cell surface« became vitally important (Dover 1954, Grinnell 1975). And concerning Just's pioneering contributions to environmental and ecological development biology, systems biology, and embryo morphogenesis, see: »Law of Environmental Dependence« (Just and Just 1941: 168, 157-165); »Ernest Everett Just, PhD: Pioneer in Ecological Development (Eco-Dev) Biology« (July 2013) by Katelyn M. Williams, Bryan A. Wilson, Wendi G. O'Connor, and Monte S. Willis in *Journal of the South Carolina Academy of Science*, 11 (1): article 5; and see »Ernest Everett Just (1883-1941)—An early ecological developmental biologist« (1 August 2006) by W. Malcolm Byrnes and William R. Eckberg in *Developmental Biology*, 296 (1): 1-11. In »Ernest Everett Just: Experimental Biologist Par Excellence« (February 2010) W. Malcolm Byrnes describes ecological developmental biology as focusing »on development in its natural environmental context,« and he emphasizes Just's challenge to established views, a challenge that has »much in common with what is known today as integrative systems biology, in which a top-down view is just as important as a [established-reductionist] bottom-up view for understanding the system« (Byrnes February 2010). Just's early advocacy of a non-reductionist/holistic approach is appreciated in »Just and Unjust: E. E. Just (1883-1941)« (August 2008)

In accordance with his pioneering basic methods, Just held that biology should distinguish without separating living organisms from their living environment. Just says:

The living thing is part of the natural world, it grows and lives on the stuff of which it is made and whence it came. Then living thing and outside world constitute one interdependent unity, as evolution teaches, as the development of an animal egg reveals. ...

(Just 1939a: 366)

The interdependence between individual and outside world is a postulate which has its sanction not from any abstract philosophical principle, but is true because of the biological basis here set for. The best system of philosophy, then, is that which recognizes living thing and outside world as one interdependent continuum. Instead of building our philosophical theories of life on the behavior of electrons, it is safer to erect them on a biological basis. ...

(Just 1939a: 366-67)

Just's biology-based philosophy of nature produced a general theory of life, a »general biology« that identifies phenomena common to all life (April 1940). According to Just, living individuals are parts of the natural world, and »they form together one inter-acting system« (1939a: 356), »one interdependent continuum,« and »one interdependent unity« (1939a: 366-67). Obviously, Just's *general biology* is consistent with panpsychism and panentheism.

In *Biology of the Cell Surface* (1939a), where Just was mainly concerned to offer an account of the living ectoplasm interacting with a living environment, he also offered briefly a biology-based theory of ethics, a *general bioethics*. Just's general bioethics is distinct from special medical bioethics. Special bioethics treats medical ethics among humans. Just's general bioethics treats the evolution of ethical behavior, starting from cells.

The first book using the term »bioethics« was *Bioethics: Bridge to the Future* (1971) by Van Rensselaer Potter (born 1911, died 2001). Relative to contemporary medical meanings (medical ethics, nursing ethics, biomedical ethics), Potter's original meaning of the term »bioethics« was literally biology converges with ethics. And given this wider scope (wider than medical ethics), bioethics included relating study of land-and-forest to ethics. So Potter dedicated his book to the memory of land conservationist Aldo Leopold (born 1887, died 1948), »who anticipated the extension of ethics to Bioethics« (Potter 1971: v). The

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by James F. Crow in *Genetics*, 179: 1735-1740. Also, in embryo morphogenesis, Just strongly influenced essential concepts (concepts usually attributed to Holtfreter) according to »Ernest Everett Just, Johannes Holtfreter, and the Origin of Certain Concepts in Embryo Morphogenesis« (2009) by W. Malcolm Byrnes in *Molecular Reproduction & Development*, 76: 912-921.

wide scope of »bioethics« allowed adding »global« to *Global Bioethics: Building on the Leopold Legacy* (1988) by Van Rensselaer Potter.<sup>3</sup> Here Potter identified Leopold as »unquestionably the first bioethicist« because Leopold was »first to envision a new ethical basis for human conduct« and »first to develop an ecological ethic (which he called the land ethic) ...« (Potter 1988: xiii). Hence, bioethicists should appreciate the »pioneering efforts« (Potter 1988: xiv) advanced in »The Land Ethic« in *A Sand County Almanac* (1949) by Aldo Leopold.

Another pioneering approach to general bioethics, an approach that was pioneering for ecological development biology, was advanced in *Biology of the Cell Surface* (1939a [also 1933; 1940]) by Ernest Everett Just. In his brief account of biology converging with ethics, Just supplemented a Darwinian emphasis (upon struggle against the surrounding environment) by adding a Kropotkinian [Peter Kropotkin] emphasis upon »mutual aid« and »co-operation« with the surroundings. Just said:

Life is not only a struggle against the surroundings from which life came; it is also a co-operation with them. The Kropotkin theory of mutual aid and co-operation may be a better explanation of the cause of evolution than the prevailing popular conception of Darwin's idea of the struggle for existence. [And with cells, T.W.] The means of co-operation and adjustment is the ectoplasm [the cell surface, T.W.]. ...

(Just 1939a: 367)

Just agreed with Kropotkin. Natural selection alone cannot explain evolutionary advances. »Mutual aid« and »co-operation« with the surroundings (ethical behaviors) are essential to explaining evolution.

And in *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902) Peter Kropotkin had predicted that future research would reveal »mutual aid« among microbes.

With many large divisions of the animal kingdom mutual aid is the rule. Mutual aid is met with even amidst the lowest animals, and we must be prepared to learn some day, from the students of microscopical pond-life, facts of unconscious mutual support, even from the life of micro-organisms.

(Kropotkin 1902: 14)

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3 According to H. Tristram Englehardt Jr. of the Center for Ethics, Medicine, and Public Issues, the term »bioethics« now serves »to identify the disciplined analysis of the moral and conceptual assumptions of medicine, the biomedical sciences, and the allied health professions« (Englehardt's foreword to Potter's 1988 book: p. x). In contrast to such medical definitions of bioethics, Englehardt observes that, as used by Potter in 1971, the term »bioethics« had a more general meaning. Similarly, »bioethics« had a more general meaning in »Bioethics: A Review of the Ethical Relationships of Humans to Animals and Plants« (1927) by Fritz Jahr (Hans-Martin Sass 2007).

Just's study of microscopic life fulfilled Kropotkin's prediction. Just recognized that in order for multicellular organisms to evolve from single cell organisms, or grow from individual egg cells, »co-operation« and »mutual aid« are necessary; and he observed examples of this bioethical principle at microbial levels.

### 1.3 *Mind-Body-Cell Analogy*

Biology can serve panpsychism and pantheism by supplying an exceptionally illuminating analogy.<sup>4</sup> Contrary to Krause's explicit argument against understanding pantheism in any spatial way (Göcke 2018: 178-179), a human mind-body-cell analogy adds a spatial metaphor (inside, outside) for pantheism understood as all-*inside*-God-ism. Biology shows that we are composed of living cells; and experience reveals that a living person is more than the sum of her/his cellular parts. According to Charles Hartshorne's biology-instructed »person-to-cell analogy« for God, all creatures are like cells in the »cosmic body« of the all-inclusive Creator, »outside« of whom »there is nothing« (1984: 59; also 1975 [1937]: 197).

This biology-based analogy illuminates the pantheist idea that God is the one all-inclusive living individual »in whom we live and move and have our being« (Clayton and Peacocke 2004), the »one all-inclusive whole of reality« (Ogden 1984: 21; also Hartshorne 1973 [1967]: 7, 12, 16; 1975 [1937]: 25, 72, 163, 208).<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, in agreement with Krause, the spatial inside-outside aspect of mind-body-cell analogy fails to show there can be no »outside« of the all-inclusive whole of reality.

### 1.4 *Partialist Fallacy*

The idea of one all-inclusive-living-loving-creative whole of reality is a pantheistic conception of »the Creator« (in whom we creatures live and move).

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4 Biology-based analogy can also serve ethics. For instance, the egg cell's »wave of negativity« repulsing all but one spermatozoon (described by E. E. Just) can serve as an appropriate analogue for marital fidelity (coffee platform conversation with Andrew Pinsent on 10 August 2017 and lunch conversation with Joseph Bracken on 11 August 2017 at international conference on Analytic Theology and the Nature of God).

5 Concerning Hartshorne's pantheism: In the Preface to the 1975 reprint of his 1937 book *Beyond Humanism: Essays in the Philosophy of Nature* (1975 [1937]) Charles Hartshorne offers two important »retractions« from his 1937 terminology. He retracts labeling his »neo-classical« metaphysics and theology with the classical term »pantheism« [pan-theism] in favor of labeling it »*my pantheism*« [pan-en-theism] (italics added); and he retracts labeling it »naturalism« (which implies contingent existence and contingent actuality, instead of necessary existence and contingent actuality) in favor of labeling it »supernaturalism« (1975 [1937]: viii-ix). As indicated in this Preface, after 1937, Hartshorne's consistent typological label—for his (and Whitehead's) organic cosmology and theology—became »pantheism.«



Here theology (all-inclusive Creator) is rightly entangled with biology (included creatures and creations). Obviously, from this panentheistic-Creator-affirming perspective, failure to conceive of one all-inclusive living whole of reality (conceiving only of parts) is a fallacy in theology and biology.

And perhaps not obviously, conceiving only of parts is also a fallacy in ethics. To be sure, this »partialist fallacy« was explicitly named in two books on moral theory (Gamwell 1984; Gamwell 1996 [c1990]).

In Franklin I. Gamwell's *The Divine Good: Modern Moral Theory and the Necessity of God* (1996 [c1990]), »partialist fallacy« labels a failure to refer to the all-inclusive whole of reality that includes »the divine good« which is »the comprehensive variable that identifies the good as such« (1996 [c1990]: 149n.15, 178). Similarly, the logical necessity of reference to divine goodness in ethics is developed in chapter 4 »God and Righteousness« in *Man's Vision of God and the Logic of Theism* (1941) by Charles Hartshorne. According to Hartshorne, theology serves theory of value by providing »explicit recognition« of »the whole of which all lesser values are parts« (Hartshorne 1975 [c1937]: 25). Following Hartshorne, Gamwell finds that the »partialist fallacy« (failure to refer to the divine whole) has been characteristic of modern moral theory since Immanuel Kant. And because reference to God (whose necessary existence is demonstrated by valid metaphysical arguments) and the divine good is a necessity for adequate moral theory, modern moral theory is necessarily inadequate.

### 1.5 *Partialist Fallacy in Cosmology*

In addition to recognizing the partialist fallacy in biologically-psychologically entangled theology, and in moral theory, we should also recognize the partialist fallacy in cosmology. Though the very word »cosmos« implies a cosmic whole, many cosmological theories refer only to parts of reality. Referencing only parts of reality (even all parts of reality [for example, in one form of pantheism God is the sum of all parts of reality]) can yield only inadequate accounts of cosmic reality.

The term »big bang« (a term coined by »steady state« advocate Fred Hoyle) encourages committing the partialist fallacy by suggesting analogy to an exploding bomb or grenade. With a bang, a grenade explodes into many fragments, obliterating the whole grenade. For the sake of correcting our tendency to conceive only of parts, we should notice that unexploded whole grenades are parts of the whole of reality, and that exploded grenade fragments are also parts of the whole of reality. Unlike parts of reality, the whole of reality is eternally all-inclusive. Cosmology should include recognizing that whether exploding/expanding or collapsing, or in some relatively steady state, all parts of reality are parts of the cosmic whole of reality.

To conceive only of parts (as though there could be parts of no whole of reality) is to commit the partialist fallacy. Where the partialist fallacy is avoided, cosmology converges with theology and moral theory.

### 1.6 *Ethical Behavior Rooted in Biology*

In moral theory, when going beyond the logically necessary metaphysics of morals, in addition to avoiding the partialist fallacy by referring to the necessary whole of reality (the divine good), an adequate moral theory must also refer to unnecessary/contingent factual examples. And according to Just, moral theory should have roots in biology. »Here«—among non-reductionist theories of life instructed by observations from biology, including cell biology—»we may seek the roots of man's ethical behavior« (Just 1939a: 367). In the final footnote in *Biology of the Cell Surface*, Just said he would »deal with this point at greater length« in a »forthcoming« work (1939a: 367).

Tragically, before he could persuade a publisher to print said forthcoming work on the biological roots of human ethical behavior, Just died in 1941. Thankfully, manuscript pages are preserved at the Howard University Moorland-Spingarn Research Center.

### 1.7 *Biological Origins of Ethical Behavior*

»The Origin of Man's Ethical Behavior« (1941, unpublished manuscript<sup>6</sup>) was co-authored by Ernest Everett Just and his research associate Hedwig A. Schnetzler Just. In the opening chapter »The Problem Stated,« after rejecting the idea that moral theory should be restricted to religion and philosophy, Just and Just say: »... we intend to treat ethics as a problem in biology ... It is within the field of biology, then, that we locate human ethics, or better to say, man's ethical behavior« (Just and Just 1941: 2-3 [also 4, 91, 146]).

6 »The Origin of Man's Ethical Behavior« (October 1941, unpublished manuscript) was previously called »Ethics and the Struggle for Existence« in a 15 April 1941 letter from Just to J. W. Buchanan (Kenneth R. Manning 1984: 327, 385 note 12); and referenced as »some 400 typed pages« (including annotated bibliography) in a 15 October 1940 letter from Just to W. C. Allee; and referenced as »a forthcoming essay« in Just's 1939 book—*The Biology of the Cell Surface* (1939a: 367). Handwritten drafts »are preserved in the Howard collection [of E. E. Just papers at the Howard University Moorland-Spingarn Research Center]: EEJ(H), box 125-21, folder 396« (Manning 1984: 385 note 12). Also, adding recently (25 May 2018) discovered, by Theodore Walker Jr. and Lillie R. Jenkins, typed pages (from box 125-9, folder 162; and from box 125-19, folder 382 [mostly from folder 382]) yields 251 pages, now transcribed and edited by T. Walker, L. R. Jenkins, and W. Malcolm Byrnes, in consultation with Stuart Newman, and now called »The Biological Origins and Evolution of Ethical Behavior: From Cells to Humans« (2019 [1941]).

The »origin of man's corporeal being« (»his material being«) is described in terms of evolutionary biology. Similarly, according to Just and Just, the »origin of man's ethical behavior« (»Man as spiritual being ...«) should be described in terms of evolutionary biology. (Just and Just 1941: 6-8).

Darwin, Huxley, Kropotkin, and others had in various ways related ethics to evolutionary influences from sub-human relatives, such as apes and other mammals with brains and central nervous systems and herd instincts.<sup>7</sup> To this, Just and Just added a more distant reach. They reached further down the biological spectrum, and further back in the history of life on Earth, than contemporary or previous others. They argued that ethical behavior (mutual aid and cooperation with others *and* with the surrounding environment) »evolved« from our »very most primitive fore-runner« (Just and Just 1941: 12 [also 17]): from cells.

The Just and Just emphasis upon observing »mutual aid« (Kropotkin) and »co-operation« (»ethical behavior«) throughout nature (from the most primitive cells to humans) witnessed against the prevailing overemphasis upon competitive »struggle for existence,« an overemphasis advanced more by followers of Darwin than by Darwin who was speaking in metaphor (Just and Just 1941: 108, 110, 119 [also p. 240]). This overemphasis produced a crisis for moral theory/ethics conceived as part of natural philosophy. Contrary to generic natural law, this overemphasis made ethical behavior seem unnatural, even contrary to nature. In the postscript »Mutual Aid and Ethics« (1941: 211-243) Just addressed this crisis and its aftermath in the opening paragraph, saying:

The promulgation of the theory of natural selection, emphasizing as it did the struggle for existence, *dates a crisis in ethics*. Over-emphasized by Darwin's followers, the struggle for existence came soon to be a credo not only in biology but also outside of it. It gave birth to a philosophy that founded a new political school of thought which, in my judgment, came to be more pernicious than the Machiavellian idea which, save for sporadic recrudescences, was in modern times outmoded. Thus translated, it gave western civilization a new fire, all the more injurious because an invention alleged to be nature's creation. It came to be spiritually a burning of all books about airy dreams wherein Utopias and

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7 Evolution and ethics were related in *The Descent of Man, and Section in Relation to Sex* (1871) by Charles Darwin, in *Evolution and Ethics* (1894) by Thomas Huxley, in *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902) by Peter Kropotkin, and in *Ethics: Origin and Development* (1924) by Peter Kropotkin. Recent efforts include: *Evolution and Ethics: Human Morality in Biological and Religious Perspectives* (2004) edited by Philip Clayton and Jeffrey Schloss, and *Darwin: A Richer Account of Evolution* (2008) edited by John B. Cobb Jr. Also, see »A Sociobiological Expansion of Evolution and Ethics« (1989) by George C. Williams, the preface to the 1989 Princeton edition of Huxley's *Evolution and Ethics* (1894).

sequestered isles of peace were chartered. It left only hell burning, made earth a hell of struggle; in the smoke, paradise vanished and with it peace on earth and good will to men.

(Just and Just 1941: 211 [postscript page »a«, italics added)

Similarly, panpsychist-panentheist logician-philosopher Charles Hartshorne had seen that it was important to correct the Darwinian idea that ethical behavior is not natural. In *Beyond Humanism: Essays in the Philosophy of Nature* (1975 [c1937]) Hartshorne said:

The Darwinian conception of animal life as primarily a ruthless struggle certainly did contaminate ethics extensively. Those who wished to resist this contamination did two things: they emphasized the distinctiveness of man (Huxley), and they pointed out that cooperation is as genuine an aspect of all animal life as conflict, even if the scope of the cooperation is usually very narrow (Kropotkin). This insistence that human love is not an utter stranger in the world was logically [←29|30→] and psychologically imperative. We must somehow see the world as one, even in respect to ethical problems ...

(Hartshorne 1975 [c1937]: 29-30)

Over-emphasis upon competitive struggle in nature contaminated ethics (Hartshorne 1975 [c1937]: 29) and dated »a crisis in ethics« (Just and Just 1941: 211 [a]). This crisis-inducing over-emphasis was corrected by recognizing the importance of mutual aid and co-operation (ethical behavior) throughout nature, even among cells. Thereby, cell biologist Ernest Everett Just and Hedwig A. Schnetzler Just made an important contribution to moral theory/ethics.

Now, with the 2018 discovery of this unpublished manuscript, their contribution can be more widely received. In addition to appreciating Just's pioneering contributions to cell biology, now we can better appreciate his contributions to biology-based moral theory. Furthermore, appreciating Just's general biology and bioethics may help with achieving new advances in psychology, anthropology, and social ethics.

### 1.8 *Psychology, Anthropology, Social Ethics—Traveling a Path Pioneered by Just*

In psychology and anthropology, some theorists are traveling a path converging with biology and ethics, a path pioneered by Just from the 1930s to 1941. Among preeminent examples, evolutionary influences upon ethical behavior are described by Robert Wright (1994), William F. Allman (1994), Jeremy Rifkin (2009), and Frans de Waal (2009).

Robert Wright in *The Moral Animal: The New Science of Evolutionary Psychology* (1994) quotes Charles Darwin predicting that »through study of evolution, ›light will be thrown on the origin of man and his history,‹ and »in the distant future‹ the study of psychology ›will be based on a new foundation‹ (Wright 1994: 3 [*Origin of Species*, p. 458 (Wright endnote 1)]). Wright emphasizes »distant future« by observing that in 1960, 100 years after *Origin of Species* (1859), historian John C. Greene observed that Darwin would have been disappointed because in 1960 anthropological studies included little study of evolutionary influences [See *Darwin and the Modern World View* (1961) by John C. Greene]; but, »a revolution started« between 1963 and 1974 when four biologists (William Hamilton; George C. Williams; Robert Trivers; John Maynard Smith) wrote about evolutionary influences upon the social behavior of nonhuman animals (Wright 1994: 4). Then, in 1975, a transdisciplinary synthesis (of social behavior studies in animals and evolutionary biology) produced »sociobiology« in Edward O. Wilson's *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (1975). And since the mid-1970s, increasingly, evolutionary biology has been applied to human behavior. This revolutionary paradigm shift is leading to a »new science of evolutionary psychology« (Robert Wright 1994). Similarly, rooting modern psychology and modern behavior in stone age humanity yields evolutionary psychology in William F. Allman's *The Stone Age Present: How Evolution Has Shaped Modern Life: From Sex, Violence, and Language to Emotions, Morals, and Communities* (1994).

More recently, in *Empathic Civilization: The Race to Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis* (2009) Jeremy Rifkin offers »a new interpretation of the history of civilization« (p. 1). This new interpretation is based upon a »radical new view of human nature« that is now »emerging in the biological and cognitive sciences« (p. 1). Rifkin says this new interpretation is »forcing us to rethink the long-held belief that human beings are, by nature, aggressive, materialistic, utilitarian, and self-interested« (p. 1). We are being forced to rethink human nature because scientists are now discovering that nature generally is not adequately described by the still prevailing view that evolution is about ›survival of the fittest‹ where ›the fittest‹ are the most aggressively self-interested. Instead, new research indicates ›fitness for survival‹ includes capacity for empathy and cooperative pursuit of mutual wellbeing. Rifkin argues that a realistic hope for overcoming our present global ecological crisis can derive from this new discovery of empathy in nature. Similarly, in *The Age of Empathy: Nature's Lessons for a Kinder Society* (2009) Frans de Waal argues that new research revealing altruism and fairness among animals can inspire a biology-based pursuit of »a kinder society.«

And most recently, contemporary researchers are starting to see what E. E. Just reported during the 1930s, cooperative behavior among cells. For instance, see »Team Players: Long thought mostly to compete with one another, microbes turn out to form partnerships that rule the planet« (November 2018) by Jeffrey Marlow and Rogier Braakman.

Natural law is not about »only the Angelicall and human Nature« (Matthew Hale 2015 [1693]: 13). According to *cell biologist* Ernest Everett Just (1883-1941), from cells to humans, ethical behavior is natural and necessary for evolutionary advances.

In Part II, we will see how *astrobiologist/cosmic biologist* Sir Fred Hoyle (1915-2001) extends evolutionary biology and life-favoring teleology beyond planet Earth via theories of stellar evolution, cometary panspermia, and cosmic evolution guided by (finely tuned by) providential cosmic intelligence.<sup>8</sup> And we will see that these theories are consistent with a panentheist »natural theology« that justifies ethical realism.<sup>9</sup>

## 2. Biology and Ethics—Beyond Earth Science—Fred Hoyle

### 2.1 *Another Scientific Revolution*

Consider the popular idea of two scientific revolutions: a Copernican revolution followed by a Darwinian revolution. This idea is addressed by biologist Francisco J. Ayala in »From Paley to Darwin: Design to Natural Selection« (2008) in *Back to Darwin: A Richer Account of Evolution*, edited by John B. Cobb Jr. In

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<sup>8</sup> Biology has been extended beyond planet Earth via theories of stellar evolution, cometary panspermia, and finely tuned cosmic evolution (Hoyle, Wickramasinghe). Psychology has been extended to ultimate extremes (all the way down to observing quantum decisions and nonlocal entanglements, and all the way up to cosmic relations) via quantum physics at the down end and quantum cosmology at the up end. The call for a new »science of consciousness«—advocated in *Shadows of the Mind: A Search for the Missing Science of Consciousness* (1994) by Roger Penrose—nourished the emergence of quantum cosmology, such as found in a collection of essays in *Consciousness and the Universe: Quantum Physics, Evolution, Brain and Mind* (2011) edited by Sir Roger Penrose, Stuart Hameroff, and Subhash Kak.

<sup>9</sup> Here the term »natural theology« indicates logical study of logos about theos within university research compliant »natural philosophy« or »philosophy of nature«—recently called »science«—and featuring six characteristic commitments distinguished by Erkki Vesa Rope Kojonen: commitment to (1) »realism,« (2) »participatory ontology« such that study of creatures and creations can reveal something about the Creator, (3) a positive view of reason, (4) formulating logical arguments or proofs, (5), valuing rational factual evidence, and (6) the conviction that natural theology has a »positive value for religious life« (Kojonen Summer 2017: 4-5 in online preprint). For the sake of moral theory within natural philosophy (natural law/natural ethics), commitment to realism, especially ethical realism, is essential.

a chapter section—titled »Darwin’s Revolution«—Ayala argues persuasively that a »priggish version« of this idea is true, yet inadequate.

I have proposed that this version of the two revolutions is inadequate: what it says is true, but it misses what is most important about these two intellectual revolutions, namely, that they ushered in the beginning of science in the modern sense of the word. These two revolutions may jointly be seen as the one scientific revolution, with two stages, the Copernican and the Darwinian. ... *Origin of Species* is important because it completed the Copernican revolution, initiated three centuries earlier, and thereby radically changed our conception of the universe and the place of mankind in it.

(Ayala 2008: 68)

Ayala holds that Copernicus and Darwin achieved »one scientific revolution with two stages« (2008: 68).

*Stage one* of this scientific revolution [Copernicus] »consisted in *displacing the earth* from its previously accepted locus as the center of the universe, moving it to a subordinate place as one more planet revolving around the sun« (Ayala 2008: 67, italics added).

*Stage two* of this same scientific revolution [Darwin] »consisted in *displacing humans* from their position as the center of life on Earth, with all other species created for the purpose of humankind, and placing humans instead as one species among many in the living world, so that humans are related to chimpanzees, gorillas, and other species by shared common ancestry« (Ayala 2008: 67-68, italics added). The Darwinian second stage »... completed the Copernican revolution ...« (Ayala 2008: 68, 69).

Accordingly, scientific revolution stage one (in astronomy) was *displacing the Earth* from the spatial center of the universe, and placing the Earth in revolution around a star. Then, stage two (in biology) was *displacing humans* from un-relatedness to other evolving life on Earth. And now, another scientific revolution (in astrobiology and cosmic biology) is *displacing the Earth* again. Now Earth is no longer conceived to be the biological center of the universe.<sup>10</sup>

10 With regard to displacing humans from the biological center; in *Beyond Humanism: Essays in the Philosophy of Nature* (1975 [c1937]) Charles Hartshorne says, »the notion that man is the center of the universe« is »not yet completely shattered by astronomy, since we still do not know that we are *not* the highest of the creatures; but it certainly has no positive support from reason—to say the least,« and Hartshorne conceives of the possibility of creatures »more intelligent or more richly sensitive than we« (1975 [c1937]: 88). Hartshorne also conceived of »intermediate individualities« possibly »interposed between« the universal individual (God) and human individuals (1975 [c1937]: 310). In other words: individuals less inclusive than God, and more inclusive than humans. A similar

The idea that all life originated in some »warm little pond« (Darwin to Joseph Hooker in 1871) on planet Earth is being replaced with the idea of a vastly larger pond: our Milky Way galaxy (with our solar system embedded in a spiral arm revolving around a galactic center). Moreover, the Milky Way is one among many billions of galactic ponds. Contrary to the astronomically improbable belief that microbial life originated exclusively in our *little* pond; Fred Hoyle advanced the vastly more probable idea that microbial life as such »did not begin on the Earth« (1980: 21), that »life is not confined to a particular galaxy,« and that »Life can spread itself through the Universe« (1980: 23). Rather than being restricted to Earth, life is »a cosmic phenomenon« (Hoyle and Wickramasinghe 7 August 1986).

## 2.2 *B<sup>2</sup>FH and Stellar Evolution*

Historically, the revolutionary practice of connecting evolutionary biology to astronomy and cosmology was greatly advanced when Fred Hoyle and others produced evidence indicating the heavy elements (elements heavier than hydrogen and helium, including especially carbon) were synthesized from hydrogen in stars (Hoyle 1946; Hoyle 1947; *B<sup>2</sup>FH* 1957).<sup>11</sup>

*B<sup>2</sup>FH* is »known to all astronomers« (Martin Rees 1997: 16) as referring to the last name initials of the four authors of »Synthesis of the Elements in Stars« (1957): E. Margaret Burbidge, Geoffrey R. Burbidge, William A. Fowler, and Fred Hoyle. The work signified by *B<sup>2</sup>FH* is so widely known because it was »a turning point in our knowledge of how the universe works« (Neil de Grasse Tyson and Donald Goldsmith 2004: 165).

This revolutionary turning point connected biology to stellar evolution. We are made of heavy elements synthesized in previous generations of stars. We are evolved stardust.

Though Fred Hoyle and others did science and mathematics showing that we are stardust; many of us first learned to conceive of ourselves as stardust from musician-poets Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young singing: »We are stardust. We are golden. We are ten billion year old carbon. And we got to get ourselves back to the garden« (1969 at Woodstock). Since then (Hoyle 1946; Hoyle 1947; *B<sup>2</sup>FH* 1957; Woodstock 1969), evolutionary astrobiology (along with advancing

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idea was expressed in Fred Hoyle's sci-fi novel *The Black Cloud* (1957) about an interstellar cloud of organic molecules endowed with a metabolism and intelligence.

11 See »The Synthesis of the Elements from Hydrogen« (1946) and »On the Formation of Heavy Elements in Stars« (1947) by Fred Hoyle; and see »Synthesis of the Elements in Stars« (1957) by E. Margaret Burbidge, Geoffrey R. Burbidge, William A. Fowler, and Fred Hoyle /*B<sup>2</sup>FH*.



theories of »cosmic evolution« and »cosmic biology«) has been displacing the idea that biology is exclusively Earth science.<sup>12</sup>

### 2.3 *Panspermia, Astrobiology, and Cosmic Biology*

Turning—from Earth-only biology to astrobiology and cosmic biology—was indicated in Fred Hoyle's *The Relation of Biology to Astronomy* (1980). Here, drawing upon work with Chandra Wickramasinghe, Hoyle argued that interstellar clouds include granular particles of bacteria. Hoyle and Wickramasinghe advanced a theory of water, organic materials, and microbial life being circulated by comets called »cometary panspermia« (1981a; 1982; 1983; 1 December 1984). And they advanced »the Case for Life as a Cosmic Phenomenon« (7 August 1986 [also Wickramasinghe and Tokoro January 2014; Wickramasinghe, K. Wickramasinghe, and Tokoro 2019]).

Hoyle predicted that the idea of interstellar and cosmic microbiological processes will become obvious to future generations. Hoyle said:

I suspect that the cosmic quality of microbiology will seem as obvious to future generations as the Sun being the centre of our solar system seems obvious to the present generation.

(Hoyle 1980: 24-25)

Hoyle's 1980 prediction is coming true. The cosmic quality of microbiology is becoming more and more obvious. And the once »maverick science of astrobiology« (Darling 2001) is now becoming less and less maverick.<sup>13</sup>

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- 12 Concerning »cosmic evolution« and »cosmic biology,« see: *Origins: Fourteen Billion Years of Cosmic Evolution* (2004) by Neil de Grasse Tyson and Donald Goldsmith; »Imperatives of Cosmic Biology« (2 March 2010) by Chandra Wickramasinghe and Carl H. Gibson; *Cosmic Biology: How Life Could Evolve on Other Worlds* (c2011) by Louis N. Irwin and Dirk Schulze-Makuch; and *Vindication of Cosmic Biology: Tribute to Sir Fred Hoyle (1915-2001)* (2015) edited by Chandra Wickramasinghe. Concerning relations between astronomy and biology: In 1937 in *Beyond Humanism: Essays in the Philosophy of Nature* (1975 [c1937]) Charles Hartshorne was saying »astronomy is not as yet of much help in determining the prevalence in space-time of conditions favoring animal organism« (58). Since then, especially since *B<sup>2</sup>FH* (1957), astronomers have learned to be of much help to biology; and in so doing, they created the new convergent disciplines of astrobiology and cosmic biology.
- 13 In *Life Everywhere: The Maverick Science of Astrobiology* (2001) David Darling says, with regard to panspermia theories advanced by Hoyle and Wickramasinghe, »Today ... panspermia is at least tolerated« and »the idea of microbes being able to hop from world to world has very much entered the scientific mainstream« (47). Also, see *The Living Universe: NASA and the Development of Astrobiology* (2005 [c2004]) by Steven J. Dick (chief NASA historian) and James E. Strick. Also see: (Hoyle and Wickramasinghe 30 March 1979), (Hoyle and Wickramasinghe 6 November 1979), and (Hoyle and Wickramasinghe 1981; 1982; September 1983; December 1983; 1984).

The previous scientific revolution (in astronomy and biology) displaced Earth from the spatial center of the universe (Copernicus 1543) and displaced humans from un-relatedness to other evolving life on Earth (Darwin 1859). The current scientific revolution (in astrobiology and cosmic biology) is displacing Earth from the biological center of the universe, and theory of evolution on Earth is displaced from un-relatedness to stellar, galactic, and cosmic evolution (B<sup>2</sup>FH 1957). Furthermore, this Copernicus-like revolution is producing a cosmic biology (Hoyle and Wickramasinghe 1979; 1980; 1981a; 1982; 8 September 1983; 1 December 1983; 1984; 7 August 1986) that is consistent with natural theology (Hoyle 1984 [c1983]; Hoyle and Wickramasinghe 1981b; 1988).

#### 2.4 *Consistent with Natural Theology*

Hoyle and Wickramasinghe argue that precisely tuned life-favoring cosmic circumstances are required to make life possible. The »coupling constants« of physics must be chosen with enormous precision (Hoyle and Wickramasinghe 1981b: 141-43; also Hoyle 1984 [c1983]: 218-19). Creating and sustaining such enormously precise cosmic circumstances (today called »cosmic fine tuning«) requires deliberate acts of a »super intelligence,« an interacting and »all-embracing intelligence« (Hoyle 1984 [c1983]: 215). The numerical calculations put the need for cosmic intelligence—exercising cosmic influences—beyond question.

A commonsense interpretation of the facts suggests that a superintellect has monkeyed with physics, as well as with chemistry and biology, and that there are no blind forces worth speaking about in nature. The numbers one calculates from the facts seem to me to be so overwhelming as to put this conclusion beyond question.

(Hoyle 1981b:12)

Furthermore, given the extreme complexity of even the smallest living microbe, mathematical calculations witness against the still prevailing theory of life emerging from non-life by random/chance assembly.

The chance that life forms might have emerged in this way [by way of random assembly, T.W.] is comparable with the chance that a tornado sweeping through a junk-yard might assemble a Boeing 747 from material therein.

(Hoyle 1981a: 105)

A commonsense interpretation of the facts forced Hoyle to conclude (against his previous atheism) that a cosmic intelligence must be exerting cosmic influences favoring the evolution of life. This implicitly pro-theological

conclusion is rendered explicit in chapter 9 »Convergence to God« in *Evolution from Space: A Theory of Cosmic Creationism* (1981b) by Fred Hoyle and N. Chandra Wickramasinghe.<sup>14</sup>

This revolutionary practice—of connecting evolutionary biology to creationist cosmology and natural theology—was anticipated and advanced by natural philosophers thinking deeply about science and biology. For instance, in *Science and the Modern World* (1925) Alfred North Whitehead conceived that science was becoming »the study of organisms« (103), with physicists studying the smaller organisms, and biologists studying the larger organisms. And, with emphasis upon universal creativity, Whitehead connected his biology-oriented »philosophy of organism« to cosmology and theology in *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology* (1927-28). Similarly, biology was connected to ontology, evolutionary cosmology, and natural theology in *Beyond Humanism: Essays in the Philosophy of Nature* (1975 [c1937]) by Charles Hartshorne. Here Hartshorne held that »the structure of reality« is »one of organisms within organisms« (91), that »the philosophical argument for *cosmic evolutionism* stands on its own feet« (140; italics added), and we are »cells in the body of God« (197).

Revolutionary advances in astrobiology and cosmic biology are catching up to philosophical anticipations, and connecting agreeably with »a quiet revolution« in theology identified in M. W. Brierley's »Naming a Quiet Revolution: The Panentheistic Turn in Modern Theology« (2004). At »the panentheistic turn,« theology converges with cosmic biology,<sup>15</sup> and with ethics.

14 Concerning God, biology, evolution, creation, and cosmic creationism: See »Hoyle on Evolution« (12 November 1981) by Fred Hoyle in *Nature*; chapter 1—»Chance and the Universe«—in *The Intelligent Universe: A New View of Creation and Evolution* (1984 [c1983]) by Fred Hoyle; and chapter 10—»The Concept of a Creator«—in *Cosmic Life-Force* (1990) by Fred Hoyle and N. Chandra Wickramasinghe. And, from among theologians at the Perkins School of Theology, see *Sisters of Dust, Sisters of Spirit: Womanist Wordings on God and Creation* (1998) by Karen Baker-Fletcher, and *The Big Bang and God: An Astro-Theology ...* (2015) by Theodore Walker Jr. and Chandra Wickramasinghe [where »Astro-Theology« indicates a constructive postmodern revision of early modern *Astro-Theology: Or, A Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, from a Survey of the Heavens* (1715) by William Derham]; and note that in a chapter titled »It's Only Natural« Craig C. Hill [a New Testament scholar attentive to biology] says, »... perhaps our biology is meant to drive us to God« (Hill 2016: 21).

15 Concerning panentheism and evolution, see: *A Natural Theology for Our Time* (1967) by Charles Hartshorne; *Analytic Theism, Hartshorne, and the Concept of God* (1996) and *Whitehead's Religious Thought: From Mechanism to Organism, from Force to Persuasion* (January 2017) by Daniel A. Dombrowski; »Panentheism: A Field-Oriented Approach« (2004) and »Actual Entities and Societies, Gene Mutations and Cell Development: Implications for a New World View« (Spring/Summer 2013) by Joseph Bracken; »Evolution

### 2.5 *Panentheism and Ethical Realism*

Panentheism helps with discerning that the biblical imperatives—to love our neighbors and our enemies as we love ourselves (Matthew 5:43-48; 22:34-40)—are imperatives founded upon realism, not mere idealism. Every experience confirms (by exemplifying) what no experience can deny: we really are partly inclusive parts among variously inclusive parts of reality. And logical/mereological analysis shows that all parts of reality are parts of the whole of reality, parts of »the one all-inclusive [divine, T.W.] whole of reality« (Ogden 1984: 21; also Hartshorne 1973 [1967]). Hence, conformity to reality (living righteously, not missing the mark [not sinning]) requires valuing neighbors, enemies, and selves as they/we really are: as parts among parts of the divine whole. This ethical realism is justified by panentheism.

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# Panpsychism and Panentheism

*Benedikt Paul Göcke*

In what follows, a plausible version of the panpsychist thesis is worked out before two arguments for panpsychism are examined for their soundness. In a next step, two arguments against the developed panpsychist thesis are discussed, which, *prima facie*, pose theoretically insurmountable aporia for it. In a final step, it is argued that panpsychism as located in analytic philosophy can overcome these problems when it is included in the wider theoretical framework of panentheism, as it is paradigmatically set out in the classical German philosophy of the panentheist Karl Christian Friedrich Krause and his pupil Arthur Schopenhauer.

## 1. Panpsychism in Analytic Philosophy of Mind

Panpsychism is a metaphysical theory about the fundamental structure of reality and the ontological categories which constitute it. It rests on the assumption that we dispose of epistemologically reliable access to the fundamental structures and qualities of reality that may be grounded both through our natural scientific and through our transcendental relationship to reality. As a first approximation, the intuition lying behind panpsychism admits of the following formulation: *Both physical and mental properties are fundamental characteristics of reality*. Because this formulation does not specify the central concepts, the panpsychist intuition must be explicated in several ways in order to develop a clear thesis of panpsychism.

### 1.1 *The Fundamental Ubiquity of Physical and Mental Properties*

That physical and mental properties are fundamental characteristics of reality means that mental properties cannot be reduced either semantically or ontologically to non-mental properties nor can physical properties be reduced either semantically or ontologically to non-physical properties. In panpsychism, both mental and physical properties, respectively, are fundamental properties.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Chalmers 1996: 126 and Blamauer 2011: 9. See the collections edited by Göcke 2012, and Koons/Bealer 2010 for critical analyses of physicalism, and Kim 2007 for an argument against

By the assumption that physical properties are fundamental, panpsychism is distinguished from idealism from which it follows that physical properties can be reduced to mental properties. The demarcation of panpsychism from classical property dualism is more difficult. The latter is consistent with the panpsychist intuition that mental and physical properties are fundamental properties. However, while classical property dualism implies that mental properties are only properties of higher creatures and humans, who have a complex nervous system, and that some physical things possess only physical properties, the panpsychist generally assumes that the class of those entities that possess mental qualities is far wider than the class of higher creatures and humans.

However, within the panpsychist debate, there is no unanimity about how exactly this class is to be determined. As a minimum consensus, and line demarcating panpsychism from classical property dualism, the different manifestations of panpsychism have in common only the assumption that in addition to humans and higher creatures, the fundamental physical entities constituting empirical reality, that is, the smallest building blocks of the physical universe, possess mental and physical properties. The panpsychist assumes that between the exemplification of mental and physical properties at the fundamental ontological level of reality there obtains a factual equivalence, which, on the ground of the opposed semantic and ontological irreducibility of mental to physical properties, can only be known *a posteriori*, not *a priori*. It therefore follows from panpsychism that mentality is, at the fundamental level of reality, one ubiquitous and underlying property of reality.

The question of which conditions must be fulfilled for other entities to be spoken of as exemplifying mental and physical properties is variously answered by panpsychists. Some panpsychists assume that a necessary and sufficient condition for the exemplification of mental properties lies in the structure of complex physical objects. They argue that, although organisms at every stage of development exemplify mental properties, pure aggregates of physical entities such as tables or stones must be excluded. For in those, the physical building blocks do not form a well-ordered whole in which each part is connected with every other part, and with the whole in a whole constituting interaction.<sup>2</sup>

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non-reductive physicalism. See Göcke 2012a for an argument that phenomenal experience belongs ontologically to the fundamental level of reality.

2 See, for this kind of panpsychism Clarke 2004: 5. See also Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2016a: 2: »Most forms of panpsychism, however, distinguish between mere conglomerates like a rock formation and genuine individuals like animals and possibly elementary particles. Mental properties can only be attributed directly to genuine individuals.«

To overcome the explanatory difficulty that in every version of panpsychism, mentality is ascribed to the fundamental, and so simple, building blocks of reality, even though these are not necessarily part of any complex physical structure, other panpsychists argue, rather, for the thesis that every entity, on every level of complexity, exemplifies both physical and mental properties. The difficulty here consists in the fact that it is not clear how exactly physical entities, which are not fundamental building blocks of reality, may be ontologically individuated.<sup>3</sup>

In what follows, I at first bracket these difficulties and proceed from the minimal formulation of the panpsychist thesis, which ascribes mental and physical properties only to the fundamental building blocks of reality and higher living beings and humans, since this thesis sufficiently specifies, and places under discussion, the essential elements of panpsychist thinking. We hold to the following specification of the minimal panpsychist thesis: *Both mental and physical properties are ontologically fundamental and, in their exemplification, factually equivalent properties of both the fundamental entities constituting reality and the higher creatures and human beings.*

## 1.2 *The Fundamental Ubiquity of Physical Structures and Subjective Experience*

The minimal panpsychist thesis remains unclear until the concepts of physical and mental properties are specified. In the following I therefore ignore abstract properties and assume that mental and physical properties are the only metaphysically relevant property types.

Based on this premise, in a first step, mental properties can be classified as those properties which logically imply the existence of a subject of experience.<sup>4</sup> The concept of a subject of experience is thereby minimally interpreted ontologically, and implies only that, on logico-conceptual grounds,

3 For this variant of panpsychism see Blamauer 201b: 338: »Panpsychism is commonly understood as a doctrine that states that everything that occurs in the world has, in itself, a form of consciousness. That is, consciousness is not just a particular human property, but one that may be found on all levels of our universe. Mental properties (conscious experience, subjectivity, etc.) and physical properties (mass, charge, spin, etc.) are both fundamental and universal.« See also Buck 2011: 60.

4 See Foster 1991: 205: »If P is a pain-sensation occurring at a certain time  $t$  [...] we should ultimately represent the occurrence of P as the event of a certain subject's being in pain at  $t$ . And if D is a decision occurring at  $t$ , [...] we should ultimately represent the occurrence of D as the event of a certain subject's taking a decision at  $t$ . Quite generally, [...] we must represent each episode of mentality as the event of a subject's being in a certain mental state at a certain time, or performing a certain act at a certain time, or engaging in a certain mental activity over a certain period of time.« See also Shoemaker 1986: 10: »[It is] an obvious

we can think no mental property of which the exemplification does not imply the existence of a subject which is the ontological bearer of this property.

Mental properties can be further specified as intentional and qualitative properties: Every mental property implies both elements of relatedness to an intentional object and elements of phenomenal givenness. Mental properties are therefore exactly those properties which imply the existence of a minimally ontologically understood subject of experience that is intentionally related to an object, which appears to it in a certain phenomenal manner, and brings with it a what-it-is-likeness for the subject of experience of this state. Mental properties are thereby intrinsic properties of a subject of experience.<sup>5</sup>

Based on this understanding of mental properties, physical properties may, as a first step, be defined *ex negativo*: Physical properties are exactly those properties which are not mental properties. That is, the exemplification of physical properties does not conceptually imply the existence of a subject of experience, which is phenomenally directed towards some intentional content. There are two possibilities for arriving at a positive concept of physical properties, complementary to this aspect: the theory-based and the object-based account. The object-based approach to the concept of physical properties rests on the assumption that physical properties are exactly those which are exemplified by paradigmatic physical objects, or locally supervene on these. The theory-based approach rests on the assumption that exactly those properties are physical which are part of the ontological inventory of a physical theory, or supervene locally on these properties.<sup>6</sup>

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conceptual truth that an experiencing is necessarily an experiencing by a subject of experience, and involves that subject as intimately as a branch-bending involves a branch«

- 5 See Strawson 2006: 189: »Experience necessarily involves experiential ›what-it-is-likeness‹, and experiential what-it-is-likeness is necessarily what-it-is-likeness *for* someone-or-something. Whatever the correct account of the substantial nature of this experiencing something, its existence cannot be denied.« See also Blamauer 2011: 103. On the difficulty of determining the concept of intrinsic properties, see Seager 2006: 129-30: »The philosophical literature on the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic properties (or relational properties) is vexed and very far from settled. The core intuition would seem to be the idea that the intrinsic properties of *x* are the properties that all duplicates of *x* would have [...] That is, the intrinsics are the properties *x* has ›all by itself‹ or ›of its own nature‹.«
- 6 See Stoljar 2002: 313: »A physical property is a property which either is the sort of property required by a complete account of the intrinsic nature of paradigmatic physical objects and their constituents or else is a property which metaphysically or logically supervenes on the sort of property required by a complete account of the intrinsic nature of paradigmatic physical objects and their constituents« See also Stoljar 2002: 313: »A physical property is a property which either is the sort of property that physical theory tells us about or else is a property which metaphysically (logically) supervenes on the sort of property that physical theory tells us about.«



Both approaches are confronted with difficulties. The difficulty of the object-based approach is that, on the one hand, it is not clear what exactly a paradigmatic physical object is, and how agreement about this could be achieved, and, on the other hand, it is not excluded that paradigmatic physical objects exemplify mental properties. If, then, all the properties of a paradigmatic physical object were classified as physical properties, then it could happen that the conceptual dichotomy between mental and physical properties itself collapses.

The difficulty of the theory-based approach is, on the one hand, that it is not clear which properties a complete and true physical theory implies, because current physical theories frequently change and turn out to be false. Based on pessimistic meta-induction, it is to be expected that our present best physical theories will also be overturned, and new physical theories will be developed that incorporate new or other physical properties into their ontological inventory. Similarly to the object-based approach, the fact that genuine mental properties can be included in the theoretical framework of physics can also be applied to the theory-based approach.<sup>7</sup>

Nevertheless, the theory-based approach seems to be the more promising approach. However, in order to arrive at a positive determination of physical properties, it must, in one respect, be made specific and, in another, qualified. To avoid the case where mental properties are classified as physical properties if they were included in a possible future widening of the ground of physical theories, the theory-based approach must be restricted in such a way that physical properties are exactly the properties assumed in a complete and adequate physical theory; as long as we are not dealing with any ontologically surprising extension of the currently known physical theories. Although not excluded, it would be particularly ontologically surprising if physical theories were to incorporate mental properties as mental properties into their ontological inventory.

Based on this restriction, the specification of the theory-based approach assumes that a decisive feature of properties found in physical theories, both in the past and in the present as well as in any non-ontologically surprising physical theory, consists in the fact that they are dispositional and thus structural properties: Any fundamental physical property is defined by its relation to other physical properties and thus by its dispositional behaviour in certain situations.<sup>8</sup> This is faintly surprising, because the approach of an empirically

7 See Melnyk 1997: 623/24. See Crook/Gillet 2001: 349.

8 See Blackburn 1990: 63-64: »Just as the molecular theory gives us only things with dispositions, so any conceivable improvement in science will give us only a better pattern of dispositions and powers. That's the way physics works.« See also Brüntrup 2011: 17.

serviceable physics, aside from its epistemological preconditions which may also contain *a priori* elements, is essentially based on experiments and trials. The structure of the experimental approach to reality is based on dispositions and structures: In the experiment, the researcher interrogates empirical reality to find out how it behaves under certain conditions. That is, the experiment, as the fundamental scientific relation to the world is, by its very nature, directed to dispositions. It is thereby in the excellent position of being exclusively structural, that is, of exploring extrinsic properties of the building blocks of reality empirically.<sup>9</sup>

The thesis of physical structuralism emerges *eo ipso* on the basis of this determination of physical properties. This means that the image of the fundamental structure of empirical reality, drawn by physics, is a picture of structural connections which provides information about the extrinsic relations of a causally closed system, and describes in mathematical and logical terms how physical entities in particular situations within this structure behave, dispositionally.<sup>10</sup>

Therefore, in contrast to mental properties, which are intrinsic properties, physical properties are extrinsic-relational and thus dispositionally determined.

### 1.3 *A Minimal Analytical Panpsychist Thesis*

Based on the assumption that mental properties represent an intentional object phenomenally to a subject of experience, and are therefore intrinsic properties of this subject of experience, and given that physical properties are extrinsic properties of reality-constituting entities, the minimal panpsychist thesis admits of being specified as follows: *Both mental and physical properties are ontologically foundational, not reducible to one another but factually equivalent in their exemplification by both the fundamental reality-constituting entities, and higher living creatures and human beings, in such a way that all fundamental entities, and higher living beings and human beings, are genuine subjects of experience, who have a phenomenal inner life, and are involved dispositionally in structures described by physics, due to their extrinsic properties.*<sup>11</sup>

9 See Russell 1927: 254: »It would seem that wherever we infer from perceptions it is only structure that we can validly infer; and structure is what can be expressed by mathematical logic.«

10 On the causal closure of the structure of the physical universe, see Clayton 2008: 135.

11 Thomas Nagel says panpsychism is the thesis that »the basic physical constituents of the universe have mental properties, whether or not they are part of living organism« (Nagel 1979: 181). See also Blamauer 2011a: 102: »Panpsychism is—in short—typically understood to be the view that consciousness experience is a fundamental as well as ubiquitous characteristic of our universe, equal to physical properties like mass, charge, and spin.«. See

Just as it is somehow phenomenal to be Benedikt Göcke, and to write this paper, there is also, somehow, something it consists in to be a photon and fly through the universe. However, even if the panpsychist is willingly to be imputed this, he is not obliged to accept that the basic building blocks of reality have a conscious life comparable to the one of human beings.<sup>12</sup> The developed thesis of panpsychism merely states *that* there is, in each case, a phenomenal inner life of the fundamental building blocks of reality, which implies the existence of an ontologically minimally understood subject of experience, and, in this sense only, is similar to us. The developed thesis of panpsychism is thereby consistent with the fact that the phenomenal experience of the basic building blocks of reality can vary greatly from our experience of reality, and is *sensu stricto* epistemologically closed to us, as is the subjective experience of other people and higher living beings.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Arguments for Panpsychism

The panpsychistic thesis, because of its *prima facie* absurdity, often evokes adverse reactions, since the natural attitude in life does not usually assume that the physical foundations of reality are subjects of experience with a phenomenal inner perspective. For the English philosopher Colin McGinn, for example, panpsychism is reminiscent of the 1968 movement, and is designated by him as little more than a »comfortable piece of utter balderdash.«<sup>14</sup> However, because philosophy requires separating the genesis and the validity

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also Seager/Allen-Hermanson 2010: »Panpsychism is the doctrine that mind is a fundamental feature of the world which exists throughout the universe.«

- 12 For this objection, see McGinn 2006: 95: »Is it really to be supposed that a particle can enjoy these kinds of [human] experiences—say feeling depressed at its monotonous life of orbiting a nucleus but occasionally cheered up by its experience of musical notes?« See also Lycan 2006: 70. For a contrary argument see Pfeifer 2016: 45.
- 13 See Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2016: 4: »But similarity is not a transitive relation. Mental properties at the fundamental level might well be wildly dissimilar from those found in living organisms. The highly speculative and abstract character of panpsychism has thus always to be kept in mind. Panpsychism is a possible move in the logical space of metaphysics, not a crude animalistic view of matter.« To distinguish human phenomenal experience from the phenomenal experience of the basic building blocks of reality, some panpsychists introduce the concept of proto-mentality. See Rugel 2011: 115-16 and Jaskolla 2011a: 70.
- 14 See McGinn 2006: 93: »Any reflective person must feel the pull of panpsychism once in a while. It's almost as good as pantheism! The trouble is that it's a complete myth, a comfortable piece of utter balderdash [...] and isn't there something vaguely hippish, i.e. stoned, about the doctrine?«

of a theory from one another, it must be soberly asked which arguments speak for panpsychism.

### 2.1 *The Argument from the Homogeneity of Cosmic Evolution*

The argument from the homogeneity of cosmic evolution is based on the assumption that evolutionary processes, whose similarity is characterized by the development of complex entities and structures from simple entities and structures, play out on both the cosmic and the biological level. Against this background, the argument of the homogeneity of cosmic evolution assumes that the only plausible explanatory model consistent with the natural sciences for the factual existence of complex phenomenal life presupposes that every basic physical entity possesses mental properties. It may be formulated as follows:

- (1) Cosmic evolution has led to the development of physical creatures, which call a complex, phenomenal-intrinsic inner life their own.
- (2) Cosmic evolution can only lead to the development of physical beings that call a complex phenomenal-intrinsic inner life their own when mental properties are either (a) bound by divine intervention to the exemplification of physical properties, or (b) by supervenience, or (c) mental properties emerge from complex physical properties, or (d) each basic physical entity has mental properties.
- (3) Mental properties are not bound to physical properties by divine intervention.
- (4) Supervenience is no explanation of the existence of mental properties.
- (5) Mental properties do not emerge from physical properties.  
Therefore:
- (6) Each basic physical entity has mental properties.  
Therefore:
- (7) Each basic physical entity has mental properties, and some complex physical beings have mental properties.

The argument is valid: If the premises are true, then it is not possible that the conclusion is false. The decisive question, therefore, is the soundness of the argument, so is about the truth of the premises. The first premise seems to be true: That cosmic evolution has led to the development of living creatures that have a complex, phenomenal inner life can be confirmed by oneself. The second premise is also true because it covers all relevant explanatory types of the emergence and existence of complex phenomenal life.

The decisive premises are therefore (3) to (5). The third premise, that is, the assumption that mental properties have been brought into the world by a

decision of divine will at a certain time of cosmic evolution, to correlate with certain physical properties, is rarely treated: On the one hand, one is aware that, although a theological necessity for the possibility of God's significant action in the world obtains, the recourse to divine action is difficult to justify in detail. And one runs the danger of integrating God into the striven for ultimate foundation only as an explanatory gap filler. On the other hand, a theological explanation of the existence of complex phenomenal life points directly to the other explanatory models mentioned in the argument. For it would have to specify through which metaphysical means, or natural laws, the existence of mental states and their correlation with physical states is assured by divine action.<sup>15</sup>

The fourth premise, that is, the assumption that mental properties supervene on physical properties, may be excluded as an explanation of the existence of mental properties. Supervenience does not denote the causal, but the logical relation between properties of different property classes. It generally states that there can be no difference on the supervenient level without difference on the subvenient level but there may be a difference on the subvenient level without any difference on the supervenient level. That mental properties supervene on physical properties may well be the case accidentally. However, the supervening relationship does not explain how mental properties have come into the world but already presupposes their existence.

The fifth premise entails that there is a causal relationship between the existence of physical properties and the existence of mental properties. The concept of weak emergence entails that F is a weakly emergent property of a physical system S, with a specific microstructure ( $p_1, \dots, p_n$ ), if and only if the natural laws logically imply that every physical system S with microstructure ( $p_1, \dots, p_n$ ) exemplifies property F, but F cannot be reduced to the properties of the microstructural entities. The concept of strong emergence assumes that F is a strongly emergent property of a physical system ( $p_1, \dots, p_n$ ) if and only if each system S with microstructure ( $p_1, \dots, p_n$ ) exemplifies property F, but this exemplification of F does not logically follow from the natural laws, but is a *factum brutum*.<sup>16</sup>

Based on this understanding of emergence, a weak emergence of mental properties can be excluded. While, for example, liquidity is a weakly emergent property of accumulations of H<sub>2</sub>O molecules that can be explained by natural laws, this is not the case with mental properties, because it does not follow

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15 See, however, Hasker 2001 und Swinburne 1997 for an analysis of the explanatory relevance of divine action for the existence of mental states.

16 See Brüntrup 2012: 68.

logically from the natural laws that systems that have a certain physical micro-structure have a certain mental characteristic.<sup>17</sup>

If mental properties emerge from physical properties, then they must be strongly emergent properties of physical systems. This possibility, however, is excluded because of the essential differences between physical and mental properties. For it is absurd to assume that a purely extrinsically determined structure, which has no intrinsic-phenomenal properties, is in a position to bring about the existence of intrinsic-mental properties. This would be as absurd the assumption that a space-time universe is constituted by a structure of abstract mathematical entities.<sup>18</sup>

Because neither divine intervention nor supervenience and strong emergence can explain the existence of complex phenomenal life, following the argument from the homogeneity of cosmic evolution, the last remaining possibility for explaining the existence of complex phenomenal experience, is this: Mentality is not a new phenomenon of the universe, but one of its own essential features: Even the smallest building blocks of reality have phenomenal properties that belong to the same ontological category as human phenomenal experience. Mental properties therefore belong to the ontological basis of reality.<sup>19</sup>

## 2.2 *The Argument from Intrinsic Natures*

The argument from intrinsic natures supports the genetic argument by analysing the ontological carrier of the dispositional structures investigated by the physical sciences. It argues that mental qualities are the only plausible candidate to fulfill this crucial role of metaphysical explanation of the existence of

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17 See Strawson 2006a: 13: »Liquidity is often proposed as a translucent example of an emergent phenomenon, and the facts seem straightforward. Liquidity is not a characteristic of individual H<sub>2</sub>O molecules. Nor is it a characteristic of the ultimates of which H<sub>2</sub>O molecules are composed. Yet when you put many H<sub>2</sub>O molecules together they constitute a liquid (at certain temperatures, at least), they constitute something liquid. So liquidity is a truly emergent property of certain groups of H<sub>2</sub>O molecules. It is not there at the bottom of things, and then it is there.«

18 See Strawson 2006a: 15. See McGinn 2000 for an argument that we are simply too limited to understand how mental properties emerge from physical properties.

19 See James 1950: 149: »And Consciousness, however small, is an illegitimate birth in any philosophy that starts without it, and yet professes to explain all fact by continuous evolution. *If evolution is to work smoothly, consciousness in some shape must have been present at the very origin of things.* Accordingly we find that the more clear-sighted evolutionary philosophers are beginning to post it there. Each atom of the nebula, they suppose, must have had an aboriginal atom of consciousness linked with it.«

empirical reality. The following is an argument with three assumptions and the panpsychist conclusion outlined:

- (1) If there is an intrinsic nature of fundamental physical entities, the physical sciences can not give us any information about this.
- (2) There is an intrinsic nature of fundamental physical entities.
- (3) If there is an intrinsic nature of fundamental physical entities, the only plausible candidate for this intrinsic nature of fundamental physical entities is phenomenal consciousness.

Therefore:

- (4) Fundamental physical entities have phenomenal consciousness.

Therefore:

- (5) Fundamental physical entities have phenomenal consciousness, and some complex physical beings have mental properties.

The argument is logically valid, so the crucial question is the question of the plausibility of the premises. The first premise is true: We have already seen that the physical sciences examine only the dispositional behaviour of physical entities, and this approach leads to physical structuralism, which does not imply any ontological statements about the intrinsic properties of physical entities whose dispositions are examined.<sup>20</sup>

All the theoretical terms of the physical description of the fundamental structures of the universe, such as the terms »electron«, »spin«, or »photon«, can therefore be removed by the method of Ramseyfication, which replaces each of these terms with an existential bound variable, without the result that the physically obtained state of knowledge is changed. There remains the assertion that there are things which fulfil a certain dispositional function and, because of this, are part of a larger mathematically describable structure.<sup>21</sup>

The second premise is also true and may be justified by a *reductio ad absurdum*. If one assumes that there is no intrinsic nature of the basic physical entities, it is assumed that the investigated dispositional properties may exist in themselves.<sup>22</sup>

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20 See Williams 2011: 74: »Physical theory describes the fundamental physical entities exclusively in dispositional terms.« See Russell 1948: 240: »The physical world is only known as regards certain abstract features of its space-time structure—features which, because of their abstractness, do not suffice to show whether the world is, or is not, different in intrinsic character from the world of mind.«

21 See Brüntrup 2011: 16.

22 See Seager 2006: 138: »Why should matter have any intrinsic properties at all? An alternative view is that all there is to matter is the set of inter-relationships which science reveals.« See also Brüntrup 2011: 25.

This results in two problems: Firstly, in property theory, it is assumed that it is precisely the intrinsic properties of things that explain their dispositional behaviour, from a metaphysical viewpoint; by the fact that an entity *x*, in situation *S*, behaves the way *Z* in virtue of its intrinsic (or: categorial) properties *M*.<sup>23</sup> Without a categorial basis, that is, without the intrinsic properties of the basic physical entities, it would be metaphysically incomprehensible how their specific dispositional behaviour is possible at all.<sup>24</sup> Secondly, the assumption that there is no intrinsic-categorial nature to the basic physical entities either leads to the conclusion that we live in an abstract mathematical structure, or to the assumption that empirical reality, as concrete empirical reality, is a strongly emergent property of an abstract mathematical structure. On the one hand, the denial of the existence of an intrinsic nature to the basic physical entities implies that the mathematical structures described in physics are ultimate reality: All that exists are structures. For physics can not say anything about the intrinsic nature of reality.<sup>25</sup> To avoid this absurd conclusion, on the other hand, it could only be assumed that empirical reality is a strongly emergent property of a special mathematical structure, and thus also an absurd *factum brutum*.<sup>26</sup>

Without intrinsic properties, therefore, it is not possible for the structure discovered by physics, and described in mathematical terms, to have any concrete reality at all. This means that physical entities have intrinsic natures and thus the second premise is justified.<sup>27</sup>

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23 See Williams 2011: 71-72: »Categoricalism (sometimes known as »Categorical Realism«) is the thesis that all dispositions must ultimately have categorial properties that ground them; it is this thesis that the dispositional essentialist denies when she claims that some or all dispositions can be baseless.«

24 See Seager 2006: 141: »Dispositions require a categorial base. A good number, perhaps most or conceivably even all of the relational properties which science discovers about matter are causal dispositions. If dispositions require (metaphysically) a base of intrinsic properties which determines their powers then we have an argument from the relations structures revealed by science to the need for some intrinsic nature which subvenes these powers.« See Williams 2011: 72: »Categorial properties lack essential causal and modal features, so something must be added for a categorial property to properly ground a disposition. Nevertheless, as categorialism concerns what is necessary for grounding dispositions, questions of what that additional something might be can be set aside.«

25 See Brüntrup 2011: 30: »But if there are no carriers, then the formal, mathematical structure is the ultimate reality.«

26 See Brüntrup 2011: 30: »How the concrete physical world as we know it emerges from this mathematical structure is a case of mysterious inter-attribute emergence, in this case the emergence of *concrete* physical objects from *abstract* mathematical structures.«

27 See Brüntrup 2016b: 55: »We need ultimate intrinsic properties that carry the entire existing set of functional-relational properties.«



The third premise is decisive for the soundness of the argument. It is justified, in a first step, by the fact that the only case in which we can have epistemologically unproblematic, direct, certain, access to intrinsic properties of a physical entity is the case of one's own phenomenal experience. For our mental qualities are such that they may be distinguished from the properties of physics by their phenomenal nature.<sup>28</sup> Based on the assumption that it is epistemologically legitimate to extrapolate from the immediately certain knowledge of one's own intrinsic essence to the intrinsic nature of all physical entities, it follows, in a final argumentative step, that we recognize mentality as the ontological carrier of the structures discovered in physics.

### 3. Arguments Against Panpsychism

Although there are two good arguments for panpsychism, at least two good arguments may be formulated against it, each of which can be understood as the complement of one of the arguments which speak for it.

#### 3.1 *The Problem of the Absurd Multiplication of Subjects of Experience*

The argument from the absurd multiplication of subjects of experience concentrates on the minimal panpsychist thesis that all basic physical entities, and only some complex physical entities, have mental properties. It attempts to show that there is no objective concept of physical complexity to determine which physical structures are sufficient and necessary for the development of complex phenomenal life. On the argument, therefore, panpsychism implies that every physical structure correlates with the existence of a subject of experience, and thus leads to an absurd multiplication of the number of existing subjects of experience. The argument may be formulated as follows:

- (1) The limitation of the minimal panpsychist thesis, with respect to the number of existing subjects of experience, is plausible when there are objectively necessary and sufficient conditions for when a physical structure leads to the development of complex phenomenal life, and thus to the existence of a corresponding subject of experience.

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28 See Seager 2006: 136: »Matter must have an intrinsic nature to ground the relational or structural features revealed to us by physical science. We are aware of but one intrinsic property of things, and that is consciousness. [...] We are physical beings and our consciousness is a feature of certain physical structures.« See also Brüntrup 2011a: 44. See Eddington 1920: 200 and Russell 1927: 402. See also Russell 1927a: 300.

- (2) There are no objectively necessary and sufficient conditions for when a physical structure leads to the development of complex phenomenal life, and thus to the existence of a corresponding subject of experience.
- (3) The limitation of the minimal panpsychist thesis regarding the number of existing subjects of experience is not plausible.
- (4) If the limitation of the minimal panpsychist thesis is not plausible with regard to the number of existing subjects of experience, then it should be abolished.
- (5) If the restrictions are lifted, panpsychism implies that each physical structure correlates with the existence of a subject of experience.
- (6) It is absurd that any physical structure correlates with the existence of a subject of experience.  
Therefore:
- (7) Panpsychism is false.

Because the argument is logically valid, it is necessary to ask how the premises are justified. The first assumption is true: The minimal panpsychist thesis assumes that, in addition to the basic physical building blocks, only a few complex physical structures such as humans and higher living beings possess mental properties and constitute independent experiential substructures. This presupposes that there are objectively necessary and sufficient conditions for when a physical structure leads to the development of complex phenomenal life and thus to the existence of a corresponding subject of experience.

The second premise states that there are no such objective criteria, since the assumption that there are persisting complex physical objects cannot be justified against the background of physical structuralism. The reason is that structuralism implies that, in a sense, there is only one physical structure, and the relations it specifies between the physically fundamental entities, and it therefore leads to nominalism about macroscopic objects. What is addressed semantically as a complex persistent physical object is thus based on linguistic convention. Furthermore, because of the causal closure of physical reality, for any two basic entities, they are in a causal context which makes it possible to speak of them as a complex structure.<sup>29</sup> Any setting of necessary and sufficient

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29 See Mathews 2011: 144: »The individuation of objects, at the macro-level, at any rate, is not consistently objectively determined [...]. Matter is not really, in any ontological sense, parceled up into convenient units or packages, despite the plethora of discrete artefacts in our own daily life that suggest that it is. Indeed, many of our individuations—of rocks and mountains, for instance—have basically nominal status.« See also Skrbina 2011: 126-127.

conditions for the development of a rich phenomenal life is therefore an arbitrary semantic stipulation.

However, as the third premise of the argument implies, without necessary and sufficient criteria for the physical complexity necessary for a rich phenomenal experience, the restrictions of the number of experiential phenomena of complex phenomenal life, defined in the minimal panpsychist thesis, must be abandoned. For it is not clear why basic physical entities, and only a few other physical structures should be thought of as correlated with genuine subjects of experience.

To save panpsychism *prima facie*, on the fourth premise of the argument, it must be assumed that, in fact, any physical structure is correlated with the existence of a genuine subject of experience.<sup>30</sup> As this consequence implies that tables, and planetary systems, and forests, and the sum of the table and the chairs in this room (let us call them »tairs«), should be classified as genuine experiential subjects, the panpsychist thesis *secunda facie* should be rejected, due to an absurd multiplication of subjects of experience.

### 3.2 *The Combination Problem of Panpsychism*

The fact that panpsychism leads to a *prima facie* absurd multiplication of existing subjects of experience seems to be a strong argument against its plausibility as a metaphysical theory. But it does not really show the inconsistency but only the epistemic significance of panpsychism, against the background of our general assumptions about the existence of subjects of experience. The argument is therefore flanked by a further argument that shows that, in the context of a panpsychist ontology, it is not clear how new subjects of experience may emerge from the mental properties of the basic physical entities, regardless of the structures that they constitute:

- (1) All basic physical entities are subjects of experience, and there is at least one subject of experience S that is not a basic physical entity but a complex physical entity.
- (2) If all basic physical entities are subjects of experience, and there is at least one subject of experience S that is not a basic physical entity but a complex physical entity, panpsychism must be able to explain the existence of S, by recourse to the physical complexity of S.

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30 Skrbina 2011: 121-22 takes exactly this route: »[T]he body indeed has innumerable lesser selves: organs, cells, macromolecules, proteins, atoms, and so on. All of these (except the atomic ultimates) are themselves composed of lesser selves, and all participate in higher-order minds.«

- (3) Panpsychism cannot explain the existence of S by recourse to the physical complexity of S.

Therefore:

- (4) Panpsychism is false.

The truth of the premises is decisive for the soundness of the argument. The first premise is true by definition, because it expresses the minimal panpsychist thesis. The second premise is also true: We know from the argument from the homogeneity of cosmic evolution that the panpsychist assumes that the basic physical building blocks of the universe are conscious and, in the course of cosmic evolution, through the formation of complex structures, higher levels of experience are constituted, by the mentality of the basic building blocks. If this constitution of higher-level subjects is not to be postulated simply by implication, the panpsychist must explain how it is possible that new subjects, different from the fundamental experiential subjects, can exist.

The starting point of the combination problem is to take up this explanatory requirement and put it to the panpsychist, in the third premise of the argument, that he can not fulfil this task which is necessary for him. For it would only be possible with reference to strong emergence, setting the origin and existence of a subject of experience's complex phenomenal life in relation to the existence of basic subjects of experience.

The assumption that the existence of complex subjects of experience can only be explained by reference to strong emergence may be justified as follows: If  $m$  is the set of basic physical subjects of experience which, *ex hypothesi*, are responsible for the constitution of a complex subject of experience S that is not contained in  $m$ , then no facts about the elements of this set or  $m$  itself, neither the physical nor the intrinsic facts about the relations between the basic experiential subjects and their inner constitution, can explain the existence of S. Contrary to, for example, the vector analysis of a physical force, it is not apparent how, out of many basic subjects of experience and their mental states, a further and genuine subject of experience could be generated at all.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> See also James 1950: 160: »Where the elemental units are supposed to be feelings, the case is in no wise altered. Take a hundred of them, shuffle them and pack them as close together as you can (whatever that may mean); still each remains the same feeling it always was shut in its own skin, windowless, ignorant of what the other feelings are and mean. There would be a hundred-and-first feeling there, if, when a group or series of such feelings were set up, a consciousness *belonging to the group as such* should emerge. And this 101st feeling would be a totally new fact, the 100 original feelings might, by a curious physical law, be a signal for its creation, when they came together; but they would have no substantial identity with it, nor it with them, and one could never deduce the one from the others, or (in any intelligible sense) say that they evolved it.« See also Goff 2006: 58 and Göcke 2012a.

The only way to explain the existence of higher-level subjects of experience is, therefore, by recourse to the concept of emergent relations. But since weak emergence can be excluded, a theory of strong emergence is the only alternative. Some panpsychists argue, accordingly, that the existence of subjects of experience of complex phenomenal life emerges strongly from basic subjects of experience, even if no metaphysical or scientific principles can be stated that explain this relation.<sup>32</sup>

Because, however, the strong emergence of complex experiential entities is as obscure as the strong emergence of intrinsic from extrinsic properties, the panpsychist cannot appeal to strong emergence without undermining the justification for his own position, which has only led to the recognition of the phenomenal life of the basic building blocks of reality.<sup>33</sup> Panpsychism should therefore be rejected.

#### 4. Panpsychism and Panentheism

There are good arguments both for and against panpsychism. In what follows, it is argued that the apparent antinomy of panpsychist thinking can be resolved when panpsychism, as discussed in analytic philosophy of mind, is integrated into the metaphysical paradigm of panentheism, as discussed in continental transcendental philosophy. To illustrate this, exemplary recourse to the panentheistic thinking of Karl Christian Friedrich Krause and his pupil Arthur Schopenhauer is appropriate, because the philosophical systems developed by both thinkers are closely interwoven.

##### 4.1 *Krause, Schopenhauer, and Analytical Philosophy of Mind*

Recourse to the monistic thinkers Krause and Schopenhauer, as luminaries of the wild years of classical German philosophy, in the course of the analysis of analytic panpsychism, is systematically obvious. Although, to my knowledge, Krause is not at all in this discussion and Schopenhauer is often only mentioned in a historical marginal note as a panpsychist.<sup>34</sup> This is astonishing, for a glance at the writings of Krause and Schopenhauer shows quickly that a large

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32 See Goff 2011: 135-36: »[The argument] has no concerns about the intelligibility of panpsychist emergentism, the view that facts about the existence and nature of high-level conscious subjects, as a matter of brute fact or natural law, arise from facts about the existence and nature of micro-physical conscious subjects.«

33 See Chalmers 2016a for an analysis of the combination problem, Goff 2016, Skrbina 2011 und Brüntrup 2016b for various attempted solutions.

34 See, however, Skrbina 2007 for an analysis of panpsychism according to Schopenhauer.

part of the *topoi*, which are presently discussed in the analytic panpsychism debate by recourse to Eddington, Russell, and James, are nearly *verbatim*, but at least, according to the case, to be found in Krause and Schopenhauer.

Firstly, both Krause and Schopenhauer hold the thesis of physical structuralism. They start from the causal closeness of the physical world, which for them is the world described by science. As transcendental philosophers, they assume that the knowledge discovered by physics is established by the principle of sufficient reason. The principle of sufficient reason, however, exclusively leads to the scientific discovery of the dispositional structure of empirical reality. In this way, Krause and Schopenhauer place themselves directly on the ground of the panpsychism debate.<sup>35</sup>

Secondly, both agree that physical structuralism does not facilitate complete knowledge of the system of sciences, because it only explores the structure between different entities in empirical reality, and their dispositional properties, not their intrinsic nature. According to Krause and Schopenhauer, the intrinsic categorial nature of the thing as such (*Ding an sich*) cannot be attained by a methodology based on the principle of sufficient reason, since it is only the relations between things that are analysed. In this respect too, Krause and Schopenhauer agree with the current debate, which is based on the insight that decisive elements of a complete metaphysical explanation of the world cannot be grasped by structuralism.<sup>36</sup>

Third, both agree with the panpsychist debate that there must be an intrinsic nature behind the structured phenomena whose denial, as Schopenhauer says,

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35 According to Krause 1869: 4, science is a system of true findings, differentiated within itself, in which all parts »exist in relation to each other, not merely as a whole, in which parts are next to one other, collected in a mere aggregate, but as a whole in which the parts are all in, with and through one other (*in, mit und durch einander*), are all only in, with and through, the whole thing. Everything is essentially joined to form a whole which contains parts, each of which, although something specific, and exists for itself, nevertheless exists only for itself, by, and as long, as it is in a certain connectedness, and interaction, with all other members of that structure, which also account for the organism«. Schopenhauer 1889: 4 fully agrees on the adequacy of such a concept of science: »For by *science* we understand a system of notions [*Erkenntnisse*], i.e. a totality of connected, as opposed to a mere aggregate of disconnected, notions [*Erkenntnisse*]. But what is it that binds together the members of a system, if not the principle of sufficient reason? That which distinguishes every science from a mere aggregate is precisely, that its notions [*Erkenntnisse*] are derived one from another as their reasons.«

36 See Schopenhauer 1969: 28: »That all science in the real sense, by which I understand systematic knowledge under the guidance of the principle of sufficient reason, can never reach a final goal or give an entirely satisfactory explanation. It never aims at the inmost nature of the world; it can never get beyond the representation; on the contrary, it really tells us nothing more than the relation of one representation to another.«

is a good recommendation for a place in the madhouse.<sup>37</sup> For both, this insight into the intrinsic nature of reality cannot be forced as the conclusion of a chain of proof, but must be carried out by every subject of knowledge himself, in the form of immediate intuition. When this is done, it can be used as an element of a final foundation that turns physical structuralism into an all-embracing metaphysical theory.<sup>38</sup>

Fourth, just as in the analytic debate, it is assumed that our immediate perception of our own phenomenal experience serves as an epistemically legitimate justification for the existence of an ontological carrier of the dispositional properties of physical reality. So Krause and Schopenhauer assume that a direct, certain intuition of one's own intrinsic nature is possible, and that knowledge of the intrinsic nature of empirical reality can be deduced from this direct, certain, knowledge. Without this perception of our own intrinsic nature, physical structuralism would remain only a metaphysical patchwork.<sup>39</sup>

#### 4.2 *Panentheism as the Solution to the Panpsychist Aporia*

Although Krause and Schopenhauer are in harmony with the central insights of contemporary analytic philosophy of mind, they spell out the panpsychist insights under panentheistic premises, transcendently. While panpsychism is generally understood as a position mediating between physicalism and dualism, since it determines both the physical and the mental as inseparable and fundamental features of reality, panentheism generally strives for a higher

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37 See Schopenhauer 2015: 163.

38 See Krause 1886: 9: »If, therefore, there is knowledge of something which in an unlimited way is all that there is, this insight entails that this something is without a ground (*ohne Grund*). Consequently, the insight into the nature and existence of this something is without a ground as well, it is unprovable and not in need of a proof. [...] If there is such an insight, it must be immediate and not mediated through any other insight or item of knowledge. And although not everyone will be able to obtain it without instruction, it must be possible to instruct every spirit to obtain this insight for themselves.«

39 Krause 1886: 66 argues that »we can only become aware of other things in so as far as these things are ourselves, and we are in these things ourselves.« Furthermore, »we can make an inference to the beings outside us, under the form: as true as I am myself, as I observe myself, there is also this or that being« Krause 1886: 75. Krause, in other words, argues that, through self-observation, we can use what is discovered as the true nature of the I to account for the ultimate ground of empirical reality. Schopenhauer, in turn, expresses this idea in a similar way: »What is directly known to us must give us the explanation of what is only indirectly known, not conversely.« (Schopenhauer 1966:196) That is, as Schopenhauer 1889: 246 says, »if we stood in the same inward relation towards every natural phenomenon as towards our own organism, the explanation of every natural phenomenon, as well as of all the properties of every body, would likewise ultimately be reduced to [that which is discovered as the nature of the I in self-observation].«

reconciliation of an atheistic pantheism, on which the universe itself is *causa sui*, and the ontological dualism of necessarily existing creator and contingent creation. To achieve the synthesis of pantheism and classical theism, panentheism interprets the being of the finite universe, in the monistic tradition, as an intrinsic constitutive part of the all-unity, which is conceived as absolutely infinite, and transposes the fundamental difference between the ground of being and the effect of being into the Absolute itself. Thus, the world as a constituent part of the inner structure of the Absolute is distinguished from the Absolute in itself, just as hydrogen and oxygen are also constitutive of the whole in the H<sub>2</sub>O molecule, and yet may be determined and distinguished from it.

Transcendental panentheism, as presented by Krause and Schopenhauer, attempts to justify the relation between empirical reality and the Absolute, epistemologically, as a metaphysical theory, by analysis of the immediately certain conditions of the possibility of any subjectivity. The essential idea is as follows: In and through the recognition of the intrinsic nature of one's own self, which is directly examined in intuition, the subject ascends to the recognition of the intrinsic determination of the Absolute, and then descends back to the intrinsic determination of the whole of extrinsic empirical reality which sustains physical structuralism.

Krause calls the Absolute simply »Essence« and Schopenhauer, as he himself admits inadequately »Will«. For both, the Absolute is the one principle of being and knowledge of empirical reality that unites all transcendent and transcendental determinations in the unity of its essence. He who recognizes himself recognizes this idea that, in his being and knowing, he is always bound in the one being and the recognition of the Absolute. Hence, Krause locates the world logically *expressis verbis* »in« the Absolute. Schopenhauer speaks, in a conceptually equivalent way, of the existence of empirical reality as a manifestation of the Will.<sup>40</sup> For both, therefore, the being of reality is not to be

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40 Empirical reality, in Krause's words, has to be understood *panentheistically* as being *in* the ultimate ground, while, in Schopenhauer's words, it has to be understood as a *manifestation* of the ultimate ground. Although different in name, both doctrines arguably express the same concept: That B is *in* A means that, according to its true nature and existence, B is completely and inseparably determined by the true nature and existence of A. As Krause 1869: 307-08 states: »Following present linguistic usage, I use ›in‹ here [...] of finite essences and essentialities, and mean by it that this finite thing is the higher whole [that is, Essence] as part of it. So this finite thing, as a part of the same, is, however, bounded by the whole of pure Essentiality. So indeed, the limit of the finite is in common with that of its whole, but this boundary does not limit or circumscribe (*begrenzt oder umgrenzt*) the whole as a whole.« That B is a *manifestation* of A means the same. What Schopenhauer says about the relation between the ultimate ground of empirical



understood in the mode of a creation, but as the intrinsic determination of the Absolute itself. In the knowledge of our own self, one knows through metaphysical intuition the Absolute only in one of its manifold determinations.<sup>41</sup>

And precisely in this lies the key to solving the panpsychist *aporias*. Both arguments for panpsychism show that conscious experience is a necessary condition for the existence of reality. The argument from the homogeneity of cosmic evolution shows that conscious experience, as an intrinsic bearer of dispositional structures of being, must exist at every moment of the existence of the universe. The argument from intrinsic natures yields the conclusion that the dispositional structure, studied by physics, without conscious experience of microphysical reality, could have no concrete reality. Both arguments against panpsychism show that panpsychism, despite the necessity of phenomenal experience for any metaphysical foundation of physical structuralism, has serious problems with the concept of the subject of experience: The argument from the absurd multiplication of subjects of experience has shown that, under any panpsychistic premises, any arbitrary physical structure implies the existence of a corresponding subject of experience. While the combination problem has shown that the panpsychist can consistently assume a certain number of basic subjects of experience, but does not have the explanatory resources to explain the existence of subjects of complex phenomenal experience. Although, in panpsychism, on the one hand, conscious experience is necessary for the existence of reality, it cannot, on the other hand, explain how subjects of experience can be individuated, and go beyond the number of fundamental subjects of experience.

The solution to this antinomy suggested by transcendental panentheism is to maintain the fundamental validity of the arguments for panpsychism, but to re-read it, and to abandon the assumption that there are numerically distinct

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reality, and empirical reality itself, therefore fits well with Krause's pantheistic definition of the world's being in its ultimate ground: »Now this is all very well, yet to me, when I consider the vastness of the world, the most important thing is that the essence in itself [...] is present whole and undivided in everything in nature, in every living being. [...] T]rue wisdom [...] is acquired by thoroughly investigating any individual thing, in that we try thus to know and understand perfectly its true and peculiar nature.« (Schopenhauer 1969: 129).

41 See Krause 1903: 362: »My chief principle is that all science rests upon the intuition of an infinite substance, which intuition can not be proved according to the principle of sufficient reason, but can only be proved as present in the human mind (*Geist*).« See also Schopenhauer 1889: 216: »The kernel and chief point of my doctrine, its Metaphysic proper, [is] that this thing in itself, this substratum of all phenomena, and therefore of the whole of Nature, is nothing but what we know directly and intimately and find within ourselves as the will.«

metaphysical subjects of experience. Within present analytic philosophy of mind, the epistemological reference to the intrinsic nature of one's own existence constitutive of panpsychism is interpreted as meaning that it can only show the inner nature of each individual existence. Instead, it should be assumed pantheistically as showing truth beyond the inner nature of one's own existence, and, as a matter of fact, as a self-display of the intrinsic nature of the Absolute: The inner vision of the self shows more than the inner nature of one's own existence. It shows the inner nature of the Absolute.

If the analytic panpsychist follows this argumentation, he leaves the two arguments against him at the expense of his abolition in transcendently motivated pantheism. For he then abandons the assumption that there is metaphysically more than one subject of experience: All the different mental qualities, following the pantheistic interpretation of panpsychism, would be characteristics of the only existing subject of experience: the Absolute.<sup>42</sup>

This conclusion might evoke *prima facie* similar amused reactions as panpsychism. But *secunda facie* it is quite an attractive theoretical option, because the physical sciences show us the image of a causally closed universe, and because the panpsychist may explain the reality of the individual relations of any dispositional structure, but not why they together constitute a coherent and harmonious reality. The pantheist can explain this by analogy to our pre-critical experience of diachronic identity as follows: Just like the assumption that there is a bearer of my conscious life enables me to see a unity and identity in my life, so empirical reality requires the existence of a single bearer to explain its own ontological unity.<sup>43</sup>

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42 Cf. Brüntrup 2011a: 39-40. As Wollgast 1990: 22 summarizes Krause's insight: »Human self-knowledge, and therefore all knowledge, presupposes an absolute principle, ›Essence«, which first makes the unity of thought and being (Sein) possible. The subject, searching for indubitable knowledge, and so reflecting on itself, presupposes the Absolute, knows that it always already finds itself within the Absolute, that it can know itself and the Absolute only through the Absolute.«

43 A central argument that seems to speak against the developed thesis is based on the premise that our phenomenal experience is a single stream of consciousness, and that we cannot have an epistemological approach to phenomenal experience that is not our own phenomenal experience. In other words, we always have only phenomenal access to our own consciousness, and no phenomenal evidence that this consciousness is part of a higher consciousness. This argument is a purely epistemological argument, and does not lead to a metaphysical conclusion that shows that it is not the case that our phenomenal experience is, at the same time part of a broader, phenomenal life. See Sprigge 2006: 485-86. See also Jaskolla/Buck 2012, Göcke 2014, and Zagzebski 2013 for analyses of holism and the concept of omni-subjectivity.

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# Deploying Panpsychism for the Demarcation of Panentheism

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## 1. Introduction

The recent literature on panentheism often starts with two claims. First, one is reminded of the recent popularity of the term ›panentheism‹ across philosophy of religion, systematic theology, the comparative study of world religions, science and religion, and naturalistic spirituality.<sup>1</sup> Through numbers, if not through arguments, »the panentheistic turn« is presented as »a doctrinal revolution«, which cannot be ignored by either critics or sympathisers.<sup>2</sup> Second, one is presented with a problem; namely, that no one knows exactly what panentheism means or how it can be demarcated from similar views—even demarcated from the very view panentheism is commonly pitted against, namely classical theism.

The central claims of panentheism, which are often used to define the position, are that ›the world is the body of God‹ and ›the world is in God‹. In order to avoid predetermining whether these phrases should be taken literally or metaphorically, I refer to these claims throughout this paper as ›the panentheistic slogans‹. These slogans are evocative but cannot illuminate panentheism's distinctive claims regarding God's relationship to the world without further analysis. As a result, there is a growing collection of secondary literature seeking to interpret these slogans in a way that clearly demarcates panentheism from neighbouring theological positions.<sup>3</sup> This paper contributes to this secondary literature.

However, there are also scholars who criticise the search for a clear demarcation for missing the point of panentheism entirely.<sup>4</sup> As Thomas C. Owen notes, some panentheists seem to view the fluidity or vagueness of their position as part of its attraction.<sup>5</sup> The implication is that the gathering together of

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1 See, Clayton and Peacocke 2004; Biernacki and Clayton 2014.

2 Clayton 1999; Brierley 2004: 4.

3 Mullins 2016; Göcke 2013; Gasser 2019 Brierly 2008: 636-41; Peterson 2001; Stenmark 2019; Gregerson 2004; Towne 2005; Hutchings 2010.

4 Lataster 2014; Lataster & Bilimoria 2018.

5 Thomas C. Owen justly critiques Philip Clayton for glossing such ambiguity as ›richness‹. Owen 2008: 653-53; cf. Clayton 2004: 254, 256.

various warring parties in religious discourse under the panentheist's banner of relationality, naturalness, scientific credibility, and embodied spirituality, is a good to which clear definitions should be willingly sacrificed.<sup>6</sup> For such a purpose, emphasising »family resemblances« between even the most disparate positions is enough.<sup>7</sup> However, this paper rejects this all-inclusive framing of either the content or purpose of panentheism. In the marketplace of academia, a clear demarcation between one's own theory or the family in which a theory is found and one's competitors is an essential part of any sales pitch, else the various members of the family might be adopted into other dynasties.

For all its celebration of unity, panentheism remains a polemical position and is presented as either »the *other* God of the philosophers«, the reasonable »middle path between two extremes« (dualistic classical theism and atheistic pantheism), or the »higher synthesis« between supernaturalism and atheistic naturalism.<sup>8</sup> If we cannot demarcate panentheism from these neighbouring positions, then not only does panentheism lose its competitive edge and much of its explanatory power, but the gathering of ambiguously related theories under the umbrella of panentheism becomes superfluous; panentheism would amount to »a somewhat suspect ›fudge‹ word.«<sup>9</sup> Process panentheist David Ray Griffin warns that »increased popularity brings a danger that ›panentheism‹ will be appropriated for doctrines devoid of [its] promise.«<sup>10</sup> If panentheism amounts to the popularity of an ambiguous slogan, rather than a genuinely shared understanding of the relationship between God and the world, then the panentheist umbrella seems unlikely to weather any future storms.

Yet there might be a way to avoid this dreary forecast. As Thomas writes, one »major exception to this vagueness in the concept of panentheism« is found in the work of Process philosophy.<sup>11</sup> Whilst few can deny the historical importance of Process theology within the panentheist family (particularly in the West where the name, but perhaps not the original idea, was coined), Process panentheism is often treated as the grandparent whose leadership of the family has been surpassed by younger generations. Thankfully, this paper has no

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6 One might point to the value-based and political arguments for panentheism in Jantzen 1984 and McFague 1993.

7 Clayton 2004: 249. Indeed, Philip Clayton describes both the classical theism of John Cooper and the atheistic pantheism of Robert Corrington as versions of panentheism, such that one is forced to ask what the term ›panentheism‹ excludes? See, Clayton 2017.

8 Cooper 2007; Brierley 2004: 3; Hartshorne & Reese 1953: 5.

9 Roe 198: 94. Patrick Hutching simply states that, to commit myself to panentheism is disingenuous since »I am—as I see it—committing myself to nothing.« Hutching 2010: 299.

10 Griffin 2005: 35.

11 Brierley 2004: 3.

interest in defending Process theology, nor holding Process panentheism up as the exemplary for panentheists more widely. Instead, this paper investigates if a particular theory of mind, one that Process philosophy shares with many other historical figures, can provide the resources to demarcate panentheism from neighbouring theological positions. The theory of mind in question is panpsychism.

This raises an immediate methodological question; quite simply, what's mind got to do with it? Although often taken for granted, it is not immediately transparent what a position in philosophy of mind has to do with the God-world relationship, nor how strong the relationship between mentality and divinity should be. On the one hand, it has been asserted that »on any possible reading of the panpsychic system« the world must be »internal parts of God and not external creations«. <sup>12</sup> On the other hand, the historical preference for panpsychism by panentheists may be little more than coincidence, since there seems no good reason why the God of classical theism could not have chosen to create a panpsychist universe quite apart from Godself. <sup>13</sup> It seems safest to conclude that adopting a panpsychist theory of mind cannot determine one's theology. Moreover, if God is the source of all being, then perhaps philosophy of mind should play second fiddle to philosophy of religion. If this is correct then panpsychism cannot *and* should not, determine one's theology. <sup>14</sup>

This brief methodological excursus allows me to be clear about the scope and ambition of this paper's analysis. It is precisely because panentheists have certain primary theological commitments regarding the God-world relationship that this paper explores whether panpsychism can facilitate and clarify those commitments. Within this paper, philosophy of mind is serving

12 James, 1947: 318; cf. Cooper 2007: 141.

13 Taliaferro 2017. This preference is noted in Cooper 2007: 193. However, classical theist Gottfried von Leibniz and pantheist Bauarch Spinoza, provide clear counter examples of how panpsychism can support various theological positions. Skrbina 2005: 87-91, 95-99.

14 R.T. Mullins raises something like this objection against demarcations where, »[a]ll the demarcating work is being done on the side of creation«, since »panentheism is supposed to be making a unique claim about the nature of God.« Mullins 2016: 342. But this seems to mischaracterize panentheism. Panentheism is primarily a statement about God's relationship with the world, not about God's nature in abstraction or considered apart from the world. Indeed, to many panentheists the idea of making a unique claim about the nature of God apart from the world would be to miss the point entirely (see, Henrikson, 2017: 1083; Gregersen 2004: 20; Meister 2017: 8; Peters 2007: 285). A God-world relationship may, of course, have strong implications for the attributes of God etc., such as seen in the panentheists tendency to accept divine passibility, mutability and deny *creatio ex nihilo*, but as Mullins shows these ideas alone fail to demarcate panentheism. On the insufficiency of these demarcations see, Stenmark 2019; Mullins 2016: 344-336; Göcke, 2013: 71-72; Lataster & Bilimoria 2018: 59-60.

as handmaiden to philosophy of religion. Panpsychism neither gives rise to, nor determines the beliefs of panentheism, and there is no argument here that panentheists are panpsychists by default (nor *vice versa*). Indeed, I do not think panpsychists should adopt panentheism as the theological expansion of their commitments.<sup>15</sup> Instead, the central question of this paper is only whether panpsychism provides a useful framework for interpreting the two panentheistic slogans, such that panentheists may use panpsychism to demarcate themselves from their neighbours and rivals.

To achieve this, the section below will define panpsychism by providing four core theses that demarcate panpsychism from neighbouring theories of mind and provide the boundaries for identifying one's theory as panpsychist. I then provide seven auxiliary theses that specify versions of panpsychism currently offered within this boundary. Not only is this necessary, since two ambiguities do not equal a clarity, but may serve as something of a model for the kind of demarcation we are hoping for with regard to panentheism. Whilst there may be a general correspondence between the aims of panentheism and panpsychism, vague gestures towards a correspondence between these theories is a relatively unhelpful exercise, particularly if the goal is to clarify panentheism's distinct claims. As such, the specific variants (seven auxiliary theses) within the panpsychist theory of consciousness are essential for the second task of this paper; to test whether particular versions of panpsychism can illuminate the two panentheistic slogans. The demarcation is in the details.

## 2. Panpsychism

The word ›panpsychism‹ can be translated to the general claim that all (pan) is mental (psyche), yet this should not be confused with animism, vitalism, or idealism. Popular definitions amongst contemporary panpsychists are that ›mentality is fundamental and ubiquitous in the natural world‹, ›the view that the basic physical constituents of the universe have mental properties‹, ›physical nature is composed of individuals, each of which is to some degree sentient ... [has] experience, or in a broad sense, consciousness‹, or more colloquially that ›everything has a soul ... or a rudiment of a soul.‹<sup>16</sup> While these definitions provide a general idea of what panpsychism is about, a more

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15 I should acknowledge that I do not subscribe to panentheism or Process theology, but do consider panpsychism the most plausible position in philosophy of mind.

16 Goff, Seager & Allen-Hermanson 2017; Nagel 1979: 181; Sprigge 1998; Popper & Eccles 1977: 15.

precise list of Panpsychism's Core Theses (PCT) are required to show that panpsychism is a coherent and demarcated position within philosophy of mind.

### *Panpsychism's Core Theses*

The first core thesis is:

PCT1: At least some physical organisms are phenomenally conscious. (Mental Realism)

Phenomenal consciousness refers to the qualitative, subjective, experience or feeling of ›what it is to be like‹ an organism.<sup>17</sup> The felt quality of an experience is said to be the *phenomenal character* of that experience; for example, the reddish quality of seeing the colour red. According to panpsychists, phenomenality is a real and irreducible feature of this world. The first core thesis demarcates panpsychism from reductive physicalism in its various forms (e.g. eliminativism, behaviourism, functionalism).

The second core thesis is:

PCT2: Phenomenal consciousness is fundamental, and thus can neither arise out of, nor be reduced to anything wholly lacking in phenomenal consciousness. (Non-Emergence and Irreducibility)

A panpsychist does not merely believe that phenomenal consciousness exists but argues that phenomenality is a really hard fact to account for in a fundamentally physical world.<sup>18</sup> If organic consciousness (phenomenal consciousness of material organisms) is real and neither reducible nor strongly emergent, then ›there must be some secret properties of matter with a direct connection to consciousness‹.<sup>19</sup> Weak and Strong Emergentists, however, will disagree with these claims and so PCT2 demarcates panpsychism from emergence theory.

Since a traditional substance dualist or hylomorphist can hold to PCT1 and PCT2, a further core thesis is required to demarcate panpsychism from these two alternative positions. I propose that a third core thesis of panpsychism should be,

PCT3: Whatever is fundamental for materiality is also fundamental for mentality, since there is only one fundamental level of reality. (Fundamental Monism)

<sup>17</sup> Sprigge 1971: 166-68; Nagel 1974; Chalmers 1995.

<sup>18</sup> Galen Strawson 2008: 60-67; Brogaard, 2017: 131-137.

<sup>19</sup> Coleman 2018a: 185.

For panpsychists then, unlike traditional substance dualists or hylomorphists, the individual phenomenal consciousness experienced by human beings is not itself fundamental, but it can be accounted for by positing a single, fundamental, psychophysical ground to reality.

This fundamental monism underpins a large portion of the general correspondences between panpsychism and panentheism. First, just as panentheism seeks the path between monistic pantheism and theological dualism, panpsychism proposes a route between reductive physicalism and substance dualism. Second, just as panentheism wishes to talk of God and the world as a ›qualified non-dualism‹ (*Vishishtadvaita*) where two realities form a single unity, so do many panpsychists speak of mind and matter as the two properties of a shared neutral substance or as the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of any one entity.<sup>20</sup> Third, for panentheists, infinity is a monistic category that includes all finite realities, and for the panpsychist fundamentality is a monistic category that grounds all beings and includes both material and mental properties. Fourth, just as a panpsychist seeks to naturalise the mind, so too do many panentheists seek a naturalistic version of theism.

Finally, one should state a fourth core thesis for panpsychism:

PCT4: Fundamental consciousness is necessary for explaining organic consciousness.

Panpsychism posits consciousness at the fundamental level of reality because it provides an explanation for organic consciousness. If fundamental consciousness does not and will never aid (in any way) in explaining organic consciousness, then panpsychists should abandon their position.<sup>21</sup> As such, how best to specify PCT4 is a major conundrum for panpsychists, better known as ›the combination problem‹.<sup>22</sup> Phrased as a question, the combination problem asks: what is the relationship between fundamental consciousness and human subjects, just that the former aids in explaining the existence of the latter? The hard-nut of this question is, more specifically, how does the adding together of many single perspectives result in a composite but unified conscious whole?

20 Meister 2017: 3. See, Stubenberg 2017; Chalmers 2015.

21 There are versions of panpsychism that are not so reliant on providing an explanation of organic consciousness, and instead seek to provide explanations to one of the other perineal mysteries of philosophy; such as causation. However, within philosophy of mind, I take it that all theories *raison d'être* is to provide an explanation of organic consciousness.

22 This is a very old problem discussed by Lucretius, Leibniz, and William James, but the conundrum was given its modern name in Seager 1995. For a thorough discussion see, Chalmers 2017b: 179-214.

Whilst the combination problem has yet to be expressed as a defeater against panpsychism, it remains an open question that requires (and is currently receiving) further research.<sup>23</sup> As panpsychists debate between themselves how to specify PCT<sub>4</sub>, this conundrum holds the competing mind-body ontologies in a stalemate; the combination problem is comparable to the interaction problem for substance dualists, or the question of how mind emerges from mindless matter for the emergentist. It may simply be a matter of which mystery one is happy to live with.

With these core theses we have successfully defined panpsychism and demarcated it from the other major positions in philosophy of mind. A specific version of panpsychism will require auxiliary theses, upon which panpsychists may disagree whilst still identifying their position with the panpsychist camp. As mentioned above, these auxiliary theses will be important for interpreting the pantheistic slogans of divine embodiment and interiority.

### *Panpsychism's Auxiliary Theses*

The seven auxiliary theses stated below are organised into three semi-independent categories. First, whilst panpsychists all agree that mentality is found at the fundamental level they differ on how to specify the nature of this primitive mentality (Aux<sub>1-3</sub>). No living panpsychists I know of posit rational, volitional, self-conscious, emotional, imaginative, etc. minds as fundamental—but prefer to use phrases such as »thin subjects« or »raw feels«. <sup>24</sup> The kind of mental life enjoyed by human beings is taken to be the result of the complexity and evolutionary development of these basic subjects. On panpsychism, you can't get something from nothing (*pace* strong emergence) and there really is something there (*pace* reductive physicalism), but we may be able to get more mental life from less—the question is ›how much less?‹. Currently a panpsychist has a choice between three auxiliary theses on this matter:

Aux<sub>1</sub>: Basic subjects, which have simple momentary experiences, exist at the fundamental level. (Subject Panpsychism)

The panpsychists who reject Aux<sub>1</sub> do so either because it is too counterintuitive or because it bares the full force of the combination problem; it demands

<sup>23</sup> Sam Coleman describes the combination problem »represents a major theoretical ›I owe you‹ of the panexperientialist/panpsychist. But that there is work to be done does not imply the falsity of a view, and there are avenues to be explored.« Coleman 2006: 51.

<sup>24</sup> ›Thin subjects‹ or »SESMETs« are what Galen Strawson uses to refer to subjects that persist only for the briefest period of time, Strawson 2009. ›Raw feels‹ is a phrase taken from Toleman 1932 to refer to features of our mental life that science cannot capture.

an account of how subjects combine to form larger subjects. To avoid these issues some panpsychists prefer:

Aux2: Proto-phenomenal properties, but not phenomenal experience or subjects, are found at the fundamental level. (Panprotopsychism)

Whilst panprotopsychism does not demand an account of subject combination, it does still require an account of how phenomenal experiences arise from proto-phenomenal properties without violating PTC2. Moreover, whilst some panprotopsychists name specific properties, such as qualities or intentions, we cannot really know what proto-phenomenal properties are. Panprotopsychism, therefore, seems threaten by noumenalism.<sup>25</sup> If Aux1 is too counterintuitive, and Aux2 appears too mysterious, then the third option is:

Aux3: There are experiences, but no subjects to experience them, at the fundamental level. (Panexperientialism)

This is the option preferred, almost exclusively, by Process theologians since it requires an event-based, and not substance-based, ontology to make sense of experiences floating free of subjects.

The second disagreement between panpsychists is in how to specify what is fundamental, or perhaps more clearly, *where* the fundamental level of reality is (Aux4-5). As argued above, the panpsychist needs to hold to fundamental monism (PTC3) and this leaves panpsychists with only two choices. The first option is,

Aux4: The cosmos is made up from a plurality of fundamental psychophysical micro-entities. (Micropsychism).

Simply put, the fundamental level of reality is where the building-blocks for all that exists are found (e.g. quarks and photons, or whatever is described by a completed physics). It is largely due to the success of reductionistic explanations in the natural sciences that the majority of Western panpsychists retain the spirit of reductionism by holding to micropsychism alongside microphysicalism (that physical things are explained in virtue of their physical parts). In order to satisfy PTC4, micropsychists typically seek models of mental combination. However, Eastern forms of panpsychism, Absolute idealism, and the rise of environmental holism has also meant that some panpsychists, instead, favour:

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<sup>25</sup> See, panqualityism in Coleman 2018b and panintentionalism in Pfeifer 2016.



Aux5: The cosmos as a single psychophysical whole is fundamental. (Cosmopsychism).

More recently, some analytic philosophers of mind have come to prefer Aux5 over Aux4, due to the perception that PCT4 will be easier to maintain.<sup>26</sup> That is, it is hoped that a theory of subject individuation will be easier than a theory of subject combination. This view is influenced by Jonathan Schaffer's account of *priority monism*, where the one and only fundamental entity is the cosmos.<sup>27</sup>

The third set of auxiliary theses outline two types of relation between fundamental subjects and human or organic subjects; namely, constitutive and non-constitutive relations. The literature on the combination problem is too large to survey fully here but I will give four example solutions from: constitutive combination, non-constitutive combination, constitutive individuation, and non-constitutive individuation. It is these examples that are most relevant for the present discussion since they specify how different panpsychists understand the mind-body relation and what it means for a mind to be >in< another mind.

The first type of relation is a constitutive relation, where all the true statements about human consciousness are (wholly or partially) grounded in true statements about fundamental consciousness.<sup>28</sup> To use a (controversial) metaphor from ecclesiology, if individual members of a church are seen to be prior to the church itself, then the existence of the church might be said to be grounded in the existence of its members. In this case, the church just is the sum of its members. However, if the church (perhaps as a spiritual reality) is logically prior to it having any members, then being a member of the church is a state of affairs about an individual that is grounded in the existence of church (itself, probably grounded in something else, like the will of God). In both cases, the grounding entities are prior to and more fundamental than the grounded entities. That is, truths about human consciousness are true in virtue of the fact that they are also, perhaps primarily, true about fundamental consciousness.

Aux6: All true facts about organic consciousness are true in virtue of facts about fundamental mentality. (Constitutive Panpsychism)

26 Goff 2017b; Nagasawa & Weger 2017; Jaskolla & Buck 2012.

27 Schaffer 2010. Schaffer's account is different to cosmopsychism primarily because Schaffer identifies as a materialist.

28 Chalmers, 2017b, 181; Cf. Fine 2012; Scheaffer 2009.

On this view, the organic subject is the sum of its fundamental parts (if combined with Aux<sub>4</sub>) or a part of a larger subject (with Aux<sub>5</sub>). All the organic subject's properties and causal powers are metaphysically necessitated by the properties and powers found at the fundamental level. This is sometimes phrased as an ›ontological free lunch‹, since the organic subject is nothing ›over-and-above‹ fundamental mentality.<sup>29</sup>

For many panpsychists, the advantage of Aux<sub>6</sub> is that it retains a bottom-up, scientific (even quasi-reductionist) account of consciousness, parallel to material sciences. The materialist will hold to a constitutive relation like this between fundamental physical facts and organic material/mental facts, whereas a constitutive panpsychist will hold to a constitutive relation between fundamental mental facts and organic mental facts (facts about the mental life of organisms). The main advantage is that constitutive relations seem best suited for accounting for mental causation in a bottom-up fashion alongside physical causation.<sup>30</sup>

A proposed constitutive combinatorial solution (Aux<sub>4</sub> + Aux<sub>6</sub>) to the combination problem is Philip Goff's idea of Phenomenal Bonding. Goff has proposed that, just as fundamental entities have intrinsic phenomenal properties (subjectivity, experience) and extrinsic material properties (mass, spin, location), so too might relations between such entities have intrinsic phenomenal relational properties which facilitate subject combination.<sup>31</sup> Similarly, Gregg Rosenberg's ›carrier hypothesis‹ has proposed that causation is a fundamental relation that has a phenomenal interiority to it, as part of his argument for panpsychism from causation.<sup>32</sup> The biggest challenge for Phenomenal Bonding is to give a more positive account of what these ›bonds‹ are, where they are, and how they structure the mental aspect of the world such that some things, like organisms, are conscious as single collective wholes, and other things (like tables and slippers) are not.

Philip Goff has more recently argued that constitutive panpsychists should, instead, adopt Cosmopsychism (Aux<sub>5</sub>). Whilst this provides some relief from providing a positive account of combinatorial relations, it still requires an

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29 Goff 2017b: 226–27.

30 Chalmers 2017b: 193.

31 Philip Goff abandons his own idea in favour of a constitutive cosmopsychism. Others are more hopeful that ›phenomenal bonds‹ might yet provide the best way forward; Miller 2017; Chalmers 2017b.

32 Goff 2009, Goff 2017a. As such, Rosenberg argues that panpsychism not only offers a solution to the mind-body problem, but also to what intrinsic or categorical natures carry the structures of causality in our world. Rosenberg 2004. See also, Mørch 2014; Mørch forthcoming.

account of constitutive individuation. Goff refers to this as Grounding by Subsumption; all true facts about organic subjects are true in virtue of being true of the cosmic subject. In this way, Goff argues, organic subjects are subsumed within the cosmic subject as a partial aspect of a given unity.<sup>33</sup> On this view, the fundamental entity (the cosmos) is not a »homogenous blob« but is »structured« by its different aspects.<sup>34</sup> These aspects may be considered (epistemologically) in isolation, but (ontologically) depend upon the existence of the whole.

If one has never been enamoured by materialism and reductive explanations, then constitutive solutions to the combination problem may seem unnecessarily strange or sterile. Instead, a panpsychist, perhaps who has previously been associated with dualism or emergence theory, may prefer to search for a non-constitutive solution to the combination problem.

Aux7: There are true facts about organic consciousness that are not true in virtue of facts about fundamental mentality. (Non-Constitutive Panpsychism)

A non-constitutive relation allows for new properties to arise within the combined organic subject that are not present in the fundamental subject. The organic subject can be said to be caused by the fundamental subject(s), but to exist over-and-above the fundamental subject(s).

The most important micropsychist version of the non-constitutive relation (Aux4 + Aux7) is Emergent Panpsychism.<sup>35</sup> As with emergence theory more widely, an emergent panpsychist can say that the body is the emergent base of the mind, and that the body gives rise to the mind due to some contingent laws of nature. But, importantly, as a panpsychist body this emergent base is a society of micropsychist subjects who merge or infuse to create a single collective mind. The main advantage of this position is that no further theory of combination is required, instead the emergent mind is fundamental in the same way that a substance dualist affirms.<sup>36</sup>

33 Goff 2017b: 221-233. The terms ›aspect‹ and ›unity‹ are treated as primitive concepts that do not admit fundamental analysis. Goff uses examples to clarify these terms: one's *unified* experience is often made up of different auditory, visual, and emotional *aspects*; a specific colour is a unity of different aspects of hue, saturation and lightness; states of affairs (electrons-having-negative-charge) are fundamental unities of which the object (electron) and the property (negative charge) are aspects.

34 Goff 2017b: 225-26.

35 Seager 2012; Seager 2010; Brüntrup 2017; Mørch 2014.

36 And thus, David J. Chalmers argues that emergent panpsychism suffers from the same difficulty as substances dualists in accounting for mental causation; Chalmers, 2017b, 193-94.

As long as Aux7 is not combined with Aux2 (panprotopsychism), then emergent panpsychism is not in danger of retreating into a (super)strong emergence theory, as is ruled out by PCT2. As a realist position regarding mentality (PCT1) and often realist concerning downward causation, emergent panpsychism cannot be confused with Weak Emergence either.<sup>37</sup> That said, given that the rejection of emergence is a core thesis for panpsychism, many panpsychists are not willing to sail so close to the wind of emergence theory.

Finally, one might propose a non-constitutive model of individuation (Aux5 + Aux7). Such solutions are popular amongst cosmopsychists, but highly speculative and often phrased metaphorically. For example, Itay Shani employs aquatic metaphors where the universe is a »vast ocean of consciousness« or »oceanic plenum« and human subjects are »local disturbances coursing the ocean as currents, waves, streams, eddies, bubbles, ripples, and the like«. <sup>38</sup> Freya Mathews and Joseph Bracken, who both endorse panentheism, employ the language of systems theory; a self is a »system with a very special kind of goal, namely its own maintenance and self-perpetuation.« <sup>39</sup> For Bracken, Ultimate Reality is a comprehensive system, in this technical sense, and is identified as the divine-life system, which includes the world and all creatures »as a sub-system within the higher-order system of the divine life«. <sup>40</sup>

This brings us to the theological implications of these variants of panpsychism and so to the main investigative question of this paper: can panpsychism aid panentheists in interpreting their two core metaphors in a way that demarcates their position from neighbouring theories of the God-world relationship? Although the two panentheistic slogans should ideally be held together they are treated somewhat separately in the two remaining sections of this paper. First, I focus on how micropsychist theories of combination (Aux4 + Aux6/Aux7) illuminate how the world might be God's body, and second I examine how cosmopsychist theories of individuation (Aux5 + Aux6/Aux7) may elucidate how one subject may be said to be ›in‹ another subject, perhaps as the world is ›in‹ God.

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37 Brüntrup 2017.

38 Shani 2015: 389-437, 411-412.

39 Mathews 2003:48. Mathews 2010.

40 Bracken 2015: 219. Bracken is clear that the aim of its systems-orientated approach is to »eliminate any kind of dualism, even dualism between God and the world of creation« p. 224.

### 3. The World as God's Panpsychist Body

The first panentheistic slogan draws explicitly on philosophy of mind in claiming that ›the world is the body of God‹. There are as many ways to interpret this metaphor as there are positions in philosophy of mind. If God is an immaterial mind, and the world is a ›mindless‹ mechanical body over which God has direct and total control, then a classical theist could easily employ this metaphor to depict the ontological separation between God and the world, as well as God's total determination of all events.<sup>41</sup> Yet, panentheists typically critique exactly this depiction of the mind-body, God-world relationships.<sup>42</sup> The success for this metaphor hinges almost entirely upon whether the panentheist can specify a mind-body relationship capable of performing the interpretative heavy-lifting necessary to demarcate panentheism from neighbouring theological positions.<sup>43</sup>

Western versions of panentheism have more recently turned to emergence theory to elucidate the metaphor of divine embodiment.<sup>44</sup> Emergence theory states that consciousness emerges from the complex arrangements of the physical body, such that consciousness supervenes upon (is determined by, or is at least ontologically dependent upon) the body. Probably the most well-known statement of »emergentist panentheism« is Philip Clayton's »*panentheistic analogy*«, which suggests that God acts in the world in a way analogous to how the emergent mind (whole) acts through the body (parts) as its physical substrate.<sup>45</sup>

There have been, however, a number of critiques against employing emergence theory to interpret the panentheist's use of this metaphor. Niels Henrik Gregersen argues that, whilst the world as God's body may have been an attractive metaphor in antiquity, the rise of emergence theory in philosophy of mind makes this metaphor unsuitable since, »God would appear as an emergent reality arising out of natural processes rather than the other way around.«<sup>46</sup> Emily Thomas compares the emergentist panentheism of Clayton, Peacocke and Morowitz, unfavourably, with Samuel Alexander's emergentist theology by arguing that emergence theory is quite simply incompatible with the claim that the universe is ›in‹ God. If God is the emergent whole or resultant then it

41 T.J. Mawson even argues that »Classical Theism is committed to seeing the universe as God's body.« Mawson 2006: 171.

42 McFague 1993: 144-145, 154-155.

43 Ward 2004, 62-68; Barua 2010.

44 Leidenhag 2013, 978.

45 Clayton 1997: 258-59.

46 Gregersen 2004: 20.

can only be true to say that »deity is strictly contained ›in‹ the universe« and not the other way around.<sup>47</sup> In summary, as I have argued elsewhere, the use of emergence theory entails the prioritization of the material and the subordination of the immaterial, which is in tension with much philosophy of religion and forms of theism, including pantheism.<sup>48</sup> The unsuitability of emergence theory, in addition to a longstanding historical precedent, gives us good reason to turn to panpsychism instead.

Subject Panpsychism and Micropsychism (Aux1 + Aux4) give an account of the body as a society of subjects. If the world is a body in this sense, then the universe is a cosmic community, united by a shared relation to the whole/God. This seems congruent with pantheistic motivations towards a sacramental, ecological, and value-laden picture of the physical universe, and the rejection of inert, mechanistic views of materiality. An example of this approach is Hartshorne's statement that »The world consists of individuals, but the totality of individuals as a physical or spatial whole is God's body, the Soul of which is God.«<sup>49</sup> Yet, what relation the bodily community of subjects will bear to God on this panpsychist interpretation of pantheism will depend upon the type of combinatorial relation that is adopted, Aux6 or Aux7.

### 3.1 *Constitutive Micropsychism and God's Body*

If the micropsychist, subject panpsychist also adopts a constitutive relation (Aux1+ Aux4 + Aux6), then God will be the sum of the universe; all facts about God will be true in virtue of being true of some feature of the world. As such, God is constantly affected by the experiences and events in the world between creatures as a metaphysical necessity. Indeed, whilst ›God‹ would properly refer to the joint experience of the whole cosmic community, it would not be incorrect to refer to each subject as God in a derivative sense of participating in, even constituting, the divine body. This resonates with Lataster's celebration of pantheism for lacking »an authoritarian deity dictating commands from on high. Only the divine can tell us what to do, but we are the divine!«<sup>50</sup>

47 Thomas 2016.

48 Leidenhag 2016.

49 Hartshorne 1984: 94.

50 Lataster & Bilimoria 2018: 52. Similarly, Gregersen ties Christian pantheism to degree Christology, where Christological revelation is not unique to the person Jesus of Nazareth. Freya Mathews goes so far as to suggest that on pantheism/panpsychism, »God with angels and burning bushes, the gods and goddess of Olympus and small hearth gods of Asia to Daoist immortals, fox faeries, vision lakes, tertons, dragons, and rainbow serpents« are all »different emanations of the same material substratum«, that is »imbued with possibilities of inspiration.« Mathews 2010: 234-35.

The problem for panentheism here is that a constitutive relation may be too strong, and so fail to demarcate panentheism from pantheism.<sup>51</sup> Not only do God and the world share a single substance, but there are no facts about God that are not also true of the world as a whole.<sup>52</sup>

### 3.2 *Non-constitutive Micropsychism and God's Body*

If the panentheist adopts Micropsychism, Subject Panpsychism, and Non-constitutive Panpsychism (Aux1 + Aux4 + Aux7), then the picture changes substantially. The world is still the body of God as a combined plurality of subjects or cosmic community, but God is not reducible to the sum of this plurality of subjects. As such, God may have properties, intentionality, experiences, or actions that are not true of individual organic subjects, nor true of the cosmic community as a whole. As such, the panentheists could now demarcate their position from pantheism and classical theism by claiming that, whilst God depends upon the world (*contra* classical theism), God also transcends the world (*contra* pantheism); there are true facts about God that are not true of the world, but all true facts about the world affect, and perhaps even effect, the very essence of God.

However, if the non-constitutive relation employed is the causal relation of emergence then on this model God again appears secondary and dependent upon the universe, but the universe does not appear dependent upon God. Panentheism would then become a version of emergent theism. This conclusion may not be exclusive to emergent panpsychism but may be a tendency within all varieties of micropsychism and (as argued above) traditional emergence, where the parts are taken as more fundamental than the whole. Therefore, a panentheist committed to divine creation/creativity of the world, to God's logical priority over the world, or even God's logically equality with the world, is more likely to find aid from cosmopsychism (Aux5) than micropsychism (Aux4).

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51 Lataster stresses that many versions of panentheism hold that God and the world are the same substance, and in doing so classifies panentheism as a version of pantheism. Lataster 2014: 390-91, 392.

52 For more on pantheism and constitutive panpsychism, see Leidenhag 2018.

#### 4. Panpsychism ›in‹ God

The second panentheist slogan, »that *the world exists within the Divine, although God is also more than the world*«, is captured in the very name ›pan-en-theism‹.<sup>53</sup> Whilst a panentheist could abandon all notion of divine embodiment, she cannot abandon the claim that ›all is in God‹ and still claim to be a pan-en-theist. Yet, as Gregersen writes, »the concept of panentheism is not stable in itself. The little word ›in‹ is the hinge of it all.«<sup>54</sup> It is widely recognised that this small word ›in‹, »must bear the brunt of the interpretative burden« since it alone »holds the position together and distinguishes it from its rivals.«<sup>55</sup> To achieve this, what is meant by ›the world being in God‹ must exclude, first, whatever it means for the world to be ›outside of God‹ (Classical Theism) and, second, ›identical to God‹ (pantheism).<sup>56</sup> Third, to say that ›the world is in God‹ should not be identical to the claim that ›God is in the world‹; the traditional doctrine of divine omnipresence or indwelling.<sup>57</sup> Whilst more controversial, this third constraint is nothing more than the logical consequence of the first two. For if what it means for the world to be in God is identical to traditional notions of omnipresence then the defining statement of panentheism is no different from a statement adhered to by most classical theists. Similarly, if ›God‹ and ›world‹ can dance around the word ›in‹ interchangeably then there is a risk of implying that these are synonymous concepts, as in many versions of pantheism.

In his constructive proposal to demarcate panentheism from neighbouring positions, R.T. Mullins suggests that panentheists should interpret the ›in‹ literally and not metaphorically. To do this, Mullins recommends that panentheists make metaphysical space and metaphysical time attributes of God—in Gregersen's words, God has »roominess«.<sup>58</sup> When this roomy God creates the universe, physical space and time are created within the divine metaphysical space and time. In this way, the universe and all its objects are literally ›in‹ God. This proposal, as Mullins intends, says something unique about God and so might be the beginnings of a successfully demarcated panentheism.<sup>59</sup>

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53 Clayton 2017: 1045

54 Gregersen 2004: 19.

55 Clayton 2004: 252; Peterson 2001: 396.

56 Göcke 2013: 63.

57 For example, Krishna's teaching in the *Bhagavad Gita* is often labelled as pantheistic and not panentheistic because he teaches that whilst »everyone abides in him, he does not abide in them.« Lataster & Bilimoria 2018: 52. This is contrary to Clayton 2010: 184.

58 Mullins 2016: 342-344; Gregersen 2004: 20.

59 Mullins 2016: 243.



However, it says nothing about God's relationship to the world and very little about the ontology of the world. As a result, Mullins' proposal abandons most of panentheism's motivators to be a more credibly scientific, relational, dynamic, view of God that can account for both the problem of evil and the reality of religious experience.<sup>60</sup> A clear demarcation that fails to motivate the position is only marginally helpful to the panentheist. The question is, can panpsychism provide an equally clear demarcation of panentheism as Mullins' proposal without sacrificing the motivating reasons to adopt panentheism in the first place?

Since, cosmopsychism (Aux5) starts with a single whole, which all finite organic subjects are contained within, it seems that the second panentheistic metaphor is a theological parallel to cosmopsychism. This retains both the literal reading of ›in‹ that Mullins argues for, but in both a mentalistic and spatial sense, since on panpsychism subjectivity and extension are fundamentally united (PCT3). As Uwe Meixner comments,

It seems natural to identify the transcendental subject with God. The immediate consequence of this idea is that *everything is in God* (*qua* being in His total experience, which, at the same time, is the totality of all experiences), whether as an experience, as a subject of experience, or as an object of experience.<sup>61</sup>

Meixner identifies this version of cosmopsychism (Husserlian idealism) with a panentheism that provides »a real sense of the inner, the utterly intimate omnipresence of God.«<sup>62</sup> As such, this cosmopsychist notion of how the world is ›in‹ God, such that the minds of the world exist by virtue of being part of God's experience, also retains at least some of the main motivators of panentheism. It seems a promising start for the panentheist, therefore, to adopt PTC<sub>1-4</sub> with Aux5. However, the panentheist will still need to adopt a theory of individuation and apply either a constitutive or non-constitutive relation to her understanding of the God-world relationship.

#### 4.1 *Constitutive Cosmopsychism*

If applied to panentheism, Philip Goff's grounding by subsumption would mean that organic subjects are constitutive aspects of the divine. This already

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60 Panentheists need not be concerned with all these motivators, nor does their proposal need to be successful in achieving all these claims. But, I take it that a panentheists should be concerned with at least one of these in order to motivate her metaphysical claims in competition to competing models of God.

61 Meixner 2017: 399.

62 Ibid.

invokes the mereological language that literal interpretations of pantheism prefer. It also captures the idea that discrete, individual subjects and objects are both dependent upon God and manifestations of the divine being, not as symbolic representations as a classical theism may hold, but in a more direct and ontological fashion.<sup>63</sup> In a way similar to how Goff says that aspects of the cosmic consciousness can be distinguished epistemologically without ontological separation, Göcke describes pantheism as holding to a distinction between reality and ultimate reality »that is epistemologically needed for ultimate explanation, [but] cannot be a *substantial* ontological distinction between them for a variety of reasons.«<sup>64</sup>

Goff argues that his grounding by subsumption model only applies to subject cosmopsychism (Aux1+Aux5), since aspects of unities (unlike parts of composites) cannot have any properties, which are not had by the whole within which they are subsumed; if aspects of the cosmos are subjects, then the cosmos must also be a subject. This may suit the personal view of God adopted by many (but not all) pantheists, demarcating it from, at least, impersonal versions of pantheism. He also suggests, however, that fundamental reality will not be a pure subject, but an impure subject with both experiential and non-experiential aspects (consciousness+).<sup>65</sup> Although Goff cannot tell us what exactly consciousness+ consists in, grounding by subsumption may yet tell us some things about the cosmic-subject/God. For example, the cosmic subject must be aware of all the experiences and first-person perspectives that are contained within it as partial aspects, otherwise these partial aspects would have properties not had by the cosmic subject. To be clear, the cosmic subject does not know *about* the experiences of finite subjects in a third- or second-person kind of knowledge, as is the case in some definitions of omniscience and omnipresence in classical theism, but the cosmic subject experiences them as its own, in an unmediated first-person way. Indeed, my experiences just are the experiences of God in the partial aspect of God that is ›me‹. Since my experiences are grounded in God's experiences, there can be no separation between how I feel and how God feels.

We might compare this constitutive cosmopsychism to Linda Zagzebski's proposal to add ›omnisubjectivity‹ as a divine attribute within classical theism. She argues that perfect knowledge of subjects and their first-person experiences, such that God is present with creatures in their experiences, is a direct implication of the classical theists' commitment to omnipresence, omniscience

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63 Clayton 2010: 187-190.

64 Göcke 2017: 6.

65 Goff 2017b: 230.

and omnipotence.<sup>66</sup> Zagzebski proposes that an omnisubjective God maximally empathizes with all the conscious first-person states of creaturely subjects. She contrasts her proposal with a constitutive relation between the divine consciousness and human subjects for three reasons. Her first reason is that if the »One conscious self (God) has another conscious self (you) as a part.« Then, »[t]he self you thought you were is not a distinct self.«<sup>67</sup> This alone may not concern panentheists or panpsychists, who could argue that we must deflate our notions of selfhood away from autonomous or fundamental unities. Second, Zagzebski points out the repercussions for relationality, since »if I am simply a part of God, I lose much of the point of *addressing* God as a distinct person.«<sup>68</sup> There can be no second-personal I-Thou relationship in a whole-part constitutive relation; this seems to me a serious problem for panentheists who claim to have a highly relational view of God. Third, Zagzebski defends her own view from The Moral Objection, which worries that if God empathizes with humanity then immoral dispositions and intentions are included into the life of God. Although Zagzebski applauds Charles Hartshorne sensitivity to the importance of divine empathy, she cites his understanding of the world as the body of God as incurring the full force of The Moral Objection, and thus departing from the tradition on the issue of absolute divine goodness and holiness.<sup>69</sup> This is a clear example of how the type of relation between God and the world has concrete implications for religious practice and ideas of who God is.

As an asymmetrical relation, grounding by subsumption may appear to demarcate this version of cosmopsychist panentheism from pantheism; since the world would be grounded in God (by subsumption), but God would not be grounded in the world and thus it seems that God and the world cannot be strictly identical. However, this demarcation fails. For whilst it is true that God bears an asymmetrical relation to organic or finite subjects (such as human beings), God does not bear such an asymmetrical relation to the world (universe or multiverse) as a whole. Indeed, a constitutive relation means that the cosmic subject is *not* more than the world, but is just the sum of its parts; the total consciousness+ in the world when it is not individuated.<sup>70</sup> The world as a whole is not a partial aspect of God, but simply is God. Goff considers this a problem for theological appropriations of his theory of mind. He comments,

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66 Zagzebski 2013: 10-25.

67 Zagzebski 2013: 24.

68 Ibid.

69 Ward 2004: 70.

70 Leidenhag 2018.

Cosmopsychism does not entail pantheism. We need not think of the universe as a supremely intelligent rational agent.... It is more plausible to think that the consciousness of the universe is simply a mess.<sup>71</sup>

Many pantheists will, justly, complain that Goff's depiction of their deity as »a supremely intelligent rational agent« is a mischaracterisation. However, Goff's assumption that his position is closest to some form of pantheism and his warning that any cosmic deity resulting from his philosophy of mind will lack mental (rational, emotional, experiential, violation) coherence or clarity should be of concern to pantheists.

#### 4.2 *Pantheism and Non-constitutive Cosmopsychism*

The problem of a ›messy‹ God is avoided by a cosmopsychist pantheism that adopts the non-constitutive model of individuation (Aux7). The most common example of a non-constitutive relation is the contingent and causal relation described in emergence theory. When combined with cosmopsychism this becomes something like a reverse emergence theory, where the whole system (›the ocean‹) logically precedes and causes the parts (sub-systems or ›eddies‹) to endure semi-independently for a time. Unlike emergent pantheism or emergent panpsychism, the adoption of cosmopsychism buttresses this version of panpsychism from the previous criticisms. If the pantheist were to adopt a non-constitutive cosmopsychism (Aux5 + Aux7) they would still be able to claim that God is logically prior to and the causal ground of all other subjects, whilst also being of one substance with all finite beings. The world is a contingent, rather than a necessary, aspect of God.

The non-constitutive relation means that the cosmic consciousness is more than the sum of its partial aspects. Therefore, the cosmic substrate, the divine ocean of consciousness, need not experience all (morally problematic) finite intentions, thoughts, emotions as its own. Indeed, the fundamental level of mentality need not be personal or a subject at all. That is, a non-constitutive relation (Aux7) is compatible with subject panpsychism (Aux1), panexperientialism (Aux2) or panprotopsyism (Aux 3), in a way grounding by subsumption was not. Therefore, a non-constitutive cosmopsychism allows the pantheist to adopt either a personal, impersonal or more-than-personal view of God. The demarcation between pantheism and pantheism is upheld by the contingent causal relation between God and the subjects/objects we call ›the world‹. In terms of holding together agency at both the cosmic-divine level and the organic level, this position gives no immediate relief to the problems

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71 Goff 2017b: 246.

of epiphenomenalism and overdetermination that challenge ontologies with fundamental agents existing on multiple levels, but this is not a unique or defeating problem for non-constitutive cosmopsychism/panentheism.<sup>72</sup>

This non-constitutive relation between God and the world means that there is a logically possible state of affairs where God, as the cosmic consciousness, was the only consciousness in existence and none of the finite objects and subjects of the world were yet to individuate themselves from the divine substance or consciousness. What we may have in a non-constitutive cosmopsychist interpretation of panentheism is an origin of finite subjects/objects through emanation from the divine substance; creation *ex deo*, not creation *ex nihilo*. Contrary to classical theism, this emanation not only takes place within the substance of God, rather than from absolute nothingness, but individuation results from a kind of contingent law or principle of the divine being itself, rather than an act of the divine will. This corresponds with a number of statements from panentheists that emanation implies that God is »bodying [the world] forth, generating all life from her being« and that creation is »a self-transformation of the divine being«.<sup>73</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

This paper has explored whether panpsychism can illuminate the two panentheistic slogans in such a way that panentheism can be clearly demarcated from neighbouring positions. Whilst panpsychism may be combined with any model of God, panpsychism's account of the mind-body relation and fundamental-organic consciousness relation do seem to provide a framework for interpreting the panentheists metaphors in a distinctive manner. This is a promising start, but further work will be needed to develop this into a more thorough demarcation and version of panentheism. Since evocatively powerful ambiguities have plagued panentheism in the past, I have employed panpsychism's auxiliary theses in addition to the core panpsychist theses to try and make this discussion as specific and concrete as possible. It is clear from the resulting analysis that these auxiliaries make a great deal of difference to the interpretation of panentheism's core metaphors. Future scholars should keep these particularities in mind when exploring or asserting any correspondence between panpsychism and panentheism. In the end, a cosmopsychism that posits a non-constitutive relation between the cosmic consciousness and

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72 Chalmers 2017b: 194.

73 McFague 1993: 152; Göcke 2017: 7.

organic subjects seems to mirror the kind of relationship between God and the world posited by panentheists most faithfully. However, there is much more to be done on this and panpsychists themselves are at no agreement concerning the possibility of such individuation; panentheists will need to pay attention to this ongoing debate. For now, it seems that there may be a way of employing panpsychism for the demarcation of panentheism, but as to whether panentheism is a plausible or desirable theology is a separate question and one I will leave panentheists to argue for.

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# God as World-Mind: Some Theological Implications of Panpsychism

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Perhaps the two most important concepts in the history of philosophy are God and mind. Unsurprisingly, both are notoriously vague, which is a large part of the reason why there has been such a diversity of views on these topics. Needless to say, the literature on each is vast. Less examined, though, is the intersection of these two concepts. ›God as mind‹; ›mind as God‹—what can these mean? What do they imply? How can such hybrid concepts be articulated and integrated into the current stream of philosophic thought? These are the questions that I will explore in the present essay. Ultimately I will argue that the most reasonable conception of God is that of a world-mind—the mind of the cosmos—in a sense that is completely analogous to the mind of a human being.

These questions will be examined in light of two other over-arching concepts: *panpsychism* and *pantheism*. Rather than analyzing these in terms of their various and subtle forms, I will address each in a relatively broad and loose conception. Panpsychism I take to be the view that all objects, or systems of objects, have, or contain, aspects of mind. Pantheism I take to be the view that God resides ›in‹ the universe as its spirit or soul. Both of these require some discussion before moving on to the primary subject at hand.

First, panpsychism: This is an ancient and respected metaphysical view, dating to the earliest days of Western philosophy. It almost certainly derives from even older pre-rational animistic traditions, which became formalized in the language and concepts of true philosophy. Primitive peoples seemed to have had an instinctive awareness that the world of nature was suffused with agency, potency, experientiality, and will. Non-human life forms clearly worked toward desired ends in a deliberate and quasi-conscious manner. They clearly experienced the world; they could flourish and be happy; they could suffer and perish. Indigenous people, seeing themselves as fully integrated into nature and not yet as a thing apart, would certainly have viewed other animals as fully enminded. Plants, as living and growing things, also would have undoubtedly been imbued with agency and spirit. And lacking any scientific notion of life, non-living things that exhibited power, motive force, or even patterned behavior would also have been assumed to possess something like a spirit or

soul, on a par with plants and animals. For our distant ancestors, all the world was alive.

As philosophy emerged, this ancient animistic intuition became subject to rational analysis—and thus transformed in the process. For the Greeks, the power to cause motion, or of self-motion, was a clear marker of an innate psyche. For Thales, even the humble magnetic rock was ensouled because it could move bits of iron. For others, the rational and orderly movement of celestial bodies was proof of ensoulment. Yet others saw elemental forces like fire and air as evidence of a universal psychic power. Even change itself, ubiquitous in nature, was seen as something god-like and divine—evidence of reason in nature.

Over time, arguments for panpsychism evolved in form and complexity, but never faded away. Some philosophers argued on a basis of *ex nihilo, nihil fit*: nothing in the effect that is not in the cause. If ensouled animals and plants could arise from mere matter, then mere matter must be ensouled. Some argued from a theological basis; if God made all and is, in some sense, extant in all things, then mind or spirit must be omnipresent. Other philosophers took cues from scientific reasoning. For example, the dynamic sensitivity of even the simplest forms of matter suggests an inherent experientiality. Yet others said that the physical manifestation of things is simply their exterior; they must also have an interior, and the best candidate for such an interior is something mind-like.

Present-day arguments are more sophisticated but draw on the same basic intuitions. We now have Russellian (in reality, Schopenhauerian) monism, analytical non-emergence arguments, process-based approaches, and *a priori* claims based on quasi-idealist views. Some current forms of panpsychism emphasize the mentality, consciousness, or experientiality of all (or at least some) elementary particles or ultimate entities. This is a necessary but not sufficient condition, however, because we are also compelled to accept our own enmind-ness. Those who promote variations on such a micro-psychism paint for us a strange cosmos, one in which (say) atoms, humans, and perhaps ›higher animals‹ are experiential beings—and nothing else. An odd universe, to say the least. Far more likely, and more in line with historical thinking, is to argue that all physical objects, and perhaps all systems of objects, have an experiential unity or aspect. For present purposes, I will defend panpsychism in this latter sense: as a broadly conceived notion that all things have an experiential unity, a mind.

Regarding panentheism, we can date the origin of the term to the early 1800s in the work of Karl Krause, a relatively minor German philosopher who

studied under Schelling and Hegel.<sup>1</sup> Krause held an organismic view of the universe, one in which God was, in effect, the soul of the physical cosmos. An omnipresent God saturated all aspects of the physical world—just as water might saturate a sponge—but remained ontologically distinct. The water is not the sponge, and God is not the universe, as pantheism would have it. Pantheism attempts to retain something of a theological God while naturalizing him; he is no supernatural being, dwelling in some otherworldly heaven.<sup>2</sup> Krause's was an attempt to construct a modern, scientific, and naturalistic cosmos without abandoning God.

But from a present-day perspective we can see some immediate problems here. If a pantheistic God is ontologically distinct from the physical realm, we are dealing with a form of dualism. And if this God has any causal power in the world, or reacts in any way to our pleadings, we are directly faced with the severe problem of interactionism—of how a non-physical God can causally interact with physical beings or a physical universe. We are furthermore confronted with the striking lack of evidence; if such a God exists, why is he not transparently obvious to all? On the contrary, he is defended by a vanishingly small portion of humanity.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, we need to inquire whether a pantheistic God is anything like the Christian God: specifically, one who is good, just, merciful, and loving. Any such moral God immediately runs afoul of the Problem of Evil: why would any all-powerful and all-good deity allow rampant pain and suffering? This problem has long been recognized to have no cogent reply. Responses such as Plantinga's—that for God to banish evil, he would also have to banish free will—are only marginally relevant. First, it addresses only logical, not metaphysical, necessity. Second, it's irrelevant for natural evil (hurricanes, tsunamis, etc) and for evil suffered by sentient but non-human animals. Third, it holds a naïvely realist view of free will, one that is arguably unjustified. For these reasons, any conventional pantheism is untenable.

But there remains a valid intuition here, I think: that there exists some kind of higher-order consciousness or mind in the universe. This, in fact, may be the one valid belief behind virtually every religion known to man. It has seemed plausible, even obvious, to many people over the millennia that some sort of Mind (or Minds) are at work in the cosmos. Given a vague analogy to the

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1 For a good exploration of Krause's views, see Göcke 2018.

2 For sake of convenience, I will refer to God in terms of male pronouns; but this is not intended literally, of course. (To be politically correct, perhaps I should use a gender-neutral pronoun like ›zie.‹ But I won't.)

3 There are no pantheistic religions, to my knowledge.

human mind, it's natural to project anthropomorphic qualities onto this Mind. And even this has some rational basis, as I will argue. But to turn the Big Mind into an all-good, all-powerful God who loves each and every one of us, answers prayers, sends sinners to hell, etc—this won't do at all. What we need, then, is a naturalistic theology without the religion: a *logos* of *theos* (rationality about God) without the ›binding‹ (*re-ligio*, lit. to bind). I hope to make some progress along this path in the present essay.

## 1. The Greek Context

Having sketched some cursory thoughts on panpsychism, panentheism, God, and mind, I'd like to start to synthesize these concepts into a viable and naturalistic theology. Unsurprisingly, many important ideas on this front were first articulated by the Greeks. Let's remind ourselves what they said on these topics.

The pre-Socratics seemed quite convinced that the cosmos as a whole was ensouled in some way. Aristotle (411a7) tells us that Thales' view was of a psyche that was ›mixed with the whole [cosmos].‹ Anaximenes is recorded as saying this: ›Just as our psyche, being air, holds us together and controls us, so do breath and air surround the whole cosmos‹ (frag. 17). For Xenophanes, ›God is one‹; he ›remains in the same place, moving not at all.‹ Yet this God somehow controls all: ›Without effort he shakes all things by the thought of his mind.‹<sup>4</sup> Heraclitus' God is Logos, a kind of cosmic rationality. Logos is ›the Wise One,‹ ›the Eternal One,‹ and ›the Thunderbolt; indeed, ›The Thunderbolt steers the Universe.‹ The Logos acts not from without, but from within: ›The Wise One knows the plan by which everything is directed through everything‹ (frag. 41). Finally we have Anaxagoras, who posited Mind (*nous*) as his cosmic overseer: ›Whatever things were to be, and whatever things were, as many as are now, and whatever things shall be, all these Mind arranged in order‹ (frag. 12). His view, according to Aristotle (984b15) was that ›just as in animals, so in nature, Mind is present and responsible for the world.‹ Hence there seems to be a kind of pre-Socratic consensus that a divine intelligence pervades the universe, a cosmic Mind or cosmic Reason, which in some way moves things and brings order and coherence to all.

Such ideas were clearly seminal for Plato and Aristotle. Among many other things, Plato is famous for the first clear articulation of a world-soul. Two initial points here: First, as with his predecessors, ›world‹ and ›soul‹ are *kosmou* (cosmos) and *psyche*. So the purported world-soul is best conceived of as a cosmic

<sup>4</sup> Fragments 8, 10, 11.

psyche or cosmic mind—a kind of rational intelligence. Aristotle confirms this for us: »it is evident that Plato means the soul of the whole to be like the sort of soul which is called mind« (*De anima*, 407a5).

Secondly, Plato explicitly differentiates the cosmic mind from the creator god or Demiurge. The latter brought the universe into being along with all its elements and then, in a separate act, it created the cosmic mind. But then the Demiurge vanishes from the scene, leaving the cosmic mind on its own. Notably, this mind is apparently unconcerned with the detailed operations of things, and especially unconcerned with human matters. Its main function seems to be to drive the regular motion of the heavenly bodies, and thus to »manage« the cosmos.<sup>5</sup> It operates on the level of the whole, not the parts. In a very real sense, the cosmos is constructed on the same model as the human being; both have physical bodies and both possess higher-order rational minds. As above, so below.

Thus stated, it's a fairly clear conception of panentheism. The cosmos is a god because it is intelligent, divine, and ensouled. But this god creates nothing, is not moral, and certainly has nothing to do with individual humans. He doesn't answer prayers, condemn people to hell, or send his son down to Earth to save humanity—not even close. Plato's is a rational, philosophical panentheism.

Importantly, Plato seems to add a subtle form of panpsychism to his panentheistic ontology. Scattered throughout his late works are references to many kinds of ensouled things—and the list is impressively long. In addition to humans, animals, and the cosmos, he attributes psyche to plants (*Tim* 77b), individual bones (*Tim* 74e), the Earth (*Tim* 40c), stars (*Tim* 41e), the sun and moon (*Laws* 898d), the four elements »alone« (*Laws* 895c), and even to the sum total of reality (*Soph* 249a). What consistent metaphysics could allow such ensouled entities and yet not include everything? Plato's case for panpsychism is implicit but strong. And if we are still unconvinced, he seems to resolve the issue for us with a striking passage near the end of *Laws*:

Now consider all the stars and the moon and the years and the months and all the seasons ... A soul or souls ... have been shown to be the cause of all these phenomena, and whether it is by their living presence in matter ... or by some other means, we shall insist that these souls are gods. Can anybody admit all this and still put up with people who deny that »everything is full of gods«? (899b)

The last phrase recalls Thales' panpsychist proclamation.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Laws* (899a).

<sup>6</sup> Nearly all the pre-Socratics were panpsychists; see Skrbina 2017.

For his part, Aristotle follows many of these attributions of psyche, though with a different interpretation. Psyche, for him, was the form or structure of biologically living things. Thus only humans, animals, and plants are ensouled, in a technical sense. Even so, other things in nature possess remarkably soul-like or life-like qualities, he says. For one, all of matter exhibits a kind of upward striving, a yearning for completion, fulfillment, life, and psyche. As John Rist (1989: 123) explains, for Aristotle, »the whole of the cosmos is permeated by some kind of upward desire and aspiration.« We see this described explicitly in *Physics* (250b12), where Aristotle writes of »an immortal never-failing property of things,« namely, »a sort of life, as it were, to all naturally constituted things.« Elsewhere he explains that the four elements, individually, »possess a principle of movement in their own nature.«<sup>7</sup> As well the cosmic sphere, because it displays constant and rational self-motion, is ensouled: »the heaven is animate and possesses a principle of movement.«<sup>8</sup> Stars, too, embody a psyche: »We think of the stars as mere bodies ... but we should rather conceive them as enjoying life and action;«<sup>9</sup> after all, their movement »[is] similar to that of animals and plants.«

In his late writings Aristotle developed a notion of God as an Unmoved or Prime Mover, one who drives the motion of the cosmos via his thoughts. The Mover is thus a Mind; he thinks, and the universe revolves. »Life also belongs to God; for the actuality (*energeia*) of thought is life, and God is that actuality,« he writes.<sup>10</sup> Somewhat later in *Metaphysics*, he reiterates that »these substances [i.e. stars] are gods, and that the divine encloses the whole of nature.« God, the cosmic Mind, thinks. Of what? *Of itself*: »Therefore it must be of itself that the divine thought thinks (since it is the most excellent of things), and its thinking is a thinking on thinking.«<sup>11</sup> As with Plato, we have here no moral God, no redeemer, no dealer in prayer and sacrifice. This God is utterly unconcerned with human affairs. He merely thinks, and his divine rationality maintains order in the cosmos.

Of this view of God as world-mind, Whitehead (1967: 173) was notably impressed. On this basis he grants Aristotle the title of »greatest metaphysician« in Western philosophy. Being largely free from mythological and theological baggage (of the Christian type), Aristotle could envision a purely rational

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7 *De caelo* (268b28).

8 *Ibid.* (285a28).

9 *Ibid.* (292a20).

10 *Met* (1072b27).

11 *Ibid.* (1074b34). The final phrase in original is: *kai estin he noesis noeseos noesis*.



conception of God. For Whitehead, it's a kind of peak in conceptual thought, something perhaps unsurpassable: »It may be doubted whether any properly general metaphysics can ever get much further than Aristotle.«

But there is more to be said. Even a cosmic Mind cannot move things without some means—a carrier or conveyor of the mental force. In the heavens, according to Aristotle, this was accomplished via the so-called fifth element, ether.<sup>12</sup> Ether conveys a circular motion from the Mind to the heavenly bodies. This suffices for the heavens, but ether does not exist (or at least is not efficacious) here on Earth. And none of the four traditional elements—fire, air, water, or earth—will do the job. Thus Aristotle was compelled to (re)introduce a new, Earthly element, the *pneuma*, that functioned like the ether.<sup>13</sup> It had to be the carrier of mind, and to pervade all aspects of the earthly realm. He describes this strange entity variously as »the faculty of all kinds of psyche,« a »vital heat« (*thermoteta psychiken*), and »the principle of psyche.«<sup>14</sup> It is, he says, »analogous to the element of the stars« [i.e. the ether]. Permeating everything, *pneuma* thus effectively animates everything, at least indirectly. In one of the most stunning passages in the Aristotelian corpus, he writes the following:

Animals and plants come into being in earth and in liquid, because there is water in earth, and *pneuma* in water, and in all *pneuma* is vital heat, so that, in a sense, all things are full of psyche.<sup>15</sup>

So it's not that all things are ensouled—this applies only to biological life—but rather that a principle of psyche or vital heat pervades everything, filling them »in a sense« with soul. This is fully consistent with his earlier remark on the »sort of life« in all things. Via the *pneuma*, all of matter is thus quasi-animated. Hence we arrive at a tentative panpsychism in Aristotle, of the sort few would have expected.

As insightful as these two men were, both have shortcomings from our modern perspective. Plato comes across either as a double-dualist (body and soul, and matter and Form) or more likely as some kind of radical pluralist. He thus invites a range of interaction problems and a host of other difficult

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12 Aristotle seems to be uncomfortable with the term »ether,« given that he rarely calls it by name. More commonly he refers to it as the »primary body,« »first element,« or »element of the stars.«

13 »*Pneuma*« was already an old concept by Aristotle's time.

14 *GA* (736b29-737a8).

15 *GA* (762a18).

metaphysical questions that go unanswered. Aristotle's cosmic Mind is more coherent and rational but we have a hard time fitting it into a larger conception of mind, especially given the strange and late introduction of the *pneuma* as a quasi-panpsychist entity.

Perhaps, then, we are best served by taking these ideas as inspiration and as aspects of truth in some broader metaphysical sense. Let me now try to construct a contemporary vision of God as a world-mind, vaguely along Greek lines, but with an eye to more recent ideas in philosophy of mind.

## 2. First Philosophy of the Mind

Pressing ahead: All philosophizing about the mind starts with one elemental fact, namely, that we ourselves are enminded and experiential beings. This is an old truth, dating back at least to Descartes, and it holds with full force today. There is no more indisputable truth than that we experience the world. Experiential reality exists, precisely because we are such reality. All serious philosophy must begin from this central metaphysical fact—perhaps the only indubitable fact that we possess.

Every move from here involves speculation, but we must try to keep it well-grounded speculation. My experiences seem to be of two broad categories. On the one hand, I have the various qualitative feelings of sensory impressions and other internal mental states. Vibrant orange color, a piercing scream, and the smell of fresh bread all evoke qualitative feelings. These qualia are then attached to certain things in my surroundings, in an apparently causal way. But the feelings themselves reside in me.

On the other hand, my experiences seem to have a sense of directedness, of focus, and of deliberation. They are *about* things. This so-called intentional aspect of the mind manifests itself in different ways: as desire, as will, as cognition, as belief. These mental states are oriented at, or directed toward, certain conditions or states of being. I see *something*, I want *something*, I think about or believe in *something*.

These two categories are distinct but not independent. Many of my mental states—perhaps all—are a mixture of qualia and intentionality. Sensory impressions almost necessarily correlate with certain beliefs, for example, such as that a certain object is real and caused so-and-so sensory impression. My seeing and smelling a fresh loaf of bread is virtually simultaneous with my wanting a piece. A pleasing piece of music is connected to beliefs and thoughts about the composer. Feeling cold is connected to a belief about the need to

close an open window, and so on.<sup>16</sup> All this, then, arises from fundamental introspection. I am an experiential being, and my mental states seem to be composed of two distinct aspects: qualitative and intentional.

My next step is to direct my attention outward, to the world at large. Here I embrace ontological monism. Dualism and pluralism have a certain intuitive force, but the problems of interaction, and general principles of parsimony, argue against them. After all, we do seem to inhabit *one world*. There is one reality, as best we can tell. Its nature may be complex, but it nonetheless is still one kind of thing, with likely one essential nature. The same physical—and metaphysical—laws must hold throughout. Any other conception is highly problematic. Dualism, for example, not only introduces interactionist problems but is also, objectively speaking, arbitrary. Why two substances? And which two? Does ›mind‹ and ›matter‹ really make sense as an ontological scheme, in this broad universe that we inhabit? Triple-ism (›triplism‹? ›trialism‹?), quadruple-ism (›quadrim‹?), etc are no less arbitrary. It seems that the only remotely viable alternative to monism is a radical pluralism—an infinity of substances; this at least has the virtue of being non-arbitrary. Perhaps we are back to Anaxagoras once again.<sup>17</sup> But for now, at least, I set this option aside.

I take it, then, that the two primordial metaphysical facts are (1) that I am an experiential being with a dual-aspect mind, and (2) that reality is a monistic entity. Everything about that monistic reality is experiential—some aspects are sensory, some are cognitive, some are volitional, but all are experiential. The sum total of my encounter with the one reality is an assortment of experiential qualities.<sup>18</sup>

My next general observation about the world is that there seems to be a distinction between ›me‹ and ›not-me‹. Me—my mind, my self—seems to be spatially located in my head, thanks primarily to my sense organs (four of them, anyway) being located there. But I won't worry here about the problem of location. Me is indubitably real, the locus of my experiences. Not-me, the outside world, seems equally real, as the source of various stimuli. Not-me seems concrete, tangible, dynamic, interactive. As a result, I tend to assign all not-me a categorical label: *physical*. In fact, ›physical‹ may be defined as that

16 I hasten to note that this two-part categorization is not new. Leibniz seems to have established the basic idea in the ›perceptions‹ and ›appetites‹ of his monads—perception representing a qualitative perspective, and appetite (or desire) an intentional one.

17 Or maybe Spinoza, with his infinitely-many attributes of the one God/Nature.

18 Henryk Skolimowski developed a related view in his conception of ›noetic monism.‹ See Skolimowski 1994/2019. But he elected not to articulate the panpsychist implications of this view.

portion of experiential reality that I experience as not-me. In more common terms, ›the physical‹ seems to have a surface or exterior that I sense, and then perhaps something more, an interior, that I do not sense. In any case, ›the physical‹ is a wholly experiential reality, just as myself is a wholly experiential reality.

Both seem equally real, and yet both seem different, distinct; but they cannot be ontologically distinct because reality is a monistic entity. The me/not-me distinction must be one of appearance only, not reality. Or at least, not of fundamental reality. But the *appearance itself*, however, may well be a fundamental fact of existence.

The not-me is furthermore apparently distinguishable into two vague categories: *like-me* and *unlike-me*. Like-me includes other normally-functioning adult humans (and perhaps teens and children); unlike-me is everything else. The like-me's seem to operate in the world basically the same as I do, and seem to be constructed, as it were, on the same metaphysical plan. But of course, given a monistic reality, this must be true. Everything, even the unlike-me's, must be constructed on the same metaphysical plan.

Like me, the like-me's seem to have qualitative experiences, i.e. qualia. Like me, the like-me's seem to exhibit will, desire, cognition, and (generally speaking) intentionality. I thus have reason to believe that my experiential unity, and my dual-aspect mind, are universal qualities, at least among the like-me's. Again, this is to be expected on any monistic scheme.

But the apparent differences between me, like-me, and unlike-me must be explained as well. All are one, and all must share all *essential* characteristics. But because they are (apparently) distinct, they also differ in what we may call *secondary* characteristics. How can I tell the difference between essential and secondary characteristics? This is the major question at hand. If anything is to be considered essential, it must be the most fundamental facts of existence: namely, that each thing is an experiential being with a dual-aspect mind, and that each experiences the world as a monistic reality. Each thing must comprehend the world as a locus of experiences that it has.

If things have a further characteristic, it must be the ability to distinguish between ›me‹ and ›not-me‹; in other words, a sense of *self*. Assuredly all animals possess this, and likely all plants. Whether this distinction moves beyond biological life is difficult to say. But the sheer fact that things function in the world as distinct units, as integrated wholes, suggests that they do—in proportion to the intensity of their integration. Rocks are relatively strongly integrated, as are atoms and molecules. These things likely realize the me/not-me distinction, if only in very rudimentary form. Less integrated things—clouds, societies, solar systems—likely have only a correspondingly vague (and rudimentary) sense

of self. Again, this is not a problem because the me/not-me distinction is not ontologically fundamental. It's a question of degree. But as I said, the *appearance* of a distinction may well be fundamental.

This raises an important issue because objecthood is vague; it too is a question of degree. If we allow, for example, that there are ultimate particles, then we are inclined to agree with Democritus: only atoms and the void. All so-called objects are mere appearances. But the atoms collect into quasi-stable patterns, and then into patterns of patterns, and then patterns of patterns of patterns, and so on. These patterns come to be called objects. And we ourselves are precisely one such pattern. Yet we are not mere appearance; we are real, efficacious beings. Other objects are the same. Here we part company with Democritus; objects have a concrete status in the world.

Degree of objecthood must correlate with degree of unity, in some sense, which in turn correlates with degree of subjecthood. On this view, *each object*, no matter how conceived, *is a subject*—to a greater or lesser degree. If each object is a subject, we then arrive at a strong form of panpsychism, as I suggested at the outset.

### 3. Mind, Both Lesser and Greater

The only mind that we know directly is our own. Being relatively intensely-constructed objects, we have a relatively intense form of subjecthood. Intensity is a function of several factors: stability, coherence, dynamism, and complexity. Mental intensity, correspondingly, has its factors: focus or coherence, energy, subtlety, and sensitivity. If physical and mental states are the two counterparts of one reality, then each must correlate with the other, on a one-to-one basis. Each object is a subject, and thus each physical change is at once a mental change. Physical state and mental state are two sides of the same (monistic) coin.

Our bodies, and in particular our brains, are quasi-stable patterns of (say) particles or quanta of energy that maintain consistent, multi-layered patterns of dynamic interaction over several decades. This is reflected in our semi-stable memories and personality. Therefore we possess correspondingly coherent, sensitive, and subtle minds that persist over time. An equally-massive rock is more stable but less dynamic, and hence is expected to have a less intense, if more durable, mental unity. A star like the sun is more massive, more energetic, and more stable of a pattern, and yet its structural complexity is far below that of a human being. The experiential unity of the sun will be at once more energetic and yet simpler and less intense than the human mind.

By contrast, consider human artifacts such as computers. Modern integrated circuits are much more complex than our brains. The brain contains something like 500,000 neurons per square millimeter, but new computer technology is producing up to 100 million transistors per square millimeter.<sup>19</sup> Single chip processors now hold up to 19 billion transistors. The experiential unity of a CPU chip is thus likely more intense, if less energetic, than that of a human. Such technologies will serve as the basis of advanced artificial general intelligences that will soon exceed our own capacities.

An object, then, is simply a more or less well-integrated pattern of energy. The more integrated patterns have a more coherent mental unity; the less integrated, a less coherent one. But the central point, once again, is this: *Every object is a subject*. Or more compactly: each is an *ob/sub*.

Every object can also be thought of an aggregate—there being no ontological distinction between the two. A rock is an aggregate, a plant is an aggregate, a human is an aggregate, a star is an aggregate. The more obvious aggregates, like a solar system, a football team, or a heap of sand, are also objects, though less well-integrated. They are also, correspondingly, less well-integrated subjects; but they are subjects nonetheless.

This being the case, it implies that every aggregate—that is, every combination of elements or individual objects—is also an object in its own right, and thus also a subject in its own right. Or: every aggregate is an *ob/sub*. Even the most bizarre aggregates, like the one composed of my chair, the moon, and an atom in some faraway galaxy, is an object, and thus also a subject. But such *ob/subs* are of such low intensity that they are utterly indistinguishable from the background patterns of energy in the universe. They have conceptual importance but no practical relevance. The functionally relevant *ob/subs* are those ›ordinary‹ things that we distinguish in the world around us—rocks and trees, stars and planets, tables and chairs. They have persistent coherence and relatively strong degrees of integration, and thus play a dominantly causal role in the world.

Under this conception, the world is a vast entanglement of enminded *ob/subs*. Every apparently discrete thing is an *ob/sub* in itself, and is at the same time a participant in countless diversified *ob/subs*. Again, nearly all of the diverse objects, including the more bizarre combinations, fade into insignificance, both as physical objects and as enminded subjects. The ones that really ›count‹ are those things that we naturally pick out as discrete entities—people, animals, plants, rocks, artifacts, planets, stars. They are the most

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19 A neuron is a biological ›decision element‹ which functions, loosely, like a single transistor. The analogy is rough but will suffice for present purposes.

articulated objects, and hence the most articulated subjects. In fact, this is precisely why we pick them out—our minds are recognizing and relating to other, comparably-distinct minds (albeit in the form of objects).

Thus understood, ob/subs extend down to the smallest quanta of energy and up to the large cosmic structures—including, importantly, the cosmos as a whole. It would not be far from the mark to declare the vast interconnected web of ob/subs as the effective fabric of reality. In this web, the complexity and intensity of minds vary accordingly, but they all share the essential characteristics. Each is an experiential being, an experiential unity, with a dual-aspect mind; each experiences the world as a monistic reality; and each has a sense of selfhood. »All mind is alike, both the lesser and the greater« (Anaxagoras).

#### 4. God as World-Mind

If all objects are subjects, and all subjects share certain core qualities (an experiential, dual-aspect mind; a sense of monism; a me/not-me distinction), then, at the highest level, the level of the cosmos as a whole, we may infer the existence and nature of a cosmic Subject, a cosmic Mind—God. The Mind of God must be constructed on the same metaphysical plan as the human mind, and as the mind of an atom. »As above, so below.« »All mind is alike.« Macrocosm and microcosm. Perhaps there is some wisdom in these old hermetic ideas after all—ideas that appear to date back to Pythagoras, at least.

If »all mind is alike,« then the Mind of God must function essentially in the same manner as our minds. That is, it must (a) be an experiential being, possessing a dual-aspect mind; (b) experience reality as a unified whole; and (c) possess a sense of self. Of this last point, God's sense of self would seem to be utterly unique because, for him alone, all is ›me,‹ and there is no ›not-me.‹ What must it be like, for all to be *oneself*? For all to be *me*? We can scarcely imagine.

Furthermore, the relation of God to the universe must be analogous to that of our minds to our bodies. And what is that? Do we have panentheistic minds? Decidedly not. Minds are not souls—not in any modern sense. Our minds are not ›in‹ our bodies. Without pretending to solve all mind-body problems, I think we can plausibly claim that the mind and body are fundamentally interconnected—two aspects of the one monistic substance, which is none other than reality itself. There is no causal link between mind and body, in either direction; this is impossible in any truly monistic universe.

Our minds do not cause our bodies to do things. Assuming that there is causal interaction in an experiential cosmos, then it is between the various

ob/subs. As a given ob/sub changes its internal configuration through interaction with other ob/subs, its physico-mental state changes as well. I step barefooted on a sharp rock; my foot suffers a momentary deformation; and my bodily mental state (and eventually my conscious state) changes accordingly. The small time delay for any conscious effect is not relevant in this ontological scheme; it's a function of the spatial distance of my foot from my brain, and of the processing and signal transfer time in the cortex. In reality, so-called physical change and mental change are simultaneous. Every change in physical state is a change in a mental state. All things are ob/subs, and the universe is a monistic reality.

Correspondingly, God does not ›do‹ anything in the cosmos. He *cannot* do anything because, as the Mind of the cosmos, he has no causal relation to it. Nor can it affect him in any way. God's only function and purpose is to instantiate the ever-changing experiential state of the universe. Rather as Aristotle said, he simply *thinks*. Unlike Aristotle, he doesn't drive the rotation of the heavens, not even by not moving. Rather, God's mental state *is* the ›rotation of the heavens,‹ manifest as an experiential unity. Every physical change in the universe has a corresponding change in God's mental state. Every small action I take—picking up my tea cup—and every small movement in nature—the rustling of leaves in the slightest breeze—are reflected in God's mind. In this sense, God knows all. We can legitimately say that God is omniscient.

But he cannot do anything with this knowledge. Not only is he *not* omnipotent, he has, as I said, no power at all. God is utterly power-less. He cannot interfere with human affairs; cannot answer prayers; cannot invoke miracles; cannot condemn people to hell—nothing. He is powerless to stop evil, to cause evil, or anything else. God simply thinks; he experiences.

Is God all-good? Compare to this question: Is our own mind ›good‹? These are normative questions that do not pertain to metaphysics. God, like our own minds, is neither good nor bad, simply because such terms are not predicable of minds. Minds simply *are*. They exist. They are the fabric of reality.

As the mind of the whole, God encompasses all layers of sub-mind within the cosmos. Just as all lesser objects are parts of the cosmic Object, so all lesser minds are parts of the cosmic Mind. In an experiential cosmos, God is the great Experiencer. God's Mind is the sum total of all mind. In this sense, my metaphysical view may qualify as a form of pantheism: all is mind, and all mind is a portion of God's Mind. All is God.

Such a God is, again, but a faint image of any traditionally religious God. God thinks, he experiences; nothing more. Then why call him God at all? What do we mean, in fact, by the term ›God‹? Etymology is not much help. ›God‹



seems to derive from the proto-Indo-European *ghut* (>that which is invoked<) or perhaps from *ghu-to* (>poured,< as in a libation or ceremonial drink). But these origins are hopelessly vague. Standard religious interpretations are not much better, given the vast diversity of meanings and characteristics attributed to God, amongst the 4,000 or so world religions.

And yet there seems to be a core conception of God that we can distill from the many interpretations. There appear to be two qualities that are shared by virtually all traditional conceptions of God. These are, first, that God is a kind of supreme being or ultimate reality. As the cosmic Mind, the God I have articulated here would indeed qualify as supreme and ultimate. The second core quality is that God is that thing which is most revered. Ought we to revere God, the cosmic Mind? Certainly we need not pray to him, which would be both pointless and inconsequential. But we might do well to develop a sense of awe and wonder at the cosmic Mind, and at our own small participation in it. Such an outlook certainly casts humanity in a new light, vis a vis the broader cosmos from which we evolved, and of which we belong.

And how, in fact, are we even to know such a God at all? How can we hold him in awe and wonder if we cannot truly know him? Here we might do well to recall Plato and his discussion of the soul of the sun. Plato, too, was concerned that we grasp the sun's soul even though it is utterly invisible to us, in any conventional sense. In his final work *Laws*, he wrote:

Everyone can see [the sun's] body, but no one can see its soul—not that you could see the soul of any other creature, living or dying. Nevertheless, there are good grounds for believing that we are in fact held in the embrace of some such thing, though it is totally below the level of our bodily senses, and is perceptible by reason alone. (898d)

When the sun shines down upon us, bathing us in his glory, we are, says Plato, »held in his embrace.« His soul is there, it is real, it exists; though, like everyone's soul, we cannot perceive it but by rational thought. In this sense, *we perceive the mind only with the mind*. Of course—how could it be otherwise?

In the same way, then, we may think about the Mind of the whole, God. We cannot see it, cannot hear it, cannot sense it in any way. And yet, by careful rational thought and well-ground speculation, we can understand that it may be there, that it *must* be there—that the Mind of God is as extant and real as our own mind. A rational God, a philosophical God, an omniscient God, a God that demands no subservience and that smites no sinners. Indeed—a God for whom no one need suffer and die at all. Imagine: a God for all humanity and for all time, yes, a God for all the universe. Imagine.

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# Universal Consciousness as the Ground of Logic

*Philip Goff*

## 1. Introduction

Shortly after the Second World War, Aldous Huxley published a book defending what he called ›the perennial philosophy,‹ a metaphysical theory he argued had arisen 2,500 years earlier and had subsequently cropped up in many and varied cultures across the globe.<sup>1</sup> According to Huxley, the view did not emerge from abstract philosophical speculation but because its truth came to be directly known to various individuals whilst in altered states of consciousness, in many cases the result of intense meditative training.

What was the content of this view? In standard analytic philosophy of mind, we distinguish between the *subject* of a given experience and the *phenomenal qualities* which characterise what it's like to have that experience. In an experience of pain, for example, there is the thing which feels the pain (e.g. me) and there is the qualitative character of how the pain feels; the former is the subject of the experience, the latter is its phenomenal quality. In the altered states of consciousness discussed by Huxley, however, this division apparently collapses resulting in a state of pure or ›universal‹ consciousness: consciousness unencumbered by phenomenal qualities. More dramatically, people who achieve these states of consciousness claim that it becomes apparent to them, from the perspective of the altered state of consciousness, that universal consciousness is the backdrop to all individual conscious experiences, and hence that in a significant sense universal consciousness is the ultimate nature of each and every conscious mind. This realization allegedly undermines ordinary understanding of the distinctions between different people and leads to a conviction that in some deep sense ›we are all one‹.

This is not a view that has been explored a great deal in the context of analytic philosophy, which tends to proceed by building coldblooded rational arguments for a given position, rather than by intuiting its truth via altered states of consciousness. However, Miri Albahari has recently presented just such a coldblooded defence of the perennial philosophy, arguing that it offers a better solution to the problem of consciousness than rival theories.<sup>2</sup> I am fascinated, but ultimately unconvinced, by her argument. I would like here

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<sup>1</sup> Huxley 1945.

<sup>2</sup> Albahari 2020.

to consider another coldblooded argument for the perennial philosophy, or something like it, rooted in its potential to account in a satisfying way for the metaphysics and epistemology of logical truth.

## 2. Logic and its Place in Nature

I take it for granted that empirical data, by which I mean the data of normal sensory observation and experience, should inform our best guess at what reality is like. But are there any other sources of data that must be taken into account when doing metaphysics? Methodological naturalists say no: once you've accounted for all of the data of observation and experiment, in the most theoretically satisfying way possible, your job as a metaphysician is done. I disagree. I have previously argued that there is at least one other datum that must be accounted for in addition to the data of third-person observation and experiment, namely, the reality of consciousness.<sup>3</sup> Nothing is more evident than the existence of one's feelings and experiences. If a supposedly complete theory of reality can account for all of the data observation and experiment but cannot account for the reality of consciousness, that theory is thereby falsified.

Are there any other non-empirical data, in addition to the reality of consciousness? I think there is at least one more, one which arises from the need to account for the truth of the laws of logic and for our epistemological relationship with them. For the sake of simplicity I will mainly focus on the law of non-contradiction (LNC), which I will take to be the law that there aren't, and cannot be, any contradictory states of affairs. This law is known with a kind of certainty roughly similar to the certainty with which I know that my own feelings exist. One can perhaps debate whether our knowledge of LNC is more or less certain than our knowledge of the reality of consciousness, but it is clear that both are known with much greater justification than anything known on the basis of the senses. The sceptical doubts that terrorise our empirical knowledge of reality threaten to a much lesser degree, if at all, our knowledge of basic logical laws.<sup>4</sup>

What implications does this have for the task of metaphysics? In my earlier work, I expressed the datum of consciousness as a constraint on metaphysical

<sup>3</sup> Goff 2017, Goff 2020.

<sup>4</sup> This is of course not entirely uncontroversial, and there are some philosophers happy to deny the law of non-contradiction (Priest 2000), just as there are philosophers happy to deny the reality of consciousness (Frankish 2016). I don't have an argument either for the truth of LNC or for the reality of consciousness. Metaphysical enquiry has to start somewhere, and the reality of consciousness and the truth of LNC seem to me the most solid starting points we have.

enquiry, something I called ›the consciousness constraint.‹ Roughly this is the constraint on the metaphysician to account for consciousness in her overall theory of reality. The metaphysical implications of logic can similarly be expressed as a kind of constraint, which we can call ›the logic constraint.‹ The logic constraint has two aspects, one metaphysical and one epistemological:

### The Logic Constraint

1. *The Metaphysical Aspect*—The metaphysician is obliged to postulate entities sufficient to ground the truth of the laws of logic.
2. *The Epistemological Aspect*—The metaphysician is obliged to account for our knowledge of the laws of logic.

I call the second aspect ›epistemological‹ because it arises from the fact that we know about logical laws (and perhaps also, as I will presently discuss, from more specific facts about the *kind of knowledge* we have of logical laws). But this aspect of the constraint is also metaphysical in the sense that it imposes demands on one's overall theory of reality. In the epistemological aspect of the logic constraint, facts about our knowledge of logic are taken as data that must be accounted for.

This source of metaphysical data has been much neglected in recent philosophy, and is pretty much entirely unknown by the scientific community more broadly. To be a fair, there is much focus, at least in philosophy, on the need to account for the metaphysics and epistemology of mathematical truth, which raises very similar issues. However, it is an open question whether, in principle, mathematical discourse could be dispensed with, which renders plausible a variety of anti-realist theories of mathematical truth.<sup>5</sup> It is much less plausible that logical discourse can be dispensed with, making it all the more pressing to account for the place of logic in reality.

I suspect that the neglect of this topic is due to a fairly widespread intuition in modern times that the truths of logic, such as LNC, are somehow ›trivial‹ or not really about the world. We find this in Hume's claim that a priori truths are mere ›relations between ideas‹ and the logical positivists' view that a priori truths are grounded in linguistic conventions or are ›true in virtue of meaning.‹ However, these days, this kind of view is largely rejected by metaphysicians.<sup>6</sup> Linguistic conventions determine the *meaning* of a sentence, but whether or

5 Hartry Field (1980), for example, tries to construe Newtonian mechanics without reference to abstract entities.

6 Sider 2012; Hale 2013: Ch. 5.

not that sentence is *true* is determined by the nature of reality. When I say, ›There are no square circles anywhere in the universe‹, this is no less a claim about reality than when I say, ›There are no unicorns.‹

I'm inclined to think that the neglect of both the logic constraint and the consciousness constraint arise from a common source, namely the scientific intellectual culture that has emerged in the last two hundred of so years, inspired by the great successes of the physical sciences. There is an irony here in that the physical sciences have been so successful precisely because they have always been aimed at a limited task: roughly, modelling the behaviour of matter. But the incredible technology that such knowledge has produced has a visceral effect on one's metaphysical yearnings, and it's hard not to get carried away and to surrender all of one's ontological faith to the thing that has produced such wonders. Nonetheless, the realities of consciousness and logical truth are so evident that I feel confident that at some point society will emerge from this scientific phase of history and return to the task of formulating a theory able to account not only for what we can see with our eyes but also for what we know through intuition (logic) and introspection (consciousness).

### 3. The Hard Problem of Logic

There are extremely deep philosophical difficulties raised by the logic constraint, perhaps even harder than those raised by the consciousness constraint. One core difficulty is that there are considerations pushing in opposite directions: on the one hand there is pressure to put the ground of LNC outside of the contingent universe, and on the other hand pressure to put the ground of LNC inside of the contingent universe. Let me explain.

With regards to the metaphysical aspect of the logic constraint, there is strong pressure to hold that the ground of LNC is outside of the contingent universe. For suppose we grounded LNC in some contingent entity or collection of entities *E*. Given that *E* is contingent, there will be at least one possible world, call it *W*, in which *E* fails to exist. But if the ground of LNC does not exist in *W*, then presumably LNC will not be true in *W*. This is not a welcome result, as LNC is, I will assume, true in all possible worlds. We can put this argument as follows:

#### Argument for the Non-Contingency of the Ground of LNC

1. If the ground of LNC is contingent, then there will be some possible world in which it fails to exist.

2. If there is a possible world in which the ground of LNC fails to exist, then there will be a possible world in which LNC is not true.
3. There is no possible world in which LNC is not true.
4. Therefore, the ground of LNC is not contingent.

This argument might naturally lead one to a Platonic view according to which the ground of LNC is an abstract object which necessarily co-exists with any possible universe.

However, there are also pressures in the other direction. Whether or not the laws of logic have implications for a Platonic realm, they certainly have implications for the physical world of space and time. Our universe is constrained not only by the laws of physics but also by the laws of logic. Suppose I know that two objects are a light year apart from each other. Assuming the truth of special relativity, I can infer that a signal cannot possibly get from one object to another in less than year. This is a way in which the laws of physics constrain what can possibly happen in this universe: things cannot travel faster than light. Similarly, if I know that Peter is in pain, I can infer that it's not the case that he is not in pain. This is a way in which the laws of logic constrain what can happen in our universe: there cannot be contradictory states of affairs. Of course, there is a crucial difference between the two cases. The laws of physics hold only in *this universe* whilst the laws of logic hold in *every possible universe*. But the fact that the laws of logic have greater modal scope than the laws of physics does not imply a dissimilarity between physical and logical laws in so far as they apply to this universe.

Putting the ground of LNC in the Platonic realm makes it hard to account for the constraining influence of logic on the physical universe. How exactly does the ›hand of logic‹ reach out from beyond space and time in order to ensure that there are no contradictory states of affairs? One possibility is to build the ground of LNC into the essential nature of universals, and then to account for the impact on the physical world in terms of the fact that universals are instantiated in the physical world. Thus, the Platonist could hold that it's in the essential nature of universals to resist being instantiated in a contradictory manner, e.g. it's in the nature of pain to resist being instantiated and also not instantiated by the same individual. However, this is a somewhat disunified view, and we would be left wanting to know why all universals share this essential feature. One possible way around this is to hold that LNC is grounded in the essential nature of the instantiation relation itself, i.e. the instantiation relation  $R$  is essentially such that, for any property  $P$  and any given individual  $I$ ,  $R$  cannot both relate and not relate  $P$  to  $I$ .

Whether or not Platonism can account for the metaphysical aspect of the logic constraint, the real problems with the view arise from the epistemological aspect. There is a related and much discussed difficulty for the mathematical Platonist. If numbers are abstract objects outside of space and time, how on earth do we physical creatures get to know about them? The epistemological challenge raised by the logic constraint is a little bit less straightforward: my starting point is not that there are *logical entities*, analogous to mathematical entities like numbers and sets, such that we need to account for how we know about those entities. Still, there's clearly still a very deep difficulty accounting for our knowledge of logical truths, especially if the ground of those truths exists outside of space and time and hence is not something we have empirical access to. We could of course observe that LNC holds in *our* universe, in something like the way we observe that the laws of physics hold in our universe. But it's hard to see how we could know that LNC holds in all possible worlds without having some kind of access to nature of the entity that explains why LNC is necessarily true. And how could we know the nature of that entity if it exists outside of space and time? Thus, by a slightly more scenic route, we have arrived back at essentially the same epistemological difficulty we find in the mathematical case.

This is a familiar challenge, at least in its mathematical guise, and I will not here trawl through all of the solutions which Platonists have offered in response. However, I would like to emphasise a particular aspect of the epistemological challenge, one that I think holds in both the mathematical and the logical case and which has not been focused on a great deal in recent philosophy. It seems to me incumbent on metaphysicians not only to account for the bare fact that we know that LNC is true, but also for the specific form of this knowledge. As already remarked, my knowledge of logical laws, or at least basic ones like LNC, comes with a much greater degree of certainty than my knowledge of empirical facts. It's very easy to entertain the skeptical hypothesis that I am in the Matrix being deceived by the evil computers to think there's a table in front of me when in fact the world I seem to experience does not exist. It is much harder to entertain the hypothesis that the evil computers are making me think that LNC holds when in fact it doesn't. And this psychological difficulty seems to reflect the different kinds of justification that hold in these cases. It is just *obvious* to me, upon reflection—I can, as it were, *just see*—that there couldn't possibly be a contradictory state of affairs, in such a way that the truth of LNC cannot rationally be doubted. As Descartes put it, I have a clear and distinct perception of the truth of LNC.

To satisfy the epistemological aspect of the logic constraint we must account not only for the fact that we know LNC but the fact that we know it



through a clear and distinct perception of its truth. Acknowledging this casts doubts on the adequacy of a fairly popular way of accounting for our knowledge of logic (and mathematics) in terms of its indispensability for scientific theorising.<sup>7</sup> We can perhaps imagine a race of alien creatures, call them ›the Quineans‹, who are able to represent the truths of logic and mathematics but do not have clear and distinct perceptions of their truth. The Quineans may find out that scientific enquiry is possible only on the assumption that certain logical and mathematical propositions are true, and, in virtue of their knowledge of this fact, they may come to have justification for believing those logical and mathematical propositions.

If those logical and mathematical propositions are indeed true, then the Quineans may count as knowing them. But the Quineans' knowledge of logic and maths is very different from our own. They would find it very easy to entertain skeptical doubts concerning LNC and basic mathematical truths like  $2+2=4$ .<sup>8</sup> To be sure, such skeptical doubts would be sweeping and radical, threatening the foundations of their empirical picture of reality. But, for Quineans, it would be as easy to entertain logical doubts as it is for us to entertain empirical doubts. The reason we find it much harder to doubt LNC, for example by entertaining the possibility that there are square circles, is that it is directly apparent to us that LNC must be true and hence that a square circle could never be. The explanation of logical knowledge outlined above may be adequate to account for the epistemological situation of the Quineans but it cannot fully account for our situation.

The ground of LNC, by definition, explains the truth of LNC. It follows that if one understood the essential nature of the ground of LNC, and one had sufficient powers of rational reflection, one could thereby come to know the truth of LNC. Compare: the chemical properties of  $H_2O$  molecules explain the fact that water boils at 100 degrees, and by understanding the chemistry one can come to see that water, given its essential nature, must have this boiling point.<sup>9</sup> This all suggests a natural way of accounting for our knowledge of LNC. On the view I have in mind, we are somehow acquainted with the essential nature of the ground of LNC, in something like the way we are acquainted with the

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7 Quine 1980; Putnam 2012.

8 Presumably, like us, the Quineans wouldn't be able to imagine scenarios in which there are square circles or in which  $2+2=5$ . But we cannot imagine four-dimensional objects and this does not convince us that such things are impossible. Merely being unable to imagine that P is true is not sufficient for a clear and distinct perception that P is false.

9 I am here assuming that the causal powers of  $H_2O$  molecules are part of their essential nature. On a contingentist view of laws, we would also have to know the laws in order to make such a deduction.

essential nature of our own conscious states, and in virtue of this acquaintance the truth of LNC is rendered apparent to us. In other words, I am directly in contact with the thing that grounds the truth of LNC, and I am thereby directly aware that LNC must be true.

The problem is that it is difficult to square this explanation with Platonism. I am acquainted with my conscious states in virtue of the fact that my mind is constituted of those states. How could I possibly bear this same relationship to something outside of space and time? How can we account for the fact that, at some point in evolutionary history, creatures of flesh and blood somehow became hooked up in an acquaintance relationship with something outside of the physical universe?

What we need is something in between the Platonic heaven that Plato pointed towards and the physical world that was Aristotle's focus. We need an entity that transcends the physical universe and yet is intimately involved with it. Universal consciousness, I will suggest, fits the bill.

#### 4. Universal Consciousness

Albahari explains the relationship between ordinary consciousness and universal consciousness by means of a thought experiment involving a >cognisensory deprivation tank.< Upon immersion, one is to imagine, all of the phenomenal qualities of one's consciousness are snuffed out one by one: not only the phenomenal qualities involved in sensory experiences, but also those involved in conscious thoughts and emotions. Consciousness ceases not only to represent, but to instantiate any phenomenal character whatsoever. It might be assumed that the determinable of consciousness could not exist without having some determinate phenomenal character, just as the determinable *shape* could not be instantiated without the instantiation of some specific determinate of that determinable, such as *sphericity*. Albahari acknowledges that this possibility cannot be ruled out a priori. However, it is also possible that with the removal of all of its qualities, consciousness itself—pure awareness—remains. This is what is meant by >universal consciousness<: consciousness stripped of phenomenal qualities.

Thus, whilst the relationship between universal consciousness and specific conscious minds is something like the relationship between a lump of clay and individual figures formed from that lump, this is a peculiar kind of clay that can exist without forming any shape at all. And there is another respect in which the clay analogy fails: whilst a hunk of clay that forms a specific cube at a given time must be distinct from the hunk of clay that forms a specific sphere

at the same time, the universal consciousness from which my mind formed is numerically identical to the universal consciousness from which your mind—and every other mind—is formed.

One might worry that this commits us to contradiction. Suppose we have two individuals, one of which feels pleasure but not pain, the other of which feels pain but no pleasure. The view currently under consideration seems to entail that: (A) universal consciousness feels pleasure but no pain, and (B) universal consciousness feels pain but no pleasure. This would clearly be incoherent. But, as I understand it, the view is not that universal consciousness is itself a subject that instantiates phenomenal properties. The view is rather that distinct subjects *arise* from universal consciousness (more on this in a moment).

We have not so far discussed another aspect of the perennial philosophy, one that might seem to put in the shade the theses so far discussed. Proponents of the perennial philosophy claim that not only each mind, but all of reality, is formed of universal consciousness. In a physicalist or dualist worldview, this is a radical claim. But in a panpsychist world view, according to which all fundamental entities are conscious subjects, this final thesis of the perennial philosophy follows trivially from the others. If each conscious subject is formed of universal consciousness, and each fundamental entity is a conscious subject, it of course follows that each fundamental entity is formed of universal consciousness. All aspects of the perennial philosophy will be essential to my account of logic, and hence I will present the resulting view as a form of panpsychism. I don't take this to be a disadvantage of the view. Panpsychism is a view that has considerable independent support as one of the most promising solutions to the problem of consciousness; and, as I have argued elsewhere, it is no less parsimonious than any other theory of fundamental reality.<sup>10</sup>

I will not here get into the details of Albahari's argument, but the conclusion of that argument is more radical still. Ultimately, Albahari defends the thesis that fundamental reality is *exhausted* by universal consciousness: that everything that exists is somehow grounded in universal consciousness. This commitment brings considerable challenges. It is, as Albahari acknowledges, hard to understand how many distinct subjects with their many and varied phenomenal properties might emerge from the single and undifferentiated universal consciousness. This is the ›Problem of the One and the Many‹ that Albahari wrestles with in her work, as did Parmenides, Plotinus, Spinoza and Schelling before her.

One easy way to avoid the Problem of the One and the Many altogether is to think of the relationship between universal consciousness and a specific

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10 Goff 2017, Goff 2019.

conscious mind as *partial grounding*, rather than complete grounding. In complete grounding relationships, at least as I think of them, the grounded entity is nothing over and above its ground; a party, for example is nothing over and above the fact that people are partying. The problem is that it's hard to see how the totality of experiential facts, concerning a vast number of subjects instantiating an unfathomable variety of rich and complex phenomenal characters, could be nothing over and above the fact there is a single, undifferentiated form of consciousness. Albahari does a fantastic job of trying to square this circle, but at the end of the day it seems to me plainly unintelligible.

On an alternative model, my conscious mind is *partly* grounded in universal consciousness—universal consciousness is an essential constituent of my conscious mind—but the fact that universal consciousness is formed into this specific conscious mind with this specific phenomenal character is something over and above the reality of universal consciousness per se. Subject arise, we might suppose, from the *interaction* of universal consciousness with discrete bundles of phenomenal properties. Thus, my mind is not wholly identical with universal consciousness, but rather contains it as a metaphysical constituent.

This position aims to respect both the claims of mystics and the Cartesian certainty each of us has of the reality of one's own mind. Perhaps some, probably including Albahari herself, will take this to be inconsistent with careful analysis of the claims of those who have directly experienced universal consciousness. But such people were not aiming to do analytic metaphysics in writing about the truths they directly experienced, and this gives us some flexibility in interpreting these claims. At any rate, I will aim to justify the view I am articulating not on the basis of the testimony of mystics, although such support would be welcome too, but on the basis of its potential to account for the truths of logic.

What is the causal basis for a specific conscious mind coming to be formed out of universal consciousness? This question cannot be answered independently of the ongoing empirical and theoretical task of working out an adequate panpsychist theory. On a constitutive panpsychist theory, my mind is nothing over and above micro-level conscious subjects. On an emergentist version, there may be specific laws that result in new macro-level subject being formed of universal consciousness. Perhaps micro-level subjects flit in and out of being or perhaps there are a number of basic subjects that have existed since the beginning of time. Whatever the standard panpsychist says about the conditions sufficient for the creation of a new subject, the proponent of universal consciousness simply adds that in such conditions a subject is formed from universal consciousness. The account of logic I will defend below will be independent of these details.

## 5. The Ground of Logic

How can the metaphysical theory outlined in the previous section account for the truths of logic? Crucially, we need to interpret it as a claim about all of modal space. On this view, universal consciousness is a necessarily existent entity, and all possible contingent entities are conscious subjects formed of, and thereby partially constituted by, universal consciousness. With this stipulated, we now have an entity—universal consciousness—well-placed to be the ground of logical laws. On the one hand, universal consciousness exists necessarily, and hence can ground the necessary truth of logical laws. On the other hand, it is intimately related to contingent entities, and hence is in a good position to account for the intimate relationship the truths of logic bear to the physical universe, both by constraining it and by becoming known to certain creatures.

To account for the metaphysical aspect of the logic constraint, we need simply to posit that universal consciousness has an essentially logical nature, e.g. is essentially such as to not tolerate being formed into contradictory states of affairs. This is just the nature of the clay out of which concrete entities are formed. This postulation entails, given that all possible states of affairs are formed from universal consciousness, that LNC holds in all possible worlds.

What about the epistemological aspect of the logic constraint? I want to propose that a plausible model of the epistemology of consciousness can be applied in this context. Before introducing this model, we need to bring in some technical terms. Many robust realists about consciousness hold that a subject necessarily stands in a relation of direct, pre-conceptual awareness to the phenomenal qualities of its experiences, a relation we can call ›acquaintance.‹ David Chalmers has outlined in great detail how we can account for our special epistemological relationship with phenomenal qualities in terms of the acquaintance relationship.<sup>11</sup> Whilst all creatures are acquainted with their phenomenal qualities, not all creatures are able to use that acquaintance relationship to attend to them and think about them. A mature human is able to form what Chalmers calls a ›direct phenomenal thought‹, a thought in which one attends to a phenomenal quality and thinks the thought ›I am feeling *like that*‹, where the reference of ›*like that*‹ is determined wholly by the act of attending to the phenomenal quality itself. In direct phenomenal thought, according to Chalmers, the acquaintance relation the subject bears to the phenomenal quality being thought about plays a special justificatory role, enabling direct and certain knowledge of the truth of what is thought.

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11 Chalmers 2003. I argue for the acquaintance relation in Goff 2015 and Goff 2017: Ch. 5.

How can this model account for our knowledge of logic? This requires holding that universal consciousness is necessarily acquainted with its own logical nature, and that each conscious mind, being partly constituted of universal consciousness, inherits the acquaintance universal consciousness has with its logical nature. Of course, not all conscious creatures will be able to make use of this acquaintance, just as not all creatures can make use of their acquaintance with phenomenal qualities. But for creatures who have evolved cognitive resources that enable them to entertain a logical truth, such as  $\sim(P \& \sim P)$ , their acquaintance with the logical nature of universal consciousness facilitates, we can suppose, a clear and distinct grasp of its necessary truth. Just as our acquaintance with our phenomenal qualities grounds and justifies direct phenomenal thought, so our acquaintance with universal consciousness grounds and justifies clear and distinct perception.

Leibniz argued that whilst we are not born with knowledge of necessary truths ›[w]hat is innate is what might be called the potential knowledge of them, as the veins of the marble outline a shape that is in the marble before they are uncovered by the sculptor.‹<sup>12</sup> What the above model provides is a way of *explaining* this potential rather than leaving it as brute fact or divinely endowed. Moreover, this explanation fits well with a plausible theory of our knowledge of consciousness, providing a unified account of the justification of those aspects of human knowledge which involve rational certainty.

In summary, the postulation of universal consciousness allows for a simple and elegant theory of the metaphysics and epistemology of logical truth, one that is internally unified and fits well with a plausible theory of knowledge in another domain.

## 6. Is this Pan(en)theism?

Does the view I have just defended count as a form of pantheism or panentheism? We can split this question into two:

1. Is universal consciousness God?
2. Is the relationship that obtains between universal consciousness and the universe a form of the relationship the pan(en)theist takes to hold between God and the universe?

Question 1 calls out for a definition of God, or at least an account of the meaning of the term ›God‹. Most philosophers assume that the meaning of ›God‹ is

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<sup>12</sup> Leibniz 1765/1996, Bk 1, Ch. 1-2.

fixed *descriptively*. Benedikt Paul Göcke defines God as the entity which has the following characteristics: (A) it is the most fundamental entity, and (B) it is worthy of worship.<sup>13</sup> Mark Johnston defines God as ›the highest one.‹<sup>14</sup> An alternative to descriptivism is the view that the meaning of ›God‹ is fixed by *ostension*, i.e. via an act, or acts, of *pointing to* (in a broad sense of that term) a particular entity. This would put ›God‹ in the same broad semantic category as proper names, at least according to the account of proper names made popular by Saul Kripke.<sup>15</sup> On this view, we fix the meaning of a proper name like ›William Shakespeare‹ not by description by an initial act of ostension: parents declare that *this child* is to be named ›William Shakespeare‹. The name is then passed on through the linguistic community, thereafter continuing to refer to Shakespeare in virtue of its causal relationship with this initial act of ostension.

Johnston rejects this view of the meaning of ›God‹ as follows:

In the scriptures, no one actually turns up and says, ›I am to be called by the name »God«. No one says anything like, ›I hereby use introduce *the name* ›God‹ as the name of THIS impressive being.‹ There is no original dubbing of someone or something as »God,« a dubbing that we can now fall back on.<sup>16</sup>

This is, however, a possibility that both Gauke and Johnston overlook: the meaning of ›God‹ might be fixed with reference to *religious experience*. Mystics report of a wondrous reality that is made manifest to them in certain altered states of consciousness. Although mystical experiences are relatively rare, intimations of the divine are a common motivation for many, perhaps most, religious believers. Let us refer to both mystical experiences and divine intimations collectively as ›religious experiences.‹ I propose defining ›God‹ as *that which is known in veridical religious experiences*, if indeed there are any. The advantage of this view is that it ties the meaning of ›God‹ to the fundamental motivations of real-world religious practice. Prophets, mystics and ordinary believers believe not because of abstract philosophical arguments, but because of their sense of the divine.

If we understand the term ›God‹ in this way, then whether or not universal consciousness is God will depend on whether or not universal consciousness is the object of mystical experiences. Whether or not this is the case cannot be settled, at least not straightforwardly, by examining the *beliefs* about God that are held by various religions. The fact that, say, Christians believe in a personal God is not inconsistent with universal consciousness being the object

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13 Göcke 2017.

14 Johnston 2009.

15 Kripke 1980.

16 Johnston 2009: 6.

of Christian religious experiences. We must distinguish the accuracy conditions of the religious experiences themselves, from the truth-conditions of beliefs concerning the object of those experiences. Ancient Greeks had veridical experiences of water whilst mistakenly believing that water is a fundamental element. Similarly, it could be that Christians have veridical experiences of universal consciousness whilst mistakenly believing that universal consciousness is a kind of person.

Those who accept the reality of universal consciousness, at least in part, on the testimony of mystics will no doubt endorse an identity between the object of religious experience and universal consciousness. However, the cold-blooded motivations for universal consciousness I have outlined in this paper do not depend on the testimony of mystics, and hence it is in principle possible to accept my conclusion whilst taking all religious experiences to be delusions. In this case, it will simply be a coincidence that some of these delusions lead people to a correct view of reality, analogous to my dreaming my auntie is visiting when in fact, unbeknownst to me, she is.

Let us turn now to question (2). Suppose we do identify universal consciousness with God. What then is the relationship between God and the physical universe? Pantheists believe that the universe is identical with God. Panentheists believe that the universe is *in* God, in the sense that the universe is an aspect of God but God's nature is not exhausted by the physical universe. In fact, neither of these proposals captures the relationship universal consciousness bears to the physical universe on the view I outlined above. My proposal is that universal consciousness *partly constitutes* matter: that each individual entity is grounded in a relationship between universal consciousness and a bundle of phenomenal properties. Indeed, it is no part of the view I have defended that the physical universe was brought into being by universal consciousness. The view is compatible with the origins of the physical universe being a brute fact.

On this view, God/universal consciousness is an aspect of the physical universe, but the nature of the physical universe is not exhausted by God/universal consciousness: the physical universe is also constituted of phenomenal properties, which are not aspects of God. This is the converse of the panentheistic position: God is in the universe but the universe is not in God. We might call this view ›theosenpanism‹, if that word were not too cumbersome.

## 7. Conclusion

The view I outlined above may sound peculiar and extravagant. This is not surprising, as the relationship between logic and physical reality is peculiar.



How on earth do these laws manage to enforce their governance in all possible worlds? How on earth does a physical human being get to know the laws that govern all of modal space just by sitting in an armchair and thinking? From the perspective of a methodological naturalist, these facts seem impossible to explain.

But methodological naturalism is a historical idiosyncrasy, which arises from an over-enthusiasm for physical science. The realities of logical truth and logical knowledge are hard data, and we should be prepared to spend ontological dollars accounting for them. Our scientific culture renders us happy to spend to account for empirical data but miserly when it comes to non-empirical data (in so far as these are acknowledged at all). No doubt the cultural associations of ›new age‹ talk of universal consciousness, in contrast to the academic prestige associated with Platonism, also plays a role here in discouraging the perennial philosophy from being taken seriously.

In fact, the postulation of universal consciousness provides an explanation of logical phenomena which is surprisingly simple and elegant. We should take this possibility very seriously indeed.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> I would like to thank my colleagues at Durham University and Benedikt Paul Göcke for instructive comments.

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# Naïve Panentheism

Karl Pfeifer

## 1. *In-troduction*

What is panentheism? The term »*Panentheismus*« was coined by Karl Krause in 1828,<sup>1</sup> reflecting the Greek expression *πᾶν ἐν Θεός* (*pân en Theós*), which literally means »all in God«. It is often said that panentheism stands midway between theism and pantheism, melding the transcendence of God from theism with the immanence of God from pantheism. Whereas theism regards God as standing independent of the world, pantheism regards God and the world as coextensive or identical, and panentheism regards God as containing the world; the world is in God, hence God is more than the world (transcendence), but God is also present in the world (immanence).

The word »in« is central here and needs to be clarified. It has been claimed that various panentheist positions entail different meanings of »in« and Tom Oord has been credited with putting together an illustrative list.<sup>2</sup> Supposedly, the world is »in« God because:

1. that is its literal location
2. God energizes the world
3. God experiences or »prehends« the world (process theology)
4. God ensouls the world
5. God plays with the world (Indic Vedantic traditions)
6. God »enfields« the world (J. Bracken)
7. God gives space to the world (J. Moltmann ... *zimzum* tradition ...)
8. God encompasses or contains the world (substantive or locative notion)
9. God binds up the world by giving the divine self to the world

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1 Krause 1828: 256. Although Clayton 2010: 183 alleges that Friedrich Schelling prefigured Krause's 1829 [*sic*] coinage of the term »*Panentheismus*« with his use of the phrase »Pan+en+theismus« in his *Essay on Freedom* in 1809, that phrase (with or without the pluses) does not appear in the original German text, nor does »Pan+en+theismus« (with or without the pluses) appear in any of the English translations; cf. Göcke 2013a: n. 5. A possible even earlier use by Krause awaits verification: in his foreword to *Vorlesungen über das System der Philosophie*, Krause tells us (pp. v-vi) that his *System der Wissenschaft* is unaltered (»*unverändert dasselbe*«) from his teaching lectures of 1803-04 in Jena and that his *Entwurf des Systemes der Philosophie* of 1804 bears witness thereto. For the first study of Krause's panentheism in English, see Göcke 2018.

2 Clayton 2004: 253.

10. God provides the ground of emergences in, or the emergence of, the world [...]
11. God befriends the world [...]
12. All things are contained »in Christ« (from the Pauline *en Christo*)
13. God graces the world [...]

I am not convinced. Except for 1 and 8, the »becauseal« *relata per se* seem to have nothing to do with the meaning of »in« at issue, and it is not obvious that in most of these cases a plausible connection to *in*-ness cannot be given in terms of a longer explanation involving a locative use. Here is how I would rate the list:

- Satisfactory becauseal relations (i.e. ones that actually involve a recognizably straightforward meaning of »in«): 1, 8
- Unsatisfactory becauseal relations: 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13
- Maybes: 4, 6, 12

Let us first consider the *Unsatisfactories*:

2. God energizes the world. By itself, this does not require the world to be in God; an analogy: an electronic device may be energized by an external power source (e.g. electrical outlet) or an internal power source (e.g. battery); only rarely would an electronic device be contained within its power source, if at all.

3. God experiences or »prehends« the world. Experiences and prehensions are not confined to internals (cf. proprioception) but may be of externals (cf. perception).

5. God plays with the world. *Prima facie* this suggests that God and the world are ontologically distinct, inasmuch as playthings are typically external to players. In the Heliopolitan creation myth, Atum does »play with himself« but that does not support a world-in-God interpretation or outcome.

7. God gives space to the world. »Giving space to« or »making space for« can be construed as forming an internal space or an external space. However, since the central concept of the *tzimtzum* tradition is contraction (»*tzimtzum*« means »contraction«) for the purpose of making the space in which creation of the world can take place, *prima facie* giving space to the world does not seem to put the world into God.

9. God binds up the world by giving the divine self to the world. One can bind up something that is either internal or external to oneself, but giving oneself to the world suggests the world is external.

10. God provides the ground of emergences in, or the emergence of, the world [...]. God could presumably provide this whether the world is in him or not.

11. God befriends the world; 13. God graces the world. Again these do not preclude the world's being external rather than internal to God.

Now for the *Maybes*:

4. God ensouls the world. If the »en« of »ensoul« works like the »en« of »envelop«, then there is a semantic linkage to »in« that implies the world's being in God. However, if we go with the *Oxford English Dictionary's* secondary definition of »ensoul« as »to infuse a soul into« then ensouling could be either internal or external.

6. God »enfields« the world. Because this claim is associated with Joseph Bracken, the notion of enfielding here is one that derives from psychological field theory,<sup>3</sup> an offshoot of Gestalt psychology. In psychological field theory interactions between individuals and environments are central, and the totality of a person's experiences and needs and all the environmental factors that influence the person's behavior at any time is called a »life space« or »psychological field«. Psychological field theory also uses topological notions in describing the various interconnections within the totality. Hence, psychological field theory deploys spatial metaphors that might provide an appropriate sense of *in*-ness. However, it is not clear whether Bracken's take on fields considers God to be coextensive with a field that is all-enfielding or whether the field is confined to the world.<sup>4</sup>

12. All things are contained »in Christ« (from the Pauline *en Christo*). This one strikes me as an outlier, not so much wrong as irrelevant, perhaps using »in« in a doxastic sense of participating-*in*-a-community-of-ideas or of having-faith-*in*; or a social sense of being-together-*in*-fellowship (cf. the salutation »Yours in Christ«). To momentarily change gears, rather than implying anything spatial or locative, 12 seems more on the order of what a party faithful might tell a comrade: »Everything is contained in Marx.« To be sure, there are some biblical passages that are more amenable to a spatial or locative construal than this, although it is noteworthy that the »things« typically referred to are the believers in Christ and not the inventory of the world at large. (But that may be enough for a clever spin doctor to get started.)

Benedikt Göcke has instructively generalized the problems he sees with what I have listed as *Unsatisfactories* and *Maybes* with his observation that »almost any interpretation of »in« that understands the relation between God

<sup>3</sup> *Britannica* 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Bracken 2000: 7f. says, for example, »in line with this proposal one can postulate that the universe or cosmic process is at any given moment an all-encompassing »structured society« or structured field« of activity for all the actual entities emergent within it.« [...] »God shares, in other words, a common field of activity with finite actual entities.«

and everything else as an *internal* and intimate relation between God and everything else can also be thought of as an *external* and intimate relation, and *vice versa*.<sup>5</sup> As is evident from my own assessments, I don't disagree with that. My problem, however, is with regarding a number of Oord's so-called meanings of »in« as being meanings of »in« in the first place, rather than simply being not relevantly qualified tenets of some variant of panentheism. »God graces the world« for example says absolutely nothing about *in*-ness or lack thereof, absolutely nothing about characterizing an internal or external relation. As a tenet of a variant of panentheism, it does not explain the *in*-ness of that variant; rather, what needs to be explained is how that tenet can be understood in terms of the *in*-ness of that variant of panentheism.

I don't believe a demarcation of panentheism that abandons the central locative or spatial characterization suggested by the etymology and the familiar diagrams (more on which below) or makes proprietary claims about any other properties of God not articulated in such terms is feasible. A clever theist could always appropriate such properties in some manner or other, and pantheists of different denominations could always find ways to disagree amongst themselves about such properties.

A constant across many popular contemporary portrayals of panentheism just *is* a spatial-locative characterization with accompanying diagrams. One may be naïve in holding that this constant directly provides us with a view of panentheism *comme il faut*, but that is where I will start and, after some scrutiny, grooming, and fattening thereof, abide.<sup>6</sup>

## 2. Figuring »In« Out

Let us then consider some diagrams commonly used<sup>7</sup> to illustrative the differences between theism, panentheism, and pantheism:

<sup>5</sup> Göcke 2013b: 63.

<sup>6</sup> This is somewhat like the naïveté of naïve realism. Or it could be regarded as akin to the naïveté of Friedrich Schiller's naïve poets, who in a childlike way accept what's given, as opposed to the sentimental poets, who place themselves reflectively and self-consciously apart, but may also strive for a synthesis (see his 1795-96 *Über naïve und sentimentalische Dichtung*). Moreover, Sharpe 1991: 60 discerns a youthful vision of »optimistic pantheism« in Schiller's 1786 *Theosophie des Julius*. So I might with modest justification be said to be pursuing a Naïve and Sentimental Panentheism. ☺

<sup>7</sup> Although the diagrams, being diagrams, are perforce two-dimensional, it is easy enough to imagine analogous three-dimensional representations, and there is no reason that the basic distinctions being made couldn't be made in higher dimensional frameworks if need be,

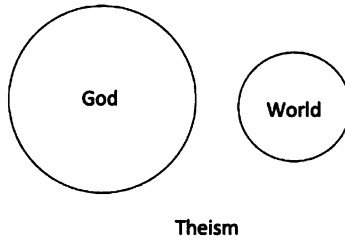


FIGURE 1

Figure 1 represents the fact that in theism, God and the world are different substances. The »world« is typically regarded as being the universe, but we can expand that conception by allowing other possibilities such as a multi-verse or the »many-worlds« of that eponymous interpretation of quantum mechanics.

Some diagrams for theism also have an arrow connecting God and the world to indicate that God interacts with and intervenes in the world. Without an appropriate caption or emendation, Figure 1 could just as well be a diagram for the omni-absent God of deism. Let us represent God’s interactive interface with the world with a point of contact between the circles, i.e. a common »pineal point« on their circumferences, as in Figure 1a:

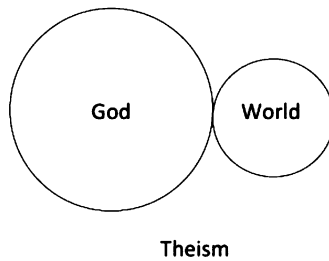
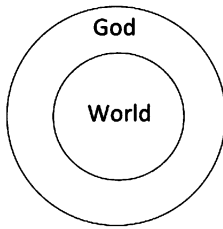


FIGURE 1A

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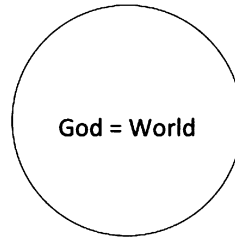
although visualizations would be more difficult. Moreover, the regions the lines enclose don't have to be regarded as literally being bounded, although they could be, e.g. for the case of a finite universe; cf. Borg 1997: 51 n. 2.

Typical diagrams for panentheism and pantheism are:



Panentheism

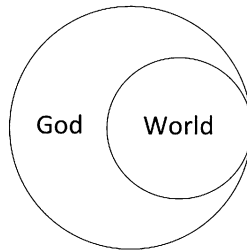
FIGURE 2



Pantheism

FIGURE 3

The two-dimensional doughnut of Figure 2 shows that the world is contained within God and we can consider God's interface with the world to be represented by a shared locus of points along the circumference of the inner circle. Alternatively, we might just represent the interface by single point of contact between the circumferences of the two circles, as in Figure 2a:



Panentheism

FIGURE 2A

But now an interesting question arises. Aren't Figures 2 and 2a ambiguous? Although the world is represented as being »in« God, there are two possibilities:

Case (i). The world is in God but the world is *not* a part of God.

Case (ii). The world is in God *and* the world *is* a part of God.

To make an analogy: My vermiform appendix is in me and is a part of me. However, the cherry pit I accidentally swallowed is in me but is not a part of me. Based on these considerations, I submit that Figure 2a, Case (i) is tantamount to Figure 1a. If the world is *not* a part of God and we imagine the contact point



as a hinge and swing the contained circle outward like a door, we in effect end up with Figure 1a. Opening the »door« wouldn't leave a circular hole in the big God circle, because after all if you take something out of God that isn't a part of God, all of God will still be there. Cf: if my appendix is surgically removed, less of my body will remain, but if I cough up and spit out the cherry pit, my body is still all there. The upshot is that »in« cannot be conceived as mere containment; panentheism requires parthood, otherwise it collapses into theism.<sup>8</sup>

So Figure 2a, Case (ii) is the more suitable option. Panentheism requires that the *in*-God-ness of the world be construed not only in a locative or spatial but also in a substantive sense.

R.T. Mullins has recently proposed a model of panentheism that embraces a spatial-locative reading of »in«.<sup>9</sup> Postulating a distinction between absolute (or metaphysical<sup>10</sup>) space and time and physical space and time, Mullins suggests that absolute space and time, but not physical space and time, be construed as attributes of God. »Absolute space and time exist regardless of the physical and temporal things that are contained within them« (p. 342). So in creating a universe, God creates physical space and time, but physical space and time exist *in* absolute (or metaphysical) space and time, and since absolute (or metaphysical) space and time are attributes of God, the universe is »literally in God« (p. 343). Mullins alleges that »Classical theists typically claim that God creates space and time and as such space and time are not attributes of God. Some neo-classical and open theists affirm that absolute time is a necessary concomitant of God's being (e.g. Clarke and Swinburne), but they do not insist that absolute space and time are divine attributes« (ibid.). If so, he alleges, we have a unique claim about panentheism that differentiates it from theism.

Mullins adds that his model also demarcates panentheism from pantheism, inasmuch as the pantheist »can maintain that God and the universe are distinct substances. God and the universe are not identical. The universe is not identical to absolute space and time; rather, the universe exists in absolute space and time. In identifying God and the universe, the pantheist is collapsing the distinction between absolute/metaphysical and physical space and time« (ibid.).

8 Some pantheists are prone to talk of the world as »God's body«. I would suggest that such a conception of the world actually makes more sense for theism. That's why I referred earlier to the interface between God and the world in Figure 1a as a »pineal« point.

9 Mullins 2016.

10 Mullins 2016: 343 mentions a distinction sometimes made between *metaphysical* space and time and physical space and time; he suggests that, given this distinction, absolute space and time are to be construed as metaphysical space and time.

His proposal, as Mullins himself admits, does leave unanswered questions. One concern might be a seeming equivocation between substance and attribute: God is a substance; the universe is a substance; absolute space and time are attributes; physical space and time (equated with the universe or containing the universe?) and the universe exist in absolute space and time.<sup>11</sup> One might think absolute space and time are being treated both as substances and as attributes. Can a substance be attributed? (Aristotle and Frege say »no«.) Can an attribute contain a substance? (Perhaps when it's really a relation... .) Purists will not be happy with such loose talk. And of course, one might also wonder, what's to stop a contrarian theist from defying Mullins and appropriating some of the claims he assigns to panentheists?<sup>12</sup>

Such concerns notwithstanding, I am sympathetic to Mullins's proposal, in spirit if not entirely in letter, because it could straightforwardly serve as a caption for Figures 2 and 2a. However, the discussion for those figures also indicates that Mullins's proposal does not go far enough. It could only serve as a necessary condition for differentiating panentheism from theism, since it does not distinguish between Cases (i) and (ii). For that, we also need to construe the *in*-ness of panentheism as substantive parthood; God and the universe cannot be completely distinct substances.

### 3. The Dough in the Doughnut<sup>13</sup>

Having plumped for a spatial-locative characterization of panentheism à la Mullins, albeit supplemented with substantive parthood, I will hereinbelow flesh it out with some analogies.

11 If the universe necessarily exists, then physical space and time, in addition to absolute space and time, *could* be considered to be attributes of God. Cf: When I have the attribute of having an alimentary canal, and the alimentary canal includes an esophageal passage, then ipso facto I have the attribute of having an esophageal passage. Similarly, if God has the attributes of absolute space and time, and absolute space and time (necessarily) contain physical space and time, then God *could* also be said to have the attributes of physical space and time. Moreover, if God can have contingent properties, then the universe doesn't even have to necessarily exist. Theological conceptual frameworks have a lot of wiggle room.

12 But I don't think it would be particularly contrarian for a theist to claim that absolute space and time are divine attributes. That no theists apparently have done so seems more like inadvertence.

13 A doughnut chart is a variant of the pie chart. Figure 2 isn't a doughnut chart, not even a bad disproportional one (cf. notes 21, 22); like the cartoon character Jessica Rabbit, it's »just drawn that way.«

We have determined that Case (ii) is the viable option for panentheism. Although I made the comparison of panentheism and theism using Figures 1a and 2a because the visual analogy was more direct, it should be clear that a Case (i) for the Figure 2 doughnut is equally tantamount to theism, despite the greater dissimilarity of Figures 1a and 2. To use a baseball metaphor, there is a distinction between the infield (the world) and the outfield (God), and although they are interrelated in the game of baseball, the infield is not part of the outfield.

Speaking of fields, the metaphor of a force field is also apt, and we can take some inspiration from Bracken's notion of »enfielding« (*Maybes* #6, above) without adopting the baggage attached. What sort of force field, then? Let's first consider an ordinary magnet's magnetic field. Objects can be placed in a magnet's magnetic field, but with many kinds of substance, the field just passes through the object without having an effect on it. Witness the primary school science demonstration with a magnet under a sheet of paper and some iron filings on top. This demonstration could be an analogy for theism: the magnet (with attribute of magnetic force) = God, the paper plus iron filings = the world; God and the world are discrete substances; God acts upon the world and produces some effects in it (the paper is not affected but the iron filings are). Although the world is in the magnetic field, it is not a part of it, so the magnetic-field analogy is captured by Figure 2 Case (i).

Consider, too, the fields as postulated by general field theories in physics, where the physical universe, with its physical attributes of space and time, is itself seen as one enormous, possibly infinite physical field, and where ordinary physical objects and phenomena are constituted by curvatures, distortions, perturbations, or whatnot, of the field. God, on a panentheist conception, is naturally not a physical field with physical attributes. But instead, we might conceive of him, in parallel fashion, as a spiritual field with Mullins's suggested divine attributes of absolute space and time. Indeed, regarding God as a spiritual field is one way of understanding the biblical assertion that »God is spirit« (John 4:24).<sup>14</sup> In physics, forces are typically essentially allied to fields (hence »fields of force« or »force fields«), so the notion of a spiritual field can also be regarded as essentially allied to a notion of a spiritual force.

Let us then entertain a notion of God as an endless spiritual field that contains the world and of which the world is a part. Much like physicists' talk of matter consisting of perturbations in the physical field that constitutes or pervades the physical universe, we can think of the physical universe itself as a perturbation in the spiritual field that is God. Nor need we think of the

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<sup>14</sup> In some versions of the Bible, John 4:24 has »spirit« as a count noun: »God is a spirit«.

spiritual field as passive; it might be regarded as an intelligent force<sup>15</sup> that wills its own perturbations, and such willings of perturbations would ipso facto be acts of creation. A »point« in the spiritual field might be expanded into a universe; in other words, God could will a Big Bang within himself. This would be akin to the power of materialization sometimes attributed to yogis, with God being like unto a super-yogi who can initiate and foster a benign tumor within himself.

Inasmuch as these universe-constituting perturbations are within and part and parcel of the spiritual field of force, we may also say that the world is ipso facto »enfielded« (*Maybes* #6) by the spiritual field of force, viz. God. (*If*, alternatively, we were to think of the divine spirit as being more like the local magnetic field in a schoolroom science demonstration, i.e. like, insofar as the divine spirit merely permeates or passes through the world in the way that a magnetic field passes through an object that is within but not a part of the magnetic field, *then* we would default to some form of theism.)

Presumably if the all-pervading spiritual field is a mentating divine person, then it can also be regarded as a soul, in which case we might have a soul that »ensouls« the world (*Maybes* #4). However, we might again ask about the role of the prefix »en«. Is it like the »en« of »enmired« (»stuck in or covered by mire [i.e. mud]«)? That would seem to suggest that what is ensouled is in the soul but is not a part of the soul, and that won't do here since it amounts to the situation represented in Figure 1a or Case (i) of Figure 2a. Moreover, it is odd to speak of anything that is nonmental as a part of the soul.

Some panentheists (as well as some pantheists) like to think of the world as God's body. But let's consider souls à la Cartesian dualism for a moment. A person with a soul is not at all ensouled in the sense of a soul containing a body or even of a body containing a soul. The situation is more like that of a person wearing a hat: during life the Cartesian soul accompanies but is not a part of the body (and vice versa). Clearly the relationship between the world and divine soul or spirit cannot be Cartesian if we are to stick with the spatial-locative construal of panentheism. If the relationship were Cartesian, it would be what is represented by Figure 1a or Case (i) of Figure 2a again.

However, if we think of a soul in its secondary sense of simply being a particular person, and think of a person as per Strawson's person theory,<sup>16</sup> then a human person is something that *has* both a body and a mind, i.e. an en-

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15 The all-pervading and conceivably intelligent force of the new religion of Jediism is often described in panentheistic terms. However, Jediism appears to have no tenets about creation or the modal status of the universe.

16 Strawson 1959: chap. 3.

tity to which both physical and mental attributes can be ascribed but which *is* itself neither a physical body nor a mind—Strawsonian tripleism,<sup>17</sup> as it were. Pursuing that analogy, we might think of God as a divine person/soul who has both spiritual attributes and physical attributes, the latter by virtue of being suitably related to the physical world. However, if that relation, to repeat our previously used metaphor, is pineal, then we are again no further ahead. An alternative might be to consider »ensouled« to be akin to »enabled«. But that merely suggests providing an additional quality rather than consisting in a locative or spatial relationship. The conclusion I draw at this point is that ensouling is not helpfully comparable to enfielding after all, and I therefore demote ensouling from the *Maybes* to the *Unsatisfactories*.

#### 4. Panning for Panpsychism

Returning to the notion of enfielding, we may ask how panpsychism might figure in an enfielding scheme of things. Presumably if the all-pervading spiritual field is a mentating divine person, it would be a tautology that panpsychism is true: mentality is everywhere that that divinity is, namely everywhere—including, by implication, the physical universe. Put another way, this construal of panpsychism would be true of the physical universe, and more besides.

Contemporary panpsychists and their fellow travellers will not likely be happy with such supernaturalization of panpsychism. Those folks regard panpsychism as a thesis about the physical universe, to wit that fundamental physical entities have genuine mental states. I myself am not drawn to the idea that »there is something that it is like to be a proton« (or whatnot) and therefore have no truck with the various panpsychisms that postulate or argue that the basic microphysical entities have primitive experiential/phenomenal properties or consciousness. However, I do think a significant analogy can be drawn between microphysical entities and the so-called unconscious mental states and processes that underpin or give rise to our conscious mental states and processes. There's a lot going on in the brain and even if unconscious, the fact that we often resort to a homuncular intentional stance to make sense of much of it is highly suggestive. Moreover, since physical causal-dispositional states satisfy various common criteria for intentionality, and dispositional properties attend everything physical, we can argue for panintentionalism, considered as

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17 Cf. Martin 1969.

a diluted variant of panpsychism.<sup>18</sup> Physical intentional-dispositional states are everywhere and when arranged in complex arrays result in full-fledged intentional states. How do conscious phenomenal states arise? I lean towards the view that they consist of or in neurophysiological properties, states, or processes of the brain. These can be called emergent, but we need not decide here and now whether the emergence is like the weak emergence of water from its constituent elements or like the stronger emergence of property dualism.

Again we may ask how the God of panentheism figures in this scenario. There are two but not necessarily mutually exclusive possibilities. Given that the physical universe is a realm of cause and effect, we can regard the divine spirit as sustaining all worldly causal relationships, making the physical causal chains and intentional-dispositional configurations that result in mentality possible.<sup>19</sup> Alternatively, we can opt for some form of occasionalism, whereby God intervenes to produce mental states whenever the underlying arrays of intentional causal-dispositional states are ripe for it. Moreover, God would accomplish either of these by enfielding, in the relevant sense, the world and willing the results. So just as causation in the world might be dependent on supernatural intentionality and willful causation, mentality in the world might likewise be dependent on supernatural intentionality and willful causation.

Thus we have two versions of panpsychism that are compatible with panentheism. The first is merely a consequence of God's all encompassing presence as a divine person who consists in a mentating spiritual field; as such, it is simply a restatement of an essential attribute of God. The other is a modest worldly panintentionalism, which by the grace of God yields conscious mental states at certain levels of complex organization of physical intentional causal-dispositional states. However, panintentionalism, as well as the various panpsychisms claiming primitive experiential/phenomenal properties or consciousness for the basic microphysical entities, would be an optional add-on as regards panentheism. Unlike the situation with pantheism, God is not identical to the world and therefore panentheism per se does not stand in need of a panpsychism that derives mentality from the physical.

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18 I have presented these ideas in more detail in Pfeifer 2016. Is my panintentionalism the same as David Chalmers's panprotopsychism? According to Chalmers 2016: 31, »*protophenomenal* properties are special properties that are not phenomenal... . Panprotopsychism is then the view that some fundamental physical entities have protophenomenal properties.« Since he does not regard mere dispositional properties as appropriately special, the answer is »no«.

19 Cf. Copleston 1961: 118-120.

## 5. Another Inning

So far we have focused on how the world might be in God. But God himself is everywhere, we are told in our catechisms. God is omnipresent and ever-present. So God is in the world and therefore presumably in each of us as well. I have previously suggested that in order to make some talk about God intelligible we need to recognize that the word »God« is equivocal between a mass-noun sense and a count-noun sense.<sup>20</sup> When used with a mass sense, it is similar to the term »gold«: parts of gold are themselves gold; in contrast, parts of chairs are not themselves chairs. The noun »gold« does not take a plural form or an indefinite article (»a«) and so gold per se is not countable, whereas »chair« does take a plural form and an indefinite article. So if gold is in a certain space, then gold itself is also in a part of that space.<sup>21</sup>

Some English nouns can be employed in both a mass and a count sense. I can say »there's chicken in the fridge«, and since parts of chicken can still be chicken we can each have chicken. However, if I say »there's *a* chicken in the fridge« it doesn't follow that we can each have »*a* chicken«. All this is admittedly oversimplification, but the main idea is clear. Mass terms afford a means of talking about substances that treats wholes and parts as on a par.

Let us now return to Mullins's idea of absolute space and time as attributes of God. Accordingly, physical space and time (which conjointly is identical to and/or contains the universe) is *in* absolute space and time; moreover, as I argued in the discussion of Figure 2a above, in order to distinguish panentheism from theism we need to construe this *in*-ness as substantive parthood. But if God is considered in his masslike aspect, we can say as we did for gold, that God himself, qua his attribute of absolute space, is in whatever the absolute space encompasses, viz. the physical space and all its contents, parts, and constituents.

I used the term »masslike« in the preceding paragraph because I want to acknowledge that there would have to be an important difference between the use of »God« as a mass noun and ordinary physical mass nouns such as »gold«. When we talk of a mass of the substance gold, it occupies space and ipso facto subspaces (or parts) of that space. The problem with this picture is that although we can say that what a subspace contains is itself gold, we would

20 Pfeifer 2016: n. 5. Also cf. n. 14 above.

21 Although not in *every* part of the space; real gold is not infinitely divisible, so at the atomic level we will have parts of gold that are not gold. In our *physical* realm, there may not actually be anything that is infinitely divisible while retaining its substancehood or identity, not even physical space.

be committed to the consequence that some subspaces will contain more gold or less gold than others.<sup>22</sup> Clearly this is not the sort of thing we want to say about God. When God is omnipresent, he is completely present everywhere, not present in varying quantities. So the analogy with mass terms for some uses of »God« needs further qualification.

Here are two additional manoeuvres we might make to explain why »God« doesn't entirely behave like »gold«. The first is that we might say that the substance that is God, whatever it comes to, is a constant throughout both absolute and physical space and time. Even as the speed of light is a constant such that two photons moving in opposite directions from a common light source would nevertheless move away from each other with a relative velocity of just the speed of light and not twice the speed of light, similarly when God is in a space (whether absolute or physical), he is fully present in all the subspaces. God's total »there-ness« is a constant that cannot be exceeded or diminished by the different spaces in which he is present. The second manoeuvre might be simply to say that, unlike gold, God is not subject to the metrics of the spaces he is in at all; familiar notions of distance, area, or volume just don't apply to him.

## 6. Quo Vadimus?

I have attempted herein to present a coherent view of panentheism that eschews Pickwickian senses of »in« and aligns itself with, and builds upon, popular diagrammed portrayals of panentheism. So we began this disquisition by going along with the common spatial-locative characterization of panentheism and paying heed to some typical accompanying diagrams. But apart from their role as visual aids, we might also consider what kinds of diagrams these are. The two-dimensional circles of planar Euclidean geometry have finite and measurable circumferences; such geometric properties are not properties of God, nor do they make for the best metaphors or similes for properties of God.<sup>23</sup> So these visual aids, if taken too literally, inadvertently reflect the opposite of what we might wish for in a characterization of God.

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22 Methanks Graham Oppy for this reminder.

23 It is not my intention here to belabor the obvious. I merely want to highlight the idea that the geometric properties of the diagrams stand metaphorically for certain features of God that might be better captured by a more abstract but nevertheless still spatial representation.



Although we may be naturally inclined towards spatial metaphors that are inherently geometrical and typically Euclidean, I would like to recommend that we prescind from such metaphors and the particular realizations of substances that they implicate. Rather than the geometrical spatial metaphors, I think we should focus on spatiality at the more abstract level of topological spaces,<sup>24</sup> of which Euclidean and other geometrical spaces are merely special cases. From a topological point of view, for example, God could be conceived of as (having the attribute of) a non-metrizable space that contains a metric or metrizable space, viz. the universe. Or else, God might be associated with a so-called pseudometric space, i.e. a space in which the distance between non-identical points can be zero. Moreover, topological concepts can be combined with mereological concepts (ergo »mereotopology«). Some philosophers have disparaged the idea that mereology might be used to say anything distinctive or interesting about panentheism, but it seems to me that mereology is amenable to many clever axiomatizations and shouldn't be written off prematurely. Indeed, recent mereological work on conceptions of location may be fruitful, inasmuch as it addresses such issues germane to the nature of God as whether substances can interpenetrate, whether substances can be multilocalized, and whether an entity can be an extended simple.<sup>25</sup> Such topological or mereological possibilities are not obviously at variance with Mullins's proposal and the additional views I have advanced. They merely represent a turn towards a more abstract and exact idiom that could be to our behoof.

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Skowron 2015. Skowron surveys the use of various topological concepts in philosophizing about God, but unfortunately he does not specifically confront panentheism.

<sup>25</sup> Gilmore 2018.

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# What a Feeling? In Search of a Metaphysical Connection between Panpsychism and Panentheism

*Uwe Voigt*

## 1. Introduction

What has been said about the relation between panpsychism and pantheism<sup>1</sup> seems to hold also for panpsychism and panentheism: They are logically independent from one another. At least, a panpsychist universe without panentheist background can be conceived of without any contradiction. This paper is going to pursue the following question: Could it nevertheless be the case that there is a metaphysical connection between panpsychism and panentheism?

This question brings to mind what might be a parallel case, famously argued for by Saul Kripke<sup>2</sup>: Before the advent of modern chemistry, the question about the essence of water could be, and has been, answered in several ways. In the meantime, the microstructure of water, described by the formula  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , turned out to be a promising candidate for a metaphysical truth about what water essentially is, insofar our natural kind term ›water‹ rigidly designates the stuff with that microstructure throughout all possible worlds. Logic alone could not provide this connection; it was forged by experience—in this case scientific experience within a certain theoretical framework.

Can a metaphysical connection between panpsychism and panentheism be established in a similar way? This question encounters the problem that panpsychism seems to be a position which it is at least not directly corroborated by experience<sup>3</sup>. But maybe the according experience has just not yet been identified as such. In this paper the following will be argued: Panpsychism can refer to such an experience, the experience of what it is like to be a natural subject. As in the case of water, there is a framework within which this experience can be elucidated, namely a phenomenological approach suggesting that subjects are open to (mental) atmospheres which can connect them. To pursue this line of thought, it is apt to begin with a look at panpsychism.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Leidenhag 2018: Introduction.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Kripke 1980.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. e.g. Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2017b: 4; Goff 2017a: 283f.

## 2. A Look at Panpsychism

For the newly gained prominence of panpsychism in contemporary philosophy, especially in analytic philosophy of mind, the following reasons can be given:

- (R<sub>1</sub>) Subjects are entities which can be in specific, namely mental, phenomenal or conscious<sup>4</sup>, states, i.e., in the following sense<sup>5</sup>: Subjects have perspectives on the world (intentionality), and it is like something for them to have these perspectives (qualitative consciousness).
- (R<sub>2</sub>) There are subjects which have been brought about in the course of natural evolution. Such subjects are to be called macrosubjects.
- (R<sub>3</sub>) The entities grasped by physics are just dispositional structures lacking intentionality and qualitative consciousness<sup>6</sup>.
- (R<sub>4</sub>) Only something which has intentionality and qualitative consciousness, namely some kind of subject or at least something which is subjective, is sufficient to bring about something which has these very properties<sup>7</sup>.
- (R<sub>5</sub>) Therefore macrosubjects have to be brought about by something like a subject or by other subjects. Such subjects are called microsubjects.
- (R<sub>6</sub>) Microsubjects (at least at the fundamental level of reality given by physics) are the qualitative inside of the dispositional structures grasped by physics<sup>8</sup>.

These reasons are well-founded:

(R<sub>1</sub>) sums up a concept issued during the last decades in defense against physicalist attacks on subjectivity. This concept has been developed, among others, by Thomas Nagel and David Chalmers and stresses that intentionality and phenomenal consciousness as essential properties of subjectivity are not within the object realm of physics and therefore cannot be denied in the name of a physical worldview by physicalism<sup>9</sup>. Being thus theoretically motivated, this thesis can refer to each and every one's personal experience at the same time and therefore is hard to shake.

(R<sub>2</sub>) is based on the wide-spread and well-founded conviction that there are at least human subjects and that these subjects have been brought about in

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4 In this paper, like in the panpsychist literature referred to below, these terms will be handled as synonymous.

5 Cf. Voigt 2019: 41-43.

6 Cf. Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2017c: 926-928, Chalmers 2017a: 26f.

7 Cf. Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2017b: 3.

8 Cf. *ibid.*

9 Cf. Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2017c: 923-928.

the course of natural evolution. The growing acceptance of subjectivity in the animal kingdom<sup>10</sup> gives further support to this thesis.

(R<sub>3</sub>) seems to describe quite aptly what contemporary physics is doing and moreover what it *should* be doing according to its theoretical and empirical foundations<sup>11</sup>.

(R<sub>4</sub>) is a version of the principle of sufficient reason<sup>12</sup>: If there is such a generic difference between subjects as conceived of in (R<sub>1</sub>) and the objects of physics as given by (R<sub>3</sub>), the bringing about of subjects by objects of physics would be a case of super-strong emergence in which something completely new appears in a way that cannot be accounted for, that remains unintelligible. Panpsychists claim that there is one promising alternative to this, namely that some subjects (macrosubjects) are brought about by other subjects—according to (R<sub>5</sub>). Generally: Subjectivity can arise only from subjectivity. This is what makes subjectivity another basic feature of reality, besides or more precisely, as the look on (R<sub>5</sub>) will show, inside the physical features. How intelligible this suggestion really is remains contested, as a look at the combination problem will show below.

(R<sub>5</sub>), the claim that there are microsubjects or something like them, follows logically from these presuppositions. »Microsubjects or something like them« here hints to the demarcation lines between different kinds of panpsychism and related positions: panpsychism proper which will be pursued here and which presupposes that it is subjects all the way down, and other brands which assume that the chain of subjects in some place breaks off in favor of somehow subjective entities which nevertheless are not subjects themselves, but rather experiences or qualities<sup>13</sup>. Panpsychism proper is preferred here for two reasons: In the first place, it is hard to conceive of something subjective without any subject experiencing it; in the second place, the progress towards ›real‹ subjects would have to be a case of super-strong emergence, a ›brute‹ occurrence which to avoid is prudent whenever possible.

(R<sub>6</sub>) is an attempt to find a place in nature for these microsubjects. One such place, also in a non-metaphorical sense, is supposed to be found *inside* the fundamental objects of physics, whatever these may be. This move guarantees that panpsychist theses do not get into conflict with physics, which, according to (3) does not have anything to say about these insides and rather is occupied only with the structural dispositions obtaining between them.

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10 Cf. Soentgen 2018: 36-42.

11 Cf. Goff 2017b: 23-39.

12 On this and the following cf. Brüntrup 2017.

13 Cf. Chalmers 2017a, Goff 2017c: 165-171.

As these points show, panpsychism tries to overcome physicalism and at the same time to access to its inheritance, physicalism being the thesis that the entities grasped by physics are sufficient to bring about subjects. Panpsychism tries to overcome physicalism by denying this thesis (which has come under great pressure anyway), and tries to access to the inheritance of physicalism by keeping up the notion that there are levels of reality given by physics, and that these levels—at least one of them—play a crucial role for the rise of macrosubjects. As these levels are levels of nature, panpsychism, like physicalism, still is a naturalism, but a more liberal<sup>14</sup>, one could also say a more inclusive one, as it includes subjectivity already as a fundamental factor of reality.

So panpsychism looks like an attractive solution to the mind-body-problem: According to panpsychism, the relation between mind and body is not mysterious but rather intimate; and situating subjectivity at least on a lowest level of physical reality does not contradict the accepted assumption that science shows us a physical world, for, in a panpsychist view, this world is only the outside of that reality, which also has a mental inside. At the same time, panpsychism makes it plausible how, within such a physical world, ›ordinary‹ subjects<sup>15</sup> like ours can arise: with a little help of the microsubjects hidden intimately on the inside of that physical world.

### 3. The Combination Problem

This solution, however, comes with a price: If microsubjects do the job to bring about macrosubjects, *how* do they do it? This question has been posed in the form of the famous combination problem<sup>16</sup>. In its original version by William James this problem starts with the assumption that microsubjects would have to *constitute* macrosubjects, in the sense of weak emergence, so that microsubjects somehow blend or fuse together in order to form a larger whole, and the contents of the mental states of this whole are accordingly formed by the contents of the mental states which belonged to the smaller units. Subjects and the contents of their mental states, however, just do not seem to do this. Even when put very close to one another, they do not fuse but rather remain enclosed within themselves.

One problem with the combination problem is the weak emergentist view that microsubjects constitute macrosubjects. A promising way out is to give

14 Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2017c: 928.

15 Cf. Goff 2017a: 295.

16 On this and the following cf. the contributions to »Part III. Panpsychism and the Combination Problem« in Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2017a.

up that view. Super-strong emergence also is out of the question, for it would mean that what is brought about belongs to another category than what is bringing it about, while here we deal with subjects on both sides. Moreover, to avoid super-strong emergence is what makes panpsychism excel in its competition with physicalism. What remains is non-constitutive strong emergence<sup>17</sup>. According to it, the microsubjects combine while staying what they are, and through their combination the macrosubjects comes to be as yet another subject. The Whiteheadian formula for this runs: »The many become one and are increased by one«<sup>18</sup>, with ›becoming one‹ here meaning ›getting related to one another‹ and ›are increased by one‹ standing for ›the additional subject, the macrosubject, being synchronically generated by that getting related to one another of the microsubjects‹.

This way out, however, encounters a generalized version of the combination problem, »The No Summing of Subjects Argument«<sup>19</sup>: Even if, or precisely if, microsubjects do not constitute macrosubjects, how can they bring them about after all, since subjects do not seem to be able to ›sum‹ in any way? Philip Goff rightly calls this »the heart of the combination problem«<sup>20</sup>, and articulates its presuppositions as follows<sup>21</sup>:

- (CP<sub>1</sub>) »Conceptual Isolation of Subjects«: It is possible to conceive that a certain number of subjects exist with certain mental states and this does not necessitate the existence of another subject.
- (CP<sub>2</sub>) »Transparency Conceivability Principle«: If a proposition contains only transparent elements, i.e. elements which reveal what they are about just by inspection, and if, reflected in an ideal way, that proposition can be conceived of to be true, it »is metaphysically possibly true«.
- (CP<sub>3</sub>) »Phenomenal transparency«: »phenomenal concepts are transparent«.
- (CP<sub>4</sub>) »Metaphysical Isolation of Subjects« (MIS): It follows from the above premises that any number of subjects may exist without necessitating the existence of another subject.
- (CP<sub>5</sub>) CP<sub>4</sub> has the consequence that subjects cannot bring about other subjects, at least not as panpsychism would have it.
- (CP<sub>6</sub>) »Therefore, panpsychism is false.«

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17 Cf. Brüntrup 2017.

18 Cf. *ibid.*: 66.

19 Goff 2017a: 291.

20 *Ibid.*

21 *Ibid.*: 291f.

In a convincing way, Goff argues for the first four premises and stresses that especially panpsychists should endorse phenomenal transparency, because to him what would make phenomenal concepts intransparent could only be their physical nature which is denied by panpsychism. Nevertheless, Goff still sees a chance for panpsychism to survive this assault: (MIS) only claims that the *existence* of a certain number of subjects does not necessitate the existence of another subject. It might still be the case that the existence of a certain number of subjects *with certain mental states*, which in turn have certain phenomenal properties, together with some *relation between these mental states* necessitates the existence of another subject<sup>22</sup>. A relation of this kind Goff calls ›phenomenal bonding‹. Goff assumes that, while we can experience the phenomenal properties, we cannot experience the relations between them, which means: we cannot experience phenomenal bonding. Goff traces this back to what he passingly assumes as obvious: that »consciousness is a monadic property«<sup>23</sup>. From the immediate context, it becomes clear what this ›monadic‹ thesis means to him:

- (MON) Each and every mental state is a categorial (i.e. also: non-relational) state of only one subject and therefore can be experienced only by that subject.

According to (MON), phenomenal bonding as a relation between mental states of several subjects cannot be experienced by any subject. Hence phenomenal bonding is not directly observable, yet, as Goff argues, the sciences offer plausible parallel examples that sometimes it makes sense to assume the existence of non-observables<sup>24</sup>.

The concept of phenomenal bonding can be applied both in constitutive and in strongly emergentist panpsychism<sup>25</sup>. Since the latter already has proved to be more promising, it has to be considered what, in its context, phenomenal bonding can mean. In principle, it seems to mean that there are and there remain several microsubjects with their respective mental states and that these mental states are related by their phenomenal properties to one another—are ›phenomenally bonded‹—so that this relation brings about another subject, the macrosubject of these microsubjects. The macrosubject is added to its microsubjects and, so to speak, exists grounded on the web of

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22 Ibid.: 292.

23 Ibid.: 293.

24 Cf. *ibid.*: 292f.

25 Cf. *ibid.*: 295.



their phenomenal interrelations. This view, however, again raises questions highlighted by David J. Chalmers:

What is the phenomenal bonding relation? And how could any phenomenal relation holding between distinct subjects (or between phenomenal states of distinct subjects) suffice for the constitution of a wholly new subject?<sup>26</sup>

Chalmers proceeds to answer these questions:

A natural candidate here is the co-consciousness relation: a relation such that whenever it relates two phenomenal states, they are experienced jointly. When this relation holds among the states of distinct microsubjects, those states will be experienced jointly by a new subject.<sup>27</sup>

But he does so only to come up with a new problem arising from this answer: Being a mental phenomenon, on a panpsychist background the ›co-consciousness relation‹ has to be the inside of a physical relation. For microsubjects on the fundamental level of reality, such relations should be fundamental physical relations like spatio-temporal and causal relations. These relations in turn are connected with one another so that, in the final analysis, their network encompasses the whole universe. The problem posed by this can be called limitation problem: Is the co-consciousness relation—principally or within certain ranges—transitive or intransitive. I.e.: Are there, within this cosmic network of mutually linked co-consciousness relations, any lower or upper limits for bringing about new subjects? What makes the limitation problem a problem are the consequences of various ways to answer that question: If the whole network itself is the lower limit, that would mean that the universe is either the only subject (which Chalmers seems to fear<sup>28</sup>) or the primary subject (which Goff has come to endorse<sup>29</sup>), which would make the existence of ›ordinary‹ subjects like us either epiphenomenal or hard to explain. If every link in that network brings about a new subject, that would mean that there are very many (macro)subjects and it would leave us with only fragmented subjects, which would make it »hard to see how we will get macrosubjects«<sup>30</sup>. And if only certain structures in that network bring about new subjects, we would need a reason why this is so, i.e. why certain groups of links are

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26 Chalmers 2017b: 200. It should be noted that ›constitution‹ here is to be understood in such a broad sense that it includes also strongly emergentist panpsychism.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.: 201.

29 Id. 2017b: 220-255.

30 Id. 2017a: 201.

›transitive‹, i.e. jointly take part in bringing about a new subject, why others are ›intransitive‹, i.e. do not take part in doing so.

Chalmers does not exclude ›intermediate possibilities in which the relation is just nontransitive enough to yield nontrivial macrosubjects‹, but in order to make those possibilities work, it would have to be shown how this structure between microsubjects and macrosubjects can arise so that ›a limited multiplicity of microsubjects associated with the human organism‹ can be assumed, saving the phenomenon of our subjectivity connected with such an organism<sup>31</sup>. An ›intermediate possibility‹ would have to avoid the ›Scylla of a universal subject and the Charybdis of fragmentary subjects‹<sup>32</sup>. Goff himself goes for the Scylla by ›identify[ing] the phenomenal bonding relation with the spatial relation‹<sup>33</sup>. At first glance, this move is plausible: Also space is something known to science by its outer, dispositional properties; if such outer properties hint to subjectivity hidden inside of them, this should apply also to the case of space. If one takes the space of the universe to be a continuous whole, as Goff does, this leads to the thesis that there is a universal mind as the inside of the whole spatially extended universe<sup>34</sup>. Whoever is inclined to take the mind of the universe to be divine ends up with some kind of panentheism based on panpsychism right here. Rather, panpsychism understood this way *collapses* into panentheism. What still makes this horn of the dilemma a ›Scylla‹ hard to embrace, however, is the circumstance that the phenomenon to be saved—human consciousness—in the very process of its salvation threatens to get lost in space or at least to be turned into an epiphenomenon, something which exists only on a superficial plane of appearance. This contradicts the ›hard fact‹ of our existence as subjects; therefore the search for an ›intermediate possibility‹ is justified.

#### 4. Phenomenal Bonding and New Phenomenology

A way towards such an option can start from questioning one presupposition which Chalmers and Goff (together with most contemporary panpsychists) share, namely (MON). This presupposition, plausible as it seems to be at first sight, does not only pose an epistemic problem for phenomenal bonding by declaring it unobservable. (MON) challenges phenomenal bonding also ontologically: The relations in which phenomenal bonding itself consists are not

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31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 Goff 2017a: 299.

34 This position has been expounded in Goff 2017b.

physical relations but rather their non-physical inside. At the same time, according to (MON) those relations are not mental states—not only because they are not states but relations, but also because there is no subject that could experience them, for subjects can only experience their own, non-relational states. Hence, if (MON) is true, phenomenal bonding gets stranded in an ontological no man's land as a type of relation which is neither physical nor mental; it seems to be a leftover from neutral monism<sup>35</sup>, only that the otherwise indeterminable ›neutral‹ now is situated within relations rather than within their relata. At best, this is where panpsychism proper would have to end and give way to protopanpsychism or some other position which works with ›something like a subject‹. If panpsychism proper has to end here, however, it does not even start, because then it would lose the microsubjects on the fundamental level of physical reality it presupposes.

But it does not have to end this way, because (MON) has been challenged in a way that can help out of that predicament. This challenge comes from a philosophical movement which goes under the name of New Phenomenology<sup>36</sup>. Its core thesis has been formulated by its founder Hermann Schmitz<sup>37</sup>: The phenomenological description of feelings like anxiety, joy and despair shows that they are entities of a certain type which Schmitz calls atmospheres. Atmospheres in this sense are not in the subject but permeate and surround it so that also several subjects may participate in them. Atmospheres according to Schmitz may even be there without any subject feeling them. They qualify as mental states in the minimal sense endorsed also by panpsychism—see (R<sub>1</sub>)—, because it is like something to be in them, and they are distinct perspectives on the world, which is sensed differently when in anxiety, joy, despair and so on. Whoever adopts (CP<sub>3</sub>), according to which phenomenal concepts are transparent, and accepts Schmitz's description, has to agree that atmospheres are spatially extended mental states which do not belong to any one subject. This is enough to contradict (MON) by claiming that not all mental states are states of one and just one subject. At the same time, it fits nicely to the thesis that mental states might be spatial relations. Panpsychism and New Phenomenology seem to approach the same position in logical space from different directions. Of course, panpsychism tries to explain the rise of subjectivity in general term and thus is a metaphysical project, while New Phenomenology puts description in the first place, but this need not stop both from being complementary for each other.

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35 On this position and its relation to panpsychism, cf. Coleman 2017.

36 For a presentation and critical discussion see Soentgen 1998.

37 Cf. Schmitz <sup>2</sup>1981: 91-360; id. 1990: 292-310.

The way New Phenomenology originally was presented by Schmitz, however, threatens to disrupt this rapprochement. Two issues have to be mentioned here: Firstly, Schmitz claims that atmospheres just are there and received by subjects, denouncing any attempt to explain how atmospheres themselves arise as pointless<sup>38</sup>. If this were so, the concepts of atmospheres would be useless for the (also explanatory) project of panpsychism. Secondly, according to Schmitz the space in which feelings are extended is totally different from the space explored by science<sup>39</sup>. Space in the first sense is a ›feeling-space‹ filled by specific kinds of stuff which mediate what is felt in this space and how it is felt. This space lacks dimensions but has—only qualitative—intensities and in some cases directions. Space in the second sense is a neutral medium for intersubjective orientation and filled with the matter quantified by science. If this were so, adopting the concept of space in New Phenomenology to a problem of panpsychism could only rest on an equivocation.

Remarkably, during the further development of New Phenomenology, these two issues have been tackled: As Gernot Böhme has pointed out<sup>40</sup>, concerning the first issue, aesthetic experience shows that there are indeed cases in which atmospheres are generated, for example in artistic efforts. As to the second issue, Jens Soentgen has argued critically that the thesis of the spatiality of feelings is informative only if space in this context is understood as the ›ordinary‹ space of intersubjective orientation and scientific exploration; otherwise it would be pointless or at best figurative to talk about a ›feeling-space‹ at all<sup>41</sup>. Constructively, Soentgen has elaborated the thesis that ›ordinary‹ space is also feeling-space by developing hermeneutic approaches in different fields of the life-sciences<sup>42</sup>. The point of these approaches is: Certain phenomena like the behavior of single organisms but also of complete ecosystems can be explained and also predicted in a more comprehensive way if these phenomena are understood as reactions to atmospheres in the sense of New Phenomenology. For example, it is like something to be wildlife in a wood where regularly hunting takes place. And because the space in which the according mental states are situated is no mysterious medium on its own, but the space also traversed by humans and explored by science, also the stuff mediating feelings throughout space is not just a mysterious non-physical something, but the ordinary stuff known to everyday experience and (in some extent) to

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38 Cf. id. 1999: 286.

39 Cf. id. 1990: 310-318.

40 Cf. Böhme 1995.

41 Cf. Soentgen 1998: 106.

42 Cf. id. 2018.

science<sup>43</sup>. Against such an identity thesis, Schmitz has argued already early that the stuff feelings are made of displays other properties than the physical stuff<sup>44</sup>. But, as may be learned from panpsychism, categorial distinctness can go hand in hand with intimate ontological connectedness: The way panpsychism sees the physical universe suggests that there is only one category of stuff, of course encompassing different stuffs, which have physical properties on the outside and have mental properties—the way it feels to be confronted with them—as their inside.

This approach in the context of the life-sciences can contribute to solve the limitation problem, centered round the question how we can arrive at macro-subjects like ourselves. In that context, the obvious answer is: by natural evolution. In the course of this evolution, it may happen that many microsubjects become one in the sense that they get phenomenally bonded to one another. On the background of New Phenomenology, that means: They enter an atmosphere which makes them form a certain arrangement that gives rise to a macrosubject. If this macrosubject in turn manages to keep up this atmosphere, it will endure as such. Being an enduring subject and therefore being capable of consciousness will provide enhanced abilities to react to the environment. By the ensuing increase of the fitness of their members, whole species of organisms with macrosubjects may arise—and obviously have arisen. All of this does not presuppose any intention to make this happen on the side of the microsubjects or the macrosubjects; it rather happens to them, and it could not be any other way, because having and carrying out such an intention would presuppose rationality; but the microsubjects, as may be assumed in this case, are not rational at all, and some macrosubjects may be rational, and are in the case of human subjects, but come to exist as such only through the act of phenomenal bonding which therefore must precede the exercise of their own rational capabilities<sup>45</sup>.

If phenomenal bonding is a spatial relation mediated by the qualities of certain kinds of stuff, and if being a subject and thus being capable of consciousness offers an advantage in the struggle for survival<sup>46</sup>, those species have a great benefit whose exemplars are macrosubjects which manage it to bring about stable phenomenal bonding of their microsubjects. Neither on the side of the microsubjects nor on the side of the macrosubject this is an intended

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43 Cf. id. 2019.

44 Cf. Schmitz 2018: 208.

45 Cf. Voigt 2019: 54f.

46 Cf. Meixner 2004: 81; Swinburne 2007: 180-183. The point of consciousness as evolutionary advantage has been made by two dualists, but it can be used by panpsychists as well.

process; rather it is something which happens and keeps itself happening while it is happening.

## 5. A Metaphysical Connection between Panpsychism and Panentheism

A further elaboration would have to show on which levels and under which physical, chemical and biological circumstances subjects can get phenomenally bonded in according atmospheres. That elaboration itself lies out of the scope of this paper. But within it lies the question asked at its beginning: Could there be a metaphysical connection between panpsychism and panentheism mediated by an experience? This question now can be reformulated: Can panentheism give an answer to a question which does not concern the circumstances under which, but the reason why subjects get phenomenally bonded in according atmospheres. The problem behind this question is: For subject to get bonded that way, the according atmospheres already have to exist, have to address them. Where, then, do that atmospheres come from? Seen from the outside, as modern science might do, it could seem that these atmospheres arise by mere chance. In the course of natural evolution, microsubjects undergo many kinds of mutual arrangements; some of these arrangements, maybe highly improbable, but not impossible, bring about the right kinds of atmospheres; the resulting macrosubjects somehow manage to sustain these atmospheres; and the rest, like all of it before, is evolutionary history. But what is this process like viewed from the inside? The view from the outside cannot exclude that the microsubjects are somehow addressed and thereby motivated to enter those arrangements. As Brüntrup and Jaskolla have shown<sup>47</sup>, such a speculative, but plausible consideration about the view from the inside demonstrates how panpsychism in general can underwrite a theist view of the world, with God not forcing, but nudging the microsubjects into a development towards increasing completion which includes the bringing about of macrosubjects. For this, there is again a fitting Whiteheadian catchphrase, depicting God as »the lure for feeling«<sup>48</sup>. Having panpsychism enriched with motives from New Phenomenology, this can be understood in the following way: God ›lures‹ the microsubjects to form the mentioned arrangements by offering them an anticipation of the atmosphere they are going to enter in order to bring about a macrosubject.

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47 Cf. Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2017c: 929-943.

48 Ibid.: 941.

Brüntrup and Jaskolla explicitly leave it open to elaborate this general theist perspective on panpsychism in the direction of a panentheist perspective. The considerations above may contribute to ease this desideratum, and even show why it is promising to go this way: Panentheism consists in the thesis that »everything is in God«. Each of the concepts used in this thesis is in need of interpretation<sup>49</sup>. In the current, panpsychist context, »everything« can be specified as »every subject which exists and becomes in the course of natural evolution«. This is going to be abbreviated as »every natural subject«. Hence, also what is meant by »is in« becomes clearer: to be in something for a subject means to be in a mental state in the sense mentioned in (R<sub>1</sub>). Given this interpretation, panentheism seems to claim that every natural subject is in a mental state which is God, which in turn implies that God is a mental state, namely a mental state in which all natural subjects are. Does not this consequence amount to a *reduction ad absurdum*, bereaving God of His ontological independence and of His personality, since mental states seem to depend on their subjects and seem to be something different from persons?

The answer to this question is not necessarily positive, if we take into account the reshaping of the concept of a mental state provided by New Phenomenology. According to it, not every mental state is just a state of mind, let alone a state of mind borne or possessed by exactly one subject; on the contrary it is possible for a mental state to exist on its own, as an atmosphere in the sense given above and used also below. Nothing precludes that such an atmosphere is also a subject, or even a rational subject, i.e. a person. Therefore it is at least not absurd to understand God as the atmosphere of the universe and hence as the atmosphere of the different atmospheres encountering in it. This understanding, however, might run afoul of one horn of a well-known dilemma in the theological and philosophical discourse on God<sup>50</sup>: On the one hand, God is a concrete agent within the universe, and as such somehow known to us—in this case by the way we know what it is like to be in an atmosphere. On the other hand, however, God is consistently conceived of as the »totally other« which should be referred to only in a negative or at least very cautious way. Understanding God as an atmosphere, does this not negate His transcendence, i.e. also His otherness exceeding human knowledge, which is expressed in that second horn? Shouldn't we all know the feeling what it is like to be in God?

However, what a feeling could that be? What is it like to be not (only) in some concrete atmosphere, but in any atmosphere at all? From the discussion on the limitation problem above, the answer to that is already known in an

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49 Cf. Göcke 2015.

50 Cf. Brüntrup/Jaskolla 2017c: 929.

abstract manner: What it is like to be in an atmosphere is the same as what it is like to be in space. If phenomenal bonding is possible in a way conceivable to us, this also is the fundamental content of the according mental states of the involved microsubjects. It may be surprising to assume that it is like something to be in space, that being in space is a qualitative perspective on the world, but this very assumption has been endorsed and elaborated by Immanuel Kant in a way which is pertinent to the present discussion<sup>51</sup>. For Kant, space is the pure form of external intuition<sup>52</sup>, whereby ›external‹ characterizes the way the objects encountering in this way are intuitively apprehended: namely as different from the subject perceiving them. Accordingly, to be in space is to be confronted with something different from oneself. This intuition is not based on conceptual insight, which would be a privilege of rational subjects; on the contrary, it is the foundation of any sensual faculty and thereby can be presupposed to be at work wherever qualities are sensed. So even microsubjects below the human level need not lack the intuitive knowledge (in a minimal sense) that there is something different from them, e.g. something they can be addressed by, they can combine and form arrangements with. What it is like to be in space, understood thus, is being open to atmospheres, as something not identical with oneself but at the same time mental, and what can happen within them. This is what it is like to be a natural subject; this is like what it is to be in the mental state which is God. What it is like *to be in that mental state*, however, is different and therefore to be distinguished from what it is like *to be that mental state*, in this case: to be God. We know that difference only from one of its side<sup>53</sup>, namely from our side as human and therefore natural subjects: We know what it is like that we can encounter something (or someone) else, we know what it is like that there can be otherness. We can approach the other side of this difference at best in a negative way, like Nicolaus Cusanus did it by calling God, considered in Himself, *non-aliud*, the »Not-Other«, thus in the final analysis staying on our side of the difference (where else could we stay or go, at least under our natural conditions?) and acknowledging it as only one side of it.

These considerations allow to resume the initial question: Could it be the case that there is a metaphysical connection between panpsychism and panentheism? They even allow to give as a preliminary answer: Yes. This answer can be justified as follows: As suspected, the searched metaphysical

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51 For the following, cf. Voigt 2016.

52 Cf. Critique of Pure Reason: B42/A26.

53 On the conception of a difference with only one (available) relatum, see Zorn 2016: 119-129.



connection consists in an experience which could not just be logically deduced. This experience in turn is the experience what, for natural subjects, it is like to be in space. It might be logically possible to think of possible worlds with natural subjects which lack the external intuition of space and therefore any feeling for the other—which also would be possible worlds without atmospheres. At the same time, it could turn out that these possible worlds widely differ from our actual world, since in them basic microsubjects might exist but, having no sense of something different from them, might never be able to combine and bring about macrosubjects. If every significant level of the physical world has its own mental inside, that would mean that such worlds without sense of otherness, without atmospheres would also lack significant physical structures above the level of the basic microsubjects. The way we experience our world tells us that it is very different from that. At the same time, since the inside of the microsubjects in our world are not directly accessible for us and since the concept of God as the atmosphere of atmospheres remains a borderline concept like the Cusanian ›Non-Other‹, that difference does not force us to endorse the combination of panpsychism, New Phenomenology and panentheism offered here, let alone to assume the existence of such a God. The connection which has been argued for in this paper does not come along with metaphysical necessity, but rather with metaphysical possibility<sup>54</sup>, as it tries to make plausible what could be the case in any possible world resembling ours. The task to further explore this possibility seems to be quite alluring.

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54 For this conception, cf. Goff 2017a: 287-290.

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**PART II**

*Panentheism and Panpsychism in Theology*



# God or Space and Nature? Henry More's Panentheism of Space and Panpsychism of Life and Nature

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## 1. Introduction: »Strato's Ghost has begun to walk of late«— Cambridge Platonist Panentheism and Panpsychism

Cambridge Platonism used to be dismissed as a somewhat anachronistic and inevitably forlorn attempt at a humanist defence of a timeless ancient theology in the era of early modern science and empiricism. However, modern research has increasingly revealed the chief representatives of the »school of Cambridge«<sup>1</sup> or the »Cambridge Enlightenment«,<sup>2</sup> notably Ralph Cudworth, Henry More, John Smith and George Rust, to be pioneering thinkers and precursors of key modern notions in theoretical and practical philosophy alike.<sup>3</sup> Their internalist epistemology constituted a powerfully-argued counterpoise to the nascent British empiricism of the likes of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, emphasizing as it did the spontaneity and activity of the subject. Modelled upon Cartesian foundationalism, it views all truth claims as grounded in a first fundamental intuitive insight into divine goodness of which a subject possesses an *a priori* idea exempt from any doubt whatsoever. Likewise, in anthropology, the Cambridge Platonists propounded seminal theories of consciousness in the Cartesian vein which, for all their debt to Descartes' *cogito*, parted ways with the French rationalist in emphasizing accountable practical agency, rather than theoretical reasoning as the chief mode of

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- 1 Cassirer 2002: 223-380, is the most influential proponent of the view of the Cambridge Platonists as backward-looking humanists. See also the rather negative assessment of Cambridge Platonism in Hall 1990: 40-81. On the Cambridge Platonists' use of the ancient theology for the purpose of systematic philosophical enquiry, see Hedley 2017: 932-953. This special issue of the *British Journal for the History of Philosophy* provides a helpful survey of contemporary Cambridge Platonist scholarship. See the exposition of their Christian Platonism in my »Pre-existence and Universal Salvation—The Origenian Renaissance in Early Modern Cambridge« (Hengstermann 2017: 971-989), as well as the general overview of their thought in my »The Cambridge Platonists« (Hengstermann in print a)
  - 2 This is the most recent group sobriquet suggested by Hutton 2015: 136-159.
  - 3 Cf. Lovejoy 1908: 265-302. However, the claim that they anticipated the whole of Kant's transcendental idealism is certainly exaggerated.

human subjectivity.<sup>4</sup> In ethics, they espoused a theory of normativity which viewed autonomous human reason as the sole source of moral obligation,<sup>5</sup> thereby contributing decisively to the »invention of autonomy« culminating in Immanuel Kant.<sup>6</sup> Cudworth's theory in particular has been hailed as anticipating Kantian ethical internalism in crucial regards.<sup>7</sup> It is on the basis of their view of an »internal ought« inscribed into the human mind that they subjected contractualism, as put forward in classics of early modern political philosophy such as Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* and Baruch de Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise*, to in-depth criticism. Both their theoretical and their practical philosophy constitute what Cudworth, with one of numerous neologisms and technical concepts coined by himself, called the »philosophy of religion«. In his massive, albeit unfinished and fragmentary, *True Intellectual System of the Universe* of 1678, the philosophy of religion is shown to centre around the three doctrines of a theism of a providential benign Deity, a strict ethical realism and a libertarian theory of action.<sup>8</sup>

Cambridge Platonist philosophy of religion as a whole left a decisive mark on the history of pantheism and panpsychism as well. As to pantheism, they have been credited with seeking to precipitate a »pantheism controversy« more than a century before the outbreak of the historic debate of that name in Enlightenment Germany. Theirs is a religious philosophy that may well be qualified as a »Spinozism of freedom«,<sup>9</sup> i.e. a system of thought that views God as informing and suffusing all of reality, while also emphasizing man's capacity for libertarian choice. Like the more well-known dispute between Friedrich

4 See the pioneering article by Thiel 1991: 79-99, and the perceptive chapter on the leading Cambridge Platonist's theory of human subjectivity in his monograph *The Early Modern Subject. Self-Consciousness and Personal Identity from Descartes to Hume* (Theil 2011: 67-71).

5 Even though the author's distinction between Cudworth's early emotionalism and mature intellectualism is almost certainly misguided, the general approach to Cambridge Platonist ethics in Gill 2006: 7-74, in terms of its secularism is sound. Theirs is an Enlightenment ethics which stresses the moral autonomy of the subject.

6 See Schneewind 1998: 194-214.

7 This has been established in the compelling study of Cudworth's ethics in Darwall 1995: 109-148.

8 Cf. Taliaferro 2005: 11-56, who hails the Cambridge Platonists as the founding fathers of the philosophy of religion.

9 On this description, generally applied to the various metaphysical systems of the German Idealists, see the illuminating account of early English idealism in Hedley 2000: 21-39. Somewhat anachronistically, this concept is a very adequate description of Cambridge Platonism, even though Spinoza's monism of substance is criticized only in the two major Cambridge Platonists' later works. The significance of their ancient theology with its emphasis upon divine all-oneness was first stressed in Assmann 2007: 110, who was the first to credit the group with anticipating key aspects of the later Pantheism Debate.

Heinrich Jacobi and Moses Mendelssohn about the late Lessing's Spinozist creed, the controversies about Cudworth's account of Platonist, Patristic and Egyptian ancient theology pivoted around God as *hen kai pain*. As to panpsychism, it is thanks to their staunch resistance both to Cartesian dualism and Spinozist monism that the Cambridge Platonists are accorded a pivotal role in the history of this contentious doctrine.<sup>10</sup> In his *True Intellectual System of the Universe*, Cudworth observed that the pre-Socratic »Strato's ghost had begun to walk of late«,<sup>11</sup> targeting two of the foremost western proponents of western panpsychism, namely the Dutch rationalist Spinoza, and one of his most gifted followers, i.e. the English physician turned metaphysician Francis Glisson. At the heart of panpsychism or, as Cudworth chose to call it with another neologism of his own coinage, »hylozoism« is the notion of »living matter«, which is meant to render superfluous the belief in a transcendent creator God. In his magisterial outline of atheisms old and new, Cudworth sought to refute its hylozoist variety with the very first formulation of the now classic »combination problem« of many allegedly conscious atoms coalescing so as to form a higher animal organism or conscious human mind:

And to say, that these innumerable *Particles of Matter*, Do all *Confederate* together; that is, to make every Man and Animal, to be a *Multitude* or *Common-wealth* of *Percipients* and Persons as it were clubbing together; is a thing so *Absurd* and *Ridiculous*, that one would wonder, the Hylozoists should not rather chuse, to recant that their *Fundamental Errour*, of the *Life of Matter*, than endeavour to seek Shelter and Sanctuary for the same, under such a *Pretence*.<sup>12</sup>

However, it was Henry More, Cudworth's close friend and fellow Cambridge Platonist, who wrote the first major refutations of both Spinozist and Glissonian panpsychism. In his three works directed against Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise* and *Ethics* as well as Glisson's *Treatise on the Energetic Nature of Substance*, More built upon his earlier critique of Cartesian mechanism, which he had first put forward in his celebrated early correspondence with the French philosopher. In so doing, More developed a deeply original metaphysics of his

10 See the very apposite description of their position in the foremost historical account of *Panpsychism in the West* by David Skrbina 2017: 102-105; 320-322.

11 Cudworth 1678: 145.

12 *Ibid.*, 839. Cudworth's originality in the formulation of this stock argument against panpsychism is emphasized by Skrbina 2017: 321: »Needless to say, such a situation poses, if not a problem, then at least a very large question for any panpsychist. Perhaps the first to recognize the question, and to criticize panpsychism on the basis of it, was Ralph Cudworth.« An excellent exposition of Cudworth's critique of hylozoism is provided by Breteau 2006: 45-72.

own which may broadly be characterized as panentheist and panpsychist in outlook. More argued both in his early rebuttal of Descartes and in his late critiques of Spinoza and Glisson, is an infinitely-extended creative mind endowing all of reality proceeding from its fullness with a first rudimentary life of its own. Only if we are prepared to grant extension to God and life to matter may we account for causality and the communication of motion by one body to the other.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. The Conundrum of Cartesian Causality—Vitalism in the Correspondence with Descartes

It is to remedy two perceived aporiai of Descartes' philosophy of nature that More provides an early draft of a panentheist and panpsychist metaphysics in his correspondence with the French rationalist.<sup>14</sup> The first is that of divine action. In order for God to communicate motion to inert matter in the beginning, he needs to share with it its extension. He must, therefore, be viewed as an infinite incorporeal extension coextensive with finite corporeal extension. The second conundrum bears upon the concept of motion itself which, as a mode, cannot pass from one substance to another. Instead, all of reality must be endowed with a certain power of its own by which it can set itself in motion.

Throughout their correspondence, More bestows lavish praise upon the Frenchman whose natural philosophy surpasses all its rivals past and present. However, despite the admiration in which he holds Descartes' thought, there are a few »minor details« (*paucula*) on which More begs to differ from him.<sup>15</sup> These »minor details« all bear on the core of Descartes' rationalism,

13 My appraisal of More's early and mature metaphysics is throughout deeply indebted to the detailed expositions of his thought in Reid 2012, and Leech 2013.

14 More 1679: II/2, 227-271. The Correspondence has been recently translated into English by myself and published in the online sourcebook of Cambridge Platonism: <http://www.cambridge-platonism.divinity.cam.ac.uk/view/texts/diplomatic/Hengstermann1679C>. There are several fine studies devoted to More's early enthusiasm for and gradual disenchantment with Descartes. The definitive overviews of the philosophical controversy and the text corpus of the correspondence are provided by Gabbey 1982: 171-249, and id. 1903: 628-642. See also the lucid chapter on More's critical reception of Descartes, in: Pacchi 1973: 3-48. Of the special issue of *Les Études Philosophiques* 2014/1 devoted to More's Cartesian writings, the papers by Anfray (2014), and by Leech (2014) are particularly important for the following précis of the debate. The charge of atheism which More levelled at Descartes in the 1670s revolves around the latter's denial of divine extension first discussed in the original correspondence of 1649/50.

15 *Epistola prima H. Mori ad R. Cartesium* (Op. omn. II/2, 234).



notably his dualism of thought and extension and the question of how God, or any other incorporeal substance, can act upon matter and body without sharing the latter's defining attribute of extension and being present to it in some way.<sup>16</sup> In response to what he views as a fundamental weakness of the admired Frenchman's ontology and philosophy of nature, More, in the first exposition of his landmark doctrine, suggests that God must be viewed as »extended in his own way«:

Firstly, the definition which you give of matter or body is far broader than is warranted. For God also seems to be an extended substance, as do angels and indeed every thing subsisting through itself. Hence, extension is apparently coterminous with the absolute essence of things, although the latter may differ according to the differences between the essences themselves. I view God as being extended in his own way on account of his omnipresence, occupying as he does the whole fabric of the world and each of its particles in an intimate fashion. How else could he impress motion upon matter, which, as you yourself concede, he did at some point and which he does to this day, unless he touches, or had at least at some point touched, the matter of the universe from close up? He could not have done so at any time had he not been present everywhere and occupied every single place. Hence, God is extended and expanded in his own way, and therefore is an extended substance.<sup>17</sup>

More's argument is remarkable for its audacity. It calls for a new ontology whose first axiomatic tenet, as he states dogmatically, is the extension of all of being or substance as »coterminous with the absolute essence of things«. <sup>18</sup> Its theistic rationale is God's creative agency in imparting motion to matter viewed as entirely immobile by itself in Cartesian physics. If and only if God is, or was at least once, present in all places, can he »touch«, or have touched at least once, the atoms constituting the reality of extension. More finds warrant

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16 As a consequence, Descartes, not surprisingly, was quite explicit in remarking in *Responsum R. Cartesii ad Epistolam Primam H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 240) that, notwithstanding More's protestations to the contrary, his well-argued *paucula* were far from peripheral to his project of rationalist physics: »Moreover, I do not admit what you grant me in your extraordinary kindness, namely that my other opinions might well stand even if those about the extension of matter were refuted. For it is one of the principal and, in my view, most certain foundations of my physics, and I confess that no other reasoning could ever satisfy me in physics proper than one involving a so-called logical or contradictory necessity (excepting only those things which can be known from experience alone such as the fact that there are only one sun and moon around this earth and the like).«

17 *Epistola prima H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 234-235).

18 This statement is particularly noteworthy as More in *Epistola Secunda H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 243) states that »the root and essence of all things lies hidden deep in eternal darkness«.

for his ontology of spiritual extension in the ancient theology represented by the Roman poet Virgil whose cosmological aperçu »The spirit within nourishes, and mind instilled throughout the living parts activates the whole mass, and mingles with this vast body«,<sup>19</sup> interpreted by the author as a nod to the Platonism of the imperial age, contains in a nutshell his own key conviction of an extended God omnipresent in matter as the source of its motion. In contradistinction to corporeal extension which is defined by its inability to penetrate or be penetrated by other bodies, spiritual extension penetrates and is penetrated by other spiritual and corporeal extensions alike. Spiritual extension, in turn, is either infinite or finite. Whereas finite spiritual extensions such as the human or the angelic mind may expand or contract, occupying larger or smaller bodies and places at will,<sup>20</sup> God's extension is, by definition, infinite, hence admitting of neither. Nor does divine extension entail the divisibility of his substance. Instead, God's infinite extension is such that he occupies every single place »in his entirety«:

Besides, God, insofar as the human mind comprehends God, is everywhere in his entirety. He is present in all places and all spaces as well as in each point of space in his whole essence. However, it does not follow that he has parts external to each other or that, by implication, he is divisible, even though he occupies all places very closely and tightly without leaving any gaps in between. Hence, I

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19 Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI 726-727, quoted and discussed in *Epistola prima H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 235).

20 Cf. *Epistola Secunda H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 243): »Notwithstanding, I hold that there is another equally real extension, which is not so well-known, let alone common knowledge in the schools. It possesses both different limits and shapes in angels and human minds which the latter, angels and minds, can change at will. While remaining one and the same substance, they can contract or re-expand to those bounds.« See also *ibid.*, (II/2, 245): »For I deny that extension belongs to a body, insofar as it is a body, but rather insofar as it is a being or at least a substance.« More went on to call this variable extension the »essential spissitude« of finite spiritual extension. In his principal philosophical work *The Immortality of the Soul* I 2,11 (More 1987: 28), it is defined as a fourth dimension which distinguishes it from three-dimensional corporeal extension. The former spiritual dimension, he avers, is understood by the mind with the same ease and clarity as the latter three are perceived by the senses: »And as what was lost in *Longitude* was gotten in *Latitude* or *Profundity* before; so what is lost here in all or any two of the dimensions, is kept safe in *Essential Spissitude*: For so I will call this *Mode* or *Property* of a *Substance*, that is able to receive one part of it self into another. Which *fourth Mode* is as easy and familiar to my Understanding, as that of the *Three dimensions* to my Sense or Phansy. For I mean nothing else by *Spissitude*, but the redoubling or contracting of Substance into less space then it does sometimes occupy. And Analogous to this is the lying of two Substances of several kinds in the same place at once.«

acknowledge the divine presence or amplitude, as you call it, to be measurable, but I deny that he is divisible in any way.<sup>21</sup>

However, infinite incorporeal extension may, by virtue of the »ubiquitous reiteration of its complete and total essence«<sup>22</sup> or creative spatial omnipresence, act upon any finite spiritual or material extension occupying any place within its own infinity, »touching« it and thereby imparting motion to it. More provides a graphic example of possible divine action in his rebuttal of Descartes' denial of a vacuum consequent upon the latter's identification of body and extension. Whereas a vessel, on the principles of Cartesian physics, must collapse once the bodily extension between two opposing sides has been removed, Morean physics allows for a possible divine intervention preventing them from meeting: »For if God impresses motion upon matter, as you have shown earlier, can he not press against it, preventing the sides of the vessel from meeting? However, it is a contradiction to say, you argue, that the sides of a vessel are distant from one another without there being anything between them.«<sup>23</sup>

»Motion« of which God is the first source poses another major problem of which Cartesian physics, according to More's early critique, is ill-equipped to provide a philosophically satisfactory account. More, for one thing, takes exception to Descartes' very concept of motion as a merely relative change of place of two adjacent bodies. Firstly, its resultant reciprocity leads to several absurd consequences. Thus, on Descartes' principles, a tower must be said to undergo motion whenever the west wind passes by it. Likewise, and even more implausibly, one person sitting still as another runs away from them, breaking out in sweat as a consequence, must be viewed as moving at the same speed.<sup>24</sup> Secondly, and arguably worse, Descartes' definition fails to do justice to what More views as the defining characteristic of motion, namely the active power by which a spirit, whether divine, human or non-human, impels matter particles otherwise wholly inert and inactive. On closer inspection, this power of motion renders its very concept even more confusing. As the lowest of the categories, it should neither be able to act upon a substance nor pass from one to another without inevitably vanishing in the process: »Finally, I am completely baffled when I consider that a thing as tiny and as vile as motion, which is also capable of being separated from its subject and passing to another, and which is of so frail and so transient a nature that it would cease to be at once if it

21 *Epistola Secunda H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 245).

22 *Ibid.* (II/2, 246).

23 *Epistola Prima H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 235).

24 *Epistola Secunda H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 247-248).

were not for a subject sustaining it, should nevertheless stir its subject up so potently and impel it here and there so forcefully.«<sup>25</sup> More's far-reaching solution to the aporia of Cartesian causality consists in a sketch of panpsychist cosmology that is closely linked to his pantheism of a spatially-extended infinite Deity. There is, in reality, he avers, no transfer of motion whatsoever. Instead, body and motion must be conceived of in analogy to mind and thought with one body exercising its own inherent power in setting itself in motion when occasioned to do so by another hitting it. The body's inherent power or »life« is not yet sensation, but rather a rudimentary kind of self-presence or proto-mentality which, as is required by its role in More's theory of natural causality, enables it to engage in a certain degree of self-motion. Ontologically, material extension is the »last and lowest shadow and image of the divine essence« from whose infinite extension it derives its own motion in creation:

I, for one, am more inclined to assume that there is no transfer of motion whatsoever. Rather, on account of the impulse of one body, another body is, as it were, awakened into motion, just as the soul is awakened into thought on this or that occasion. Instead of receiving motion, a body stirs itself into motion on being alerted by another body. And, as I have said before, motion is to body what thought is to mind, that is to say, neither of them is received from without, but both proceed from within the subject in which they are to be found. And in fact every so-called body is also alive in a mindless and befuddled way, since in my view it is the last und lowest shadow and image of the divine essence which, I hold, is most perfect life. However, it is devoid of all sense and animadversion.<sup>26</sup>

All of reality is a »shadow and image« of God's own archetypal »perfect life« with which it, therefore, cannot but share its defining characteristic. Inanimate being is, hence, ruled out as incompatible with the notion of creation viewed as the procession of reality from the supreme divine life. Instead, self-motion is intrinsic to reality.<sup>27</sup> As a »kind of dark life«, matter *per se* is not primarily

25 *Epistola Tertia H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 256).

26 Ibid. As is observed by Reid 2012: 246, More's theory of causality may be branded an idiosyncratic kind of occasionalism or »occasional causation« which the author defines as follows: »Whereas ordinary transeunt efficient causation means that one object *A* simply produces a certain effect on another object *B* by means of the exercise of its own intrinsic power, occasional causation will take place when one object *A* induces another object *C* to produce an effect on *B* by its own.« Thus, whereas in Malebranche's more well-known variety, it is God who is the source of all motion, More's attributes agency to every body qua body. His, therefore, is a cosmos of nearly infinitely many agents each of which, by its very nature, possesses the capacity for some rudimentary self-motion.

27 In response to Descartes' scathing criticism of his notion of living matter, More, in his *Responsio ad Fragmentum Cartesii* (Op. omn. II/2, 271), provided an illuminating explanation of the metaphor of nature as a »shadow« of the Deity. Its meaning is twofold. It

an »extension of its parts«, but rather a »constant motion« initially given to it and subsequently guided by God's ubiquitous creative intellect which »instilled throughout the living parts activates the whole mass, and mingles with this vast body.«

Throughout his Correspondence, More closely links God's spatial ubiquity and nature's universal animation, viewing God's creative agency, exercised in every single place of his infinite extension, as a benign communication of life and motion. While following the logic of his early trialism of extension in disagreeing with Descartes and assuming the *possibility* of a vacuum, More is nevertheless careful to deny its *reality* on theological grounds. Instead of leaving places devoid of its beneficent self-communication, »the divine fecundity«, More instead states as a theological first principle of his Christian Platonism, »is not idle anywhere. It has produced matter in all places without leaving even the minutest of gaps.«<sup>28</sup> God's spatial omnipresence is, hence, inextricably linked to his creative agency by which he everywhere produces the »dark life« of matter as his own »shadow and image«. His creative agency is conceived of in the univocal terms of More's own hylemorphist theory of human action. For one thing, he avers, God's life-giving omnipresence is the ontological *sine qua non* of the existence of libertarian agency in the first place. It cannot but seem all but inexplicable on the principles of rigid Cartesian mechanism: »How does the *ἀντεξούσιον*, of which we are conscious in ourselves, come to be?«<sup>29</sup> For another, man's *ἀντεξούσιον* or freedom of choice by which he moves his own body by virtue of its animal spirits and shapes the corporeal reality within and without furnishes the closest analogue to God's own life-giving agency in the world:

I wonder, therefore, whether a philosopher should not acknowledge that there is in the whole fabric of things some incorporeal substance which can nevertheless, as bodies do on one another, impress on some body all or at least most

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expresses 1) the ontological dependence of the image upon the archetype and 2) a certain ontological kinship. In so doing, he also addresses the inevitable, yet possibly misleading, use of metaphorical language in all discussions of pansychism: »Besides, there cannot be any deceit hidden in the use of metaphors and similitudes as long as we keep in mind that things are not designated by their proper names, but by figurative ones. Hence, in saying that matter or the universal body of the world was, as it were, the shadow of the divine essence, I did not mean to say they were a shadow in reality. For the meaning of this metaphor is not that it is a shadow in actual fact, but that it depends upon God as does the shadow upon the body. Further, just as a shadow reflects some image of the body, albeit a very obscure and base one, there are in body or matter some blind and faint traces of the divine essence. However, since the latter, as I have said, is most perfect life, the analogy itself requires that matter is not wholly deprived of the image of life.«

28 *Epistola Secunda H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 246).

29 *Ibid.* (II/2, 246). The concept used is the Stoic technical term for »free will«.

corporeal properties such as motion, shape and the structure of its parts. Nay more, since this clearly holds true of motion and rest, may it not also add to it whatever is consequent upon motion? May it not divide and join, disperse and bind together, give shape to particles and arrange them after that, make them rotate or move in any other way and stop them again as well as all other such things as necessarily give rise to light, colour and other sense impressions of that kind, as your excellent philosophy has shown?<sup>30</sup>

Mores's early doctrine of divine agency and causality by which he seeks to remedy two key aporiai of Descartes' metaphysics and physics posits an archetypal spirit of infinite extension and creative omnipotence which shapes the cosmos by »touching« it itself and by guiding and directing the infinitely many material self-movers inhabiting it. In his mature critique of Descartes' unorthodox follower Baruch de Spinoza, whom More, upon reading his *Theological-Political Treatise* in 1677, identified as the most astute of atheists, God's infinite extension and ubiquitous life-giving agency are identified with absolute space and the spirit of nature respectively.

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30 Ibid. Descartes' comments on his critics' reflections upon God's substance and agency are highly revealing. On the one hand, he acknowledges in *Fragmentum Resp. R. Cartesii ad Epist. Tertiam H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 268) that More's doctrine of divine agency is based upon his own physical axiom of the preservation of the amount of motion originally imparted to the world in creation: »However, the moving power may well be that of God himself preserving the same amount of transfer in matter which he put into it at the first moment of creation.« Moreover, while not sharing More's ontological conclusions, Descartes, in *Responsum R. Cartesii ad Epistolam Secundam H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 252) also concurs with his view of the quasi-univocity of divine and human action expressed in hylemorphist terminology: »And while I think that there is no mode of action belonging to God and his creatures univocally, I must confess that I cannot find in my mind any other idea representing a mode in which God or an angel can move matter than the one exhibiting to me the mode in which I am conscious of being able to move my body by my thought.« On the other hand, however, Descartes' caveat that the resultant doctrine, as is clear from its very language, may be seen as close to Plato's and Plotinus's notion of the world soul is evidently far from ill-founded. It is, as he points out in *Fragmentum Resp. R. Cartesii ad Epist. Tertiam H. Mori* (Op. omn. II/2, 268), one of the reasons for his denial of spiritual extension: »I was afraid that I might seem to endorse the view of those who consider God the world soul united with matter.«

### 3. Divine Space and Living Nature—The Panentheism and Panpsychism in the Critique of Spinoza

#### 3.1 *Spatial Panentheism: God as Infinitely-Extended Mind*

At the heart of More's critique of Spinoza are what he chooses to call »twin columns of« his adversary's »atheism, namely that necessary existence pertains to substance as substance, and that there is but a single substance in the universe«. <sup>31</sup> In his critique of Spinoza's rationalist system, More vacillates between a strict first reading, viewing it as naturalism and reductive materialism, and a somewhat more charitable second one, branding it »hylozoism« or panpsychism. Either the single substance erroneously viewed as existing of necessity is matter *per se* or it is matter endowed with a rudimentary life of its own. Spinoza's misguided materialist ontology is throughout shown to spring from his inadequate epistemology which fails to do justice either to God's goodness, as intuited by what More calls the soul's »boniform faculty«, or the distinction between imperfect material and perfect divine extensions, as perceived by the senses and understood by the intellect respectively. <sup>32</sup>

31 *Demonstrationis Duarum Propositionum ... Confutatio*, title (Op. Omn. II/2, 615). The *Confutatio* (ibid., 615-635) of Spinoza's principal philosophical work, the *Ethics*, is inarguably the most important of More's three writings against Spinoza. However, his unduly-neglected earlier refutation of the *Theological-Political Treatise* (ibid., 563-601) contains philosophical points crucial to More's own anti-Spinozist panentheism and panpsychism. A third work is his *Scholia In Epist. Ad V.C.* (ibid., 602-614) in which More provides critical comments on the *Opera Posthuma*, which he had purchased in London shortly after his refutation of the *Treatise*. Most importantly, it contains his refutation of the Spinozist panpsychism of the Cambridge metaphysician Francis Glisson. See pp. 180-185 below. There is an English translation of the *Confutatio* by Alexander Jacob with a helpful introduction and notes: Alexander Jacob, *Henry More's Refutation of Spinoza*, Hildesheim/Zurich/New York: Olms, 1991. My English translations of the *Ad V.C. Epistola altera* and the *Scholia* are accessible online in the Sourcebook: <http://www.cambridge-platonism.divinity.cam.ac.uk/view/texts/diplomatic/Hengstermann1679A>. An exhausting account of the historical background of More's critique of Spinozism, including the link between Cambridge Platonism and liberal Dutch theology, is provided by Colie 1964: 183-219, and 1957: 66-93. See also Hutton 1984: 181-200, viewed by the author herself as »no more than a footnote to these studies« by Colie (ibid., 194 n. 1). However, Hutton's essay contains an illuminating comparison between Spinoza's and the Cambridge Platonists' divergent concepts of divine revelation.

32 This two-fold approach to Spinoza's metaphysics was first noted by Leech (forthcoming) on whose compelling reconstruction of the debate between the Dutch and the English rationalist the following exposition relies and builds throughout. See also the author's earlier account in Leech 2013: 199-227. Cf., moreover, the excellent new article by Reid 2013: 764-792. Apart from Leech's and Reid's important recent research work, More's critique, despite its historical and systematic significance, has received only scant scholarly

In his critique of biblical prophecy in the *Tractatus*,<sup>33</sup> Spinoza views revelation as originating solely in the Hebrew prophets' vivid imagination. Its sole object is ethical obedience, rather than metaphysical truth. The truth of the prophets' imaginative visions is one of »moral certainty« alone and is borne out by their own probity and by God's signs granted to them in confirmation of their mission. While More concurs with his adversary that the prophets were virtuous seers who were endowed with great imaginative power and granted extraordinary signs by God, he views prophets like Isaiah and Ezekiel as philosophers of the highest calibre. The chief power by which they acquired the most sublime of truths about God, the soul and the world was their »boniform faculty«<sup>34</sup> or, as More chooses to term it in his *Ad V.C. Epistola altera*, a »natural sagacity«<sup>35</sup> or an »internal sense«.<sup>36</sup> It is the power by which the soul, prior to any discursive reasoning, grasps or »touches« the infinity of God's universal goodness in indisputable intuitive awareness. The soul's boniform vision is one of a world proceeding from and suffused by God's disinterested creative beneficence. At the moment of immediate insight, God himself acts upon the soul as its principle and form, allowing it to share in his own beneficent omnipresence in existential union with it. In an early work, More provides a memorable description of his philosophical mysticism:

But I say that a free divine universalized spirit is worth all. How lovely, how magnificent a state is the soul of man in, when the life of God inactuating her, shoots her along with himself through Heaven and Earth, make her unite with, and after a sort feel herself animate the whole world, as if she had become God and all things? This the precious clothing and rich ornament of the mind, farre above reason or any other experiment. This is to become Deiform, to be thus suspended (not by imagination, but by union of life, Κέντρον κέντρον συνάψαντα, joyning centres with God) and by a sensible touch to be held up from the clotty dark Personality of this compacted body.<sup>37</sup>

As in More's early hymn to the pinnacle of the soul's experiential, yet rational, vision of God, the prophets' »sagacity« and »internal sense« of God is

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attention so far. Of the two earlier articles by Becco 1978: 103-119, and Schütt 1981: 19-50, the former provides an excellent interpretation in terms of More's defence of divine and human agency, while the latter is largely an exercise in the logic of Spinozist monism.

33 *Theological Political Treatise* 1-2 (3, 15-44 Gebhardt).

34 *Enchiridion Ethicum* I 2,5 (*Op. Om.* II/1, 12). See my comprehensive exposition of Cambridge Platonist epistemology in Hengstermann in print b.

35 *Epistola altera* 20 (*Op. omn.* II/1, 574).

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Second Lash of Alazonomastix*, Cambridge: Printers to the University of Cambridge, 1651, 43.



described in terms of divine and human double-agency in his mature critique of Spinoza. There is a knowledge of absolute certainty and indubitability in all matters of speculative divinity. Such, in fact, is the internal certainty attached to the prophets' boniform vision that it even renders superfluous any exterior warrant, including divine signs, however impressive: »I reply that even though there usually tend to be external signs, prophets may nevertheless be equally certain without them because of a higher principle dwelling in their hearts, namely the most inward operation of the divine spirit that stirs a faith stronger than all imagination, reason or external sign.«<sup>38</sup> The knowledge granted to the prophetic soul is that of God's first attribute, his universal and disinterested goodness. By virtue of their »natural sagacity« which is superior to reason and sense, the prophets are given »indubitable knowledge of« a »God« who creates the world and intervenes in its history as a benign agent, as laid down in the Holy Writ: »For there is in all humankind a certain and infallible sagacity of mind by which they derive indubitable knowledge of God from such historical narratives and come to worship his justice, power and goodness.«<sup>39</sup>

It is on the basis of the soul's boniform vision of the *ens perfectissimum* as a supremely good and benign agent that More subjects Spinoza's definition of God as »absolutely infinite being, i.e. substance consisting of infinite attributes, each one of which expresses eternal and infinite essence«<sup>40</sup> to detailed criticism. The bone of contention is the »absolute« by which the Dutch rationalist qualifies God's infinity, expressly rejecting a Divine that is »only infinite in its kind« as unduly restricting it and denying to it any number of possible attributes expressing positive being and power.<sup>41</sup> In a two-fold argument, More rehabilitates the Cartesian definition of God as the »supremely perfect being«<sup>42</sup> which, he avers, rules out »absolute« infinity as an adequate divine attribute. First, in an *ad hominem* argument, »absolute« infinity is shown to imply the infinity of all divine attributes, including the supreme moral ones which Spinoza is at pains to expose as merely imaginary and anthropomorphist in nature. Thus, Spinoza, despite himself, is compelled to acknowledge the absolute moral perfection of the one absolutely infinite substance: »For, an absolutely infinite being altogether implies infinite perfection, and infinite perfection absolute omnipotence, omniscience, and foresight of all things, which do not please Spinoza's judgement.«<sup>43</sup> Secondly, God's moral perfections, on the

38 Ibid. 10 (II/1, 568).

39 Ibid. 15 (II/1, 571).

40 *Ethics* 1D6 (2, 45 Gebhardt).

41 Ibid. 1D6exp. (2, 46).

42 Descartes, *Meditations* 3 (AT 7, 46).

43 *Confutatio* (Op. Omn. II/2, 623). Translation: Jacob 1991: 82.

principles of More's Christian Platonism, serve as the chief criterion of all of his characteristics. If and only if infinity expresses a moral perfection can, and must, it be predicated of the most perfect being. The *sui generis* of divine infinity upon which More is careful to insist in opposition to Spinoza's *absolute* is its goodness or the »essential sanctity and purity of the divine Majesty« by which it creates and saves all of reality. At the heart of the notion of the *ens perfectissimum* expounded in More's critique of Spinoza, therefore, is its infinite moral perfection to which all of its other perfections must be viewed as subservient in its defining creative and salvific agency and by which it cannot but transcend all of reality beneath it:

Hence, absolute infinity in God must not be understood in such a fashion as if it were not an infinity of his own kind (*sui generis*) and an infinity corresponding to his most absolute perfection. For there is a certain essential sanctity and purity of the divine majesty by which he is different and distant from all the rest of things by his very kind, as it were (*toto quasi genere*). It is this sanctity which this impure sophist tries to violate with such zeal and temerity when confusing the divine nature with the nature of created things. No infinity, therefore, is denied to God which expresses perfection, but that alone which involves imperfection. And whatever is perfect in the essence of creatures, as long as it pleases God, must be referred to him as the source and principle which. While not encompassing them *formally*, he encompasses the essences and perfections of all created things *eminently* and *causally*.<sup>44</sup>

The God of More's anti-Spinozist writings is both the Platonic idea of the good and the perfect mind expressed in Cartesian language. As the archetypal mind, he is not identical with the formal or actual reality of subsequent creation, but its eminent or causal archetype beyond it. As creative goodness, More's Platonic God chooses to share his cosmic vision with man and the world at large. His supreme goodness by which he ungrudgingly communicates the riches of his being to all of reality constitutes the emphatic *sui generis* by which God transcends the latter both in ontological rank and supremely moral power.

Throughout his system, Spinoza fails to do justice to this transcendence of holiness by which God, as the soul intuits by virtue of the highest of its epistemic powers, is »distant and different« from the world. Instead, »confusing the divine nature with created nature«, he erroneously identifies God with matter viewed as mindless mechanism at worst and as generic life at best. On More's materialistic first interpretation of his adversary's substance monism, Spinoza, despite all his protestations to the contrary, is an atheist who denies the existence of God altogether. Instead, he posits matter as the sole

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44 Ibid. (II/2, 629). Translation: *ibid.*, 99 (heavily modified).

deity. Spinoza's erroneous naturalist ontology of a divinized mindless matter is shown to originate in an egregious epistemological error. In an in-depth critique of proposition 15, More rejects Spinoza's argument that it is one and the same extension perceived by sensation and imagination as finite, composed of parts and divisible and understood by intellect as infinite, without parts and indivisible: »As if, indeed that which is everywhere apprehended as divisible by the senses, can rightly and truly be conceived of by the intellect as indivisible, all the particular things of the world, that is, the modes of the material world be divisible, and yet all the matter of the world everywhere, insofar as it is substance, be indivisible.«<sup>45</sup> Spinoza erroneously conflates God with the material extension of sense perception and imagination, thereby attributing to him its many imperfections, including its divisibility. Not only is God, as material extension, inevitably subject to the chaos of purely mechanistic motion and rest, but his thought likewise becomes divisible. Dispersed throughout all of animate matter, it is not the unified one of perfect indivisible intellection, but a disjointed many of a great number of consciousnesses of varying complexity. On More's more charitable second reading of Spinoza's substance monism as »hylozoism« or panpsychism, God is not mere matter, but thought as well. However, God's thought is an inferior cogitation spread out throughout the infinitely many living beings brought about by the random motion and rest of his infinite extension. Since each of the modes of God's extension, on the principles of Spinoza's parallelism, is a mode of divine cogitation as well, divine cogitation must be literally »asinine« in asses and »leaden« in lead:

Since, therefore, stones, lead, dung, an ass, a toad, a louse and all things of that sort are individual things, it is necessary that they be modes of the attributes of God and their expressions in a certain and determinate manner. Moreover, since besides substance and modes there is nothing, and modes cannot be without substance, it is clear that the substance of God is the substance of stones, lead, dung, an ass, a toad, and a louse, and those extended things modes of divine extension and those thoughts modes of divine thought, so that the God of Spinoza thinks in an ass as an ass, in a toad as a toad, in a louse as a louse, and indeed in a stone, lead and dung as stone, lead and dung.<sup>46</sup>

45 Ibid. (II/1, 620). Translation: *ibid.*, 73.

46 Ibid. (II/1, 619-620). Translation: *ibid.*, 71 (modified). Cf. *ibid.* (II/1, 627), where More includes his adversary himself in a satirical climax of alleged subjects of divine thought, highlighting the incompatibility of hylozoism with an adequate definition of the *ens perfectissimum*: »Whence, if the substance which is God, or a Being supremely and absolutely perfect, is nothing besides matter, which Spinoza, however, wishes, this God of Spinoza will think as a goose in geese, as an ass in asses, as a toad in toads, as louse in lice, as a tortoise in tortoises, as a man in men, as a fool in fools, as a maniac in maniacs, as Spinoza in Spinoza« (translation: *ibid.*, 95).

The many living beings and animate objects, each of which is viewed by Spinoza as a mode of divine extension and cogitation alike, are altogether ignorant of the mind processes of their fellow creatures. They, hence, fail to coalesce in one unified consciousness greater than themselves, let alone perfect in its range and scope. The multiplicity of consciousnesses in Spinozist hylozoism cannot but fall short of the unity of supreme cogitation worthy of the *ens perfectissimum*.

Still, although he lambasts Spinoza's erroneous reasoning, More is nevertheless prepared to credit his adversary with certain insights. In particular, Spinoza, for all his enthusiast fancy and materialist error springing from it, is shown to have had at least a faint inkling of the *sui generis* divine spatial extension of More's own mature metaphysics<sup>47</sup> which, astonishingly, the English rationalist expressly qualifies as prophetic in character.<sup>48</sup>

Spinoza therefore rages and raves, and does not philosophize acutely or soundly. However, in this philosophical rage there seems to me to have sprung up by itself, from the heat of this tumultuously agitated mind—just as it sometimes occurs to the delirious to divine in a certain manner and prophesy—the form of infinite and indivisible extension. There is indeed a certain substance of this sort, infinite, indivisible and extended with unitary extension, which is absolutely indivisible and infinite, which, through what rage I do not know, has sprung up in Spinoza's mind here. That this is indeed not matter is in fact certain—of which more later.<sup>49</sup>

Spinoza's prophetic insight revolves around the two unorthodox Cartesians' shared notion of a God who is not only perfect cogitation, but perfect extension as well. Crucial to Spinoza's and More's own line of reasoning is the Cartesian

47 Besides the chapters devoted to it in Reid 2012: 103-139, and in Leech 2013: 123-143. More's historic doctrine of absolute space, generally held to have influenced Isaac Newton's, is the subject of several in-depth book chapters and articles. Cf., above all, the classical exposition by Koyré 2008: 78-94. Of the many essays devoted to Morean space, the one by Boylan 1980: 395-405, which is dedicated to the two principal mediatory entities in More's pantheist metaphysics, is particularly relevant to the following account. Though building upon his more comprehensive exposition in his *Enchiridium Metaphysicum* of 1679, to which he repeatedly refers his reader, the epistemological argument for divine absolute space in the *Confutatio* adds quite significantly to the most celebrated of Morean doctrines.

48 Not only is it extraordinary that More should credit his as formidable a philosophical foe as Spinoza with the gift of prophecy, but it is also in keeping with the epistemology of his late critiques of enthusiasm and materialism. Every soul, however impure and corrupt, possesses a boniform faculty and is, hence, open to the vision of God's spatial infinity suffused by his omnipresent creative and salvific goodness.

49 *Confutatio* (Op. omn. II/1, 621). Translation: Jacob 1991: 74.

axiom »that nothing is the modification of nothing«. <sup>50</sup> This axiom by which Descartes himself had established the existence of the second substance of extension is the pivot of More's argument for the necessary existence of an infinite divine spatial extension. Whereas Spinoza, implausibly, assumes that one and the same extension may at once be perceived as divisible and mobile and understood as indivisible and immobile, More instead insists that equal weight be placed upon the perception and the intellection of extension. The two extensions defined by contradictory predicates must, hence, be viewed as the attributes of two substances equally different in nature. Sensation and intellection reveal one extension that is mobile and »discernible and impenetrable« and another that is immobile and »indiscernible and penetrable« respectively. <sup>51</sup> The former is the defining attribute of finite matter, the latter that of infinite spirit. Whereas Spinoza agrees with Descartes in identifying extension with matter *tout court*, More, from his early correspondence with the French rationalist in the late 1640s to his late critique of Spinoza in the 1670s, distinguishes sharply between an imperfect extension that is the object of sensation and imagination and a perfect extension that is the object of intellection: »I say, however, that there is an extended substance which it would be madness and delirium to consider as being composed of parts. That is, that immobile extension distinct from mobile matter which I have demonstrated in the *Enchiridion Metaphysicum*.« <sup>52</sup> In More's principal metaphysical work, the demonstration or intellection in which the necessary existence of infinite space is established takes the form of a conceivability argument modelled upon Descartes' metaphysical doubt. Even when abstracting from all attributes and modes of cogitation and extension, the I is shown to be unable not to grasp an infinite extension in which it cannot but imagine itself to be situated in the very act of meditative doubt and abstraction:

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50 Descartes, *Principles of Philosophy* I 52 (AT 7, 25), quoted *ibid.* (II/1, 626). In his *Scholium in Fragment. Respons. R.C.* (Op. Omn. II/2, 269), a later comment on his own original correspondence with the French philosopher, More is careful to emphasize the axiom common to his and Spinoza's metaphysics of the extended Divine, referring the reader to his late metaphysical chef-d'oeuvre: »Certainly, if the Cartesians hold on to these principles—and Spinoza himself is most adamant that there is no property or predicate of nothing—then it can clearly be demonstrated that there is an incorporeal substance distinct from matter which is extended in some way. I have provided detailed proof in my *Enchiridium Metaphysicum*, chs. 6-8.«

51 These are the defining attributes of body and spirit in More's *Immortality of the Soul* I 3,2 (p. 30 Jacob).

52 *Confutatio* (Op. Omn. II/1, 61). Translation: Jacob 1991, 61.

I shall only observe, incidentally, that anyone who thinks his mind can be nowhere, may test his powers of thinking, and after he has abstracted himself from all thought or sense of his body, and fixed his mind on the idea of indefinite or infinite extension alone, and at the same time perceives himself to be some particular thinking thing, let him test, I say, whether he can in any way avoid perceiving himself at the same time to be or, at least, to be able to be somewhere within this very immense extension and to be surrounded everywhere by it.<sup>53</sup>

As well as establishing the *reality* and *necessity* of infinite spiritual extension which the I cannot conceive as non-existent, More's anti-Cartesian and anti-Spinozist conceivability argument also proves the *contingency* of indefinite or finite material extension. Infinite spatial extension can clearly be conceived by the I as entirely devoid of body and matter, i.e. as a vacuum, whose *possibility* More had established in his early critique of Cartesian physics. Bodily matter is thereby shown both to be distinct from extension and strictly contingent. Moreover, the necessity by which infinite extension and spirit is distinguished from contingent finite matter strongly points to its divine nature. It is further corroborated by some twenty attributes which absolute space shares with the God of classical theism. Once again invoking the Cartesian principle »that nothing is the modification of nothing«,<sup>54</sup> More insists that, far from banning the Divine from the world, it proves its omnipresence in it: »And so, by that very door by which the Cartesian philosophy«, embraced and carried to the inevitably atheistic upshot of its mechanism by Spinoza, »is seen to wish to exclude God from the world, I, on the contrary (which I am confident will attend me with the happiest success) strive and strain to bring him back.«<sup>55</sup> More's argument in his *Enchiridium Metaphysicum* ends in an enumeration of the characteristics common to God and space: »Of which kind are those which follow, which metaphysicians specifically attribute to First Being. Such as one, simple, immobile, eternal, complete, independent, existing from itself, subsisting by itself, incorruptible, necessary, immense, uncreated, uncircumscribed, incomprehensible, omnipresent, incorporeal, permeating and encompassing everything, Being by essence, Being by act, pure Act.«<sup>56</sup>

Infinite immobile space, as distinct from finite mobile matter, is a key concept in More's *Confutation*. For one thing, it serves as a principle of individuation that is meant to buttress his traditional doctrine of substance pluralism. Individuation, in More's mature ontology, is not necessarily due either to

53 *Enchiridium Metaphysicum* 27,10 (Op. Omn. II/1, 312). Translation: Jacob 1995: I, 107.

54 *Ibid.*, 8,7 (II/1, 167). Translation: *ibid.* 57.

55 *Ibid.* Translation: *ibid.*

56 *Ibid.*, 8,8 (II/1, 167). Translation: *ibid.*

attribute or mode, as Spinoza holds in his argument for monism, but to place. »Real distinction«,<sup>57</sup> conceived as the spatial separation of individual substances sharing one or both of their defining attributes, enables him to eschew monism and hold on to an ontological pluralism of self-movers. For another, More views immaterial extension as the mode of divine omnipresence. Thus, whereas mobile material extension cannot be predicated of God as the most perfect being, immobile immaterial extension is the mode of his creative and salvific ubiquity whereby God »touched«, and continues to »touch«, the extended minds inhabiting the infinite space of his archetypal intellect. Such is the God of the boniform vision that he gives life to responsible agents who possess the ability either to obey or disobey the »laws« of his universal goodness inscribed into their reason. Moreover, once they have forfeited his vision in sin, he comes to their aid »in new ways« meant to achieve his aim of universal soul-making of their own autonomous moral volition. If, as has been established in More's critique of Spinozist monism, God is not the extension of mindless matter, his supreme perfection may indeed be that of a supreme lawgiver benignly guiding his creatures towards moral and intellectual perfection: »Why should not God, if he exists and if he is a being distinct from worldly matter, be able to inscribe laws in the minds of men, doing it in such a way, however, that it is up to them whether to obey them or not. Why should he not after their disobedience try in new ways to lead them to good fruits, as he is said to have done on Mount Sinai in giving the Laws to Moses?«<sup>58</sup> The infinity of the archetypal creative mind's extension is the absolute space of his purposeful agency in all of nature and history.

### 3.2 *Panpsychism and Divine and Human Agency: The Spirit of Nature*

Divine agency, conceived of as univocal love and goodness along the lines of the author's Christian Platonism, is the key concern of More's anti-Spinozist interpretation of the rationalist notion of the *ens perfectissimum*. In response to the spectre of Spinozist naturalism, More attributes two kinds of actions to the Deity, one that is mediated by and identical with the life of nature and one that is immediate and supernatural. For one thing, God acts upon the material world through the agency of the spirit of nature by which the intelligible ideas of his supreme intellect gradually shape reality in law-governed organic processes. For another, the spirit of nature, viewed by More as a lesser

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57 *Confutatio* (Op. Omn. II/1, 617).

58 *Epistola altera*, 43 (Op. omn. II/1, 593).

metaphysical entity devoid of intellection and volition, is such that God and other spiritual agents may act contrary to its laws whenever they see fit.<sup>59</sup>

More goes to great lengths to rebut Spinoza's devastating critique of purposeful divine agency in general and of miraculous supernatural intervention in particular, as put forward in the Appendix to the first book of the *Ethics* and the sixth chapter of the *Theological-Political Treatise* respectively. Spinoza's rejection of divine design and goodness as ill-founded anthropomorphism is shown to flow from the *proton pseudos* of his metaphysics, namely his naturalism. Once »God« is replaced by »matter«, Spinoza's exposition of divine agency reveals its thinly-veiled naturalist meaning. God's action, conceived of in terms of Cartesian mechanism, is solely that of the motion and rest of mindless material extension: »Nothing is determined by the free will of God [i.e. matter], or his absolute good pleasure, but all things have been determined by the absolute nature of the infinite power of God [i.e. matter].«<sup>60</sup> In response to Spinoza's critique of the classical theism of a divine moral agent, More, for one thing, levels the same objection at the Dutch rationalist in an *ad hominem* argument. Clearly, geometry, from which Spinoza's notion of God as infinite extension is derived, is as much a product of the human mind as ethics. For another and more importantly, on the logic of the *ens perfectissimum* theology, it is inadmissible to deny to the divine archetype any of its human image's perfections, let alone its greatest, which is deliberate moral agency:

To do justice to the human mind, since it apprehends excellently all particular things of which it is conscious, the fact that it judges God similar to itself and as a certain eternal and infinite and absolutely perfect omniscient mind, immediately and fully establishes providence. Is this not indeed infinitely preferable to that blind and tumultuous matter? I cannot fail to note how unworthily the fool accuses others here who posit God from their minds, which are free agents or proposing ends to themselves, since he posits matter from his mind, mathematic if your please.<sup>61</sup>

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59 The development of More's doctrine of the spirit of nature is traced in detailed analyses of his major writings in Reid 2012: 313-348. Most expositions centre around his controversy with the chemist Robert Boyle, whose experiments More, much to the celebrated scientist's chagrin, sought to interpret as providing empirical confirmation of his metaphysical postulate of a mediating entity. Cf., above all, Henry 1990: 55-76. Again, More's later debate with Spinoza, notably the link between final causality on the one hand and libertarian agency and contingency on the other, adds crucially to our knowledge about a landmark doctrine of Cambridge Platonism.

60 *Confutatio* (Op. omn. II/1, 622). Translation: Jacob 1991: 78.

61 *Ibid.* (II/1, 623); translation: *ibid.*, 81.



Instead, in Spinoza, the attributes of divine extension, notably the necessity by which mathematical proof proceeds, are once again shown to annul the superior ones of divine cogitation.<sup>62</sup> They, thus, fall of short of God's benign creative and salvific action.

As against the naturalist deity of Spinoza's *Treatise* and *Ethics*, More insists upon the Platonic view of God as a supremely good moral agent. Contrary to the infinite power of thought and extension by which Spinoza's substance acts without any purposeful deliberation, let alone moral intention, the omnipotence of More's God is that of his supreme creative and salvific goodness. It is for the sake of the autonomous moral soul-making of rational agents that God calls into being a world, intervening in its affairs either directly or through the agency of his angelic aides whenever he sees fit. More goes to great lengths to establish the distinctness of divine agency from nature. Whereas, for Spinoza, the laws of nature proceed from God and represent his understanding and will which are strictly identical, More views God and nature as two centres of distinct, albeit closely-related, creative agency. In contradistinction to Spinoza's simple substance or nature which both understands and wills the infinity of all possible worlds flowing from its infinite power by necessity, More's creator God is one of univocal goodness. As such, he *understands* evil when setting out to create a world with which to share his goodness and wisdom in creative power, but he does not *will* it. He is bound both by conceptual and ethical necessity to act in accordance with his infinite goodness and share with a finite reality the fullness of his own being. However, he is free to choose any single one of the many possible worlds envisaged in the beginning. The identity of divine and natural agency, which More identifies as the speculative core of Spinoza's naturalist critique of miracles, must therefore be rejected on strictly conceptual grounds:

However, this last principle to which the whole proof boils down is utterly false, ... Indeed, God *understands* the evil order of things, but he does not *will* it. He understands all the possible varieties of universes that he could create, even though only a single kind exists in actuality. According to this principle, however, all of them would exist as he would will all of them to exist assuming he understood nothing without also willing it, which is an obvious contradiction.<sup>63</sup>

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62 Cf. *ibid.*

63 *Epistola Altera*, 19 (Op. Omn. II/1, 573). More's *reductio* argument against Spinoza's necessitarian theological actualism is far from conclusive. While man's epistemic access is restricted to one world, this does not rule out that other or indeed all other possible worlds may have existed in the past, exist at present or come to exist in the future.

Of the infinite number of possible worlds, God chooses to create only one, presumably the best of all possible ones, while not actualizing all the others. The world created is not one of dead atoms in motion and at rest in a lifeless void, but instead one animated by what More, as from his *Immortality of the Soul* of 1659, calls the »spirit of nature«. Mediating between the supreme intellect and base matter at the top and at the bottom of his Platonic chain of being, the spirit of nature is defined by More as a »*substance incorporeal, but without Sense and Animadversion, pervading the whole Matter of the Universe, and exercising a Plastical power therein according to the sundry predispositions and occasions in the parts it works upon, raising such Phaenomena in the World, by directing the parts of the Matter and their Motion, as cannot be resolved into mere mechanical powers.*«<sup>64</sup> While devoid of any active intellection and volition itself, it serves God as the natural means to his chief moral end of universal soul-making by preparing matter in such a fashion that it becomes capable of being informed by the creative ideas contained in his perfect archetypal intellect of which the spirit of nature itself is an imperfect mindless image. In More's refutation of Spinoza, it is viewed as the living embodiment of the »universal laws of nature«, which it »embraces ... in a living fashion«. <sup>65</sup> Originally proceeding from God not by the necessity of his essence, but by the benignity of his will alone, it gradually effects the »good of the universe« at large: »The universal laws of nature do not arise from the divine intellect by the same necessity as a property, such as three angles equal to two right angles, from a triangle. Instead, they are inserted into the spirit of nature at the same time it is created by God and, therefore, geared towards the good of the universe«. <sup>66</sup> It, thus, executes God's beneficent creative intention of disinterested universal self-communication. As befits its role in God's design, natural causality or the »spirit of nature« as the sum total of its laws is not one of mindless mechanism, but one of living organic growth and flourishing by which it produces and promotes the »good of the universe« at God's behest. As such, the spirit of nature is nothing less than the »the external word of God« by which he bodies forth the intelligible principles and ideas contained in his wisdom: »I reply, however, that I find it quite reasonable that the work and order of nature itself should be called the order, decree or word of God since I view the spirit of nature in which the laws and order of worldly matter are contained, flowing from there into it, as the external word of God.«<sup>67</sup> Its laws may therefore be equated with »God's gen-

64 *Immortality of the Soul* III 12,1 (Jacob [1987]: 254).

65 *Epistola altera*, 18 (Op. Omn. II/1, 573).

66 *Ibid.*, 20 (II/1, 574).

67 *Ibid.* 21, (II/1, 575).

eral providence«: »Therefore, I do not mind admitting at all that God's general providence is contained in the laws and order of this spirit of nature and can thus be rightly called a part of divine providence.«<sup>68</sup>

However, while More concurs with Spinoza in viewing nature as God's own mediate providential action, nature or »general providence« needs to be complemented by an immediate »special providence« which he is careful to express in terms of strictly libertarian agency unrestricted by the laws of nature: »However, what I insist upon most emphatically is that there is also God's special providence besides that, one that is administered by himself or through his ministers or angels, as they are generally called, and that it is entirely erroneous to conclude from the fact that the actions of the spirit of nature are called the orders or decrees of God that there are no other divine orders or decrees besides those.«<sup>69</sup> God may choose to ignore the laws contained in the spirit of nature whenever the »good of the universe«, which is the latter's original *raison d'être*, calls for a demonstration of the enduring benevolence and beneficence of his creative wisdom and power. Aided by his many angels and ministers of grace, he is at liberty to intervene at will so as to reassure humankind of his benign providential care: »Nature has deliberately been created by God in such a way that it obeys its creator and his pleasure as well as the free ministers of his providence in leaving its accustomed order, as they see fit, for the existence of God, the angels and divine providence to be made all the more evident by the fact that not everything depends upon nature alone.«<sup>70</sup> Not only, therefore, does the spirit of nature account for the regularity of natural processes by which beings capable of participating in God's fullness gradually come into existence, but also for the contingency of a world open to occasional interventions by supernatural agency, whether divine, angelic or demonic. To the spirit of nature's lesser degree of reality, therefore, corresponds a higher degree of contingency which, in turn, is meant to allow different supernatural agents to exercise different kinds of moral agency, including libertarian choice. In his argument for theological interventionism, More, characteristically, invokes the univocity of divine and human freedom. If man's imperfect libertarian action is not necessitated by natural causality, God's own perfect freedom is clearly all the more exempt from it:

It is the divine intention that, even though they [i.e. the laws of nature] are to work in one and the same mode all the time unless some impediment turns up, their operation, once an impediment is caused by some free agent, is to be

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68 Ibid.

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid. 19 (II/1, 573).

suspended or altered. However, God, that uncreated free agent (*Agens illud liberum increatum Deum*), can with infinitely more ease do what even created free agents (*libera Agentia*) can do. When there is such a suspension or alteration, which has evidently not been caused by anyone nor by any other visible and perceptible natural cause, the effect may not unreasonably be ascribed to the work of angels or to God himself.

More's *a fortiori* argument hinges upon the strict libertarianism shared by all the Cambridge Enlightenment thinkers. Not only is freedom a *sui generis* causality beyond the laws of nature, but it is tied closely to the categorical imperative of a purgation of all earthly passion and self-will. Besides possessing perfect intellection and volition, God, as a supreme moral agent, must be credited with the highest degree of libertarian freedom unhampered either by the laws of nature or man's inferior motives. While his actions, determined by his goodness, are of necessity benign and beneficent, the course pursued to attain his salvific ends is due to the contingent choice of his wisdom and power alone. Throughout his *Ad V.C. Epistola altera*, More emphasizes that God may intervene in nature »as the circumstances require it«. <sup>71</sup> It is meant to bring home the notion of God's moral agency guiding fallen humankind towards its eventual restitution. The interventions of God and his angels in salvation history serve as a soteriological *anamnesis* by which the fallen souls are reminded of the true intelligible reality which they are called upon to regain in a life of pious virtue and contemplation.

It was shortly after finishing his refutation of Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise* that More came across a treatise by the celebrated physician and fellow Cambridge metaphysician Francis Glisson. Not only did More identify it as another *Strato redivivus* in Cudworth's categorization of classical and contemporary atheism, but he also chose to wield his anti-Spinozist argumentative weaponry to combat materialist panpsychism in general.

#### 4. Panentheist Panpsychism, Panpsychist Panentheism—More's Critique of Glisson's *Energetic Nature*

Shortly after the publication of the *Treatise on Energetic Nature* by biologist and physician turned metaphysician Francis Glisson in 1672, More subjected the titular concept to detailed philosophical critique, rejecting it as yet another form of hylozoism in the Spinozist vein. A major part of the »scholia« or comments

71 It is not a figure of speech, but a leitmotif recurring throughout More's first anti-Spinozist treatise Cf., e.g., *ibid.* 11 (II,1, 570), 19 (II/1, 573), 21 (II/1, 575).

appended to his original refutation of Spinoza's *Theological-Political Treatise* in the *Ad V.C. Epistola altera* consists in a sustained refutation of Spinoza's kindred spirit.<sup>72</sup>

In his refutation, More is quick to identify Glisson as a Spinozist. Just as the »impure sophist« views material substance as necessarily existent by itself, so does the celebrated physician view matter *per se* as being endowed with perception, striving and self-motion: »Like Spinoza who holds that all substance, insofar as it is substance, exists from itself because it subsists through itself, he contends in that work that substance, insofar as it is substance, is necessarily alive by the force of its nature, i.e., it perceives, strives and moves itself. He therefore assumes that the perceptive, appetitive and motive faculties are all intrinsic parts of matter itself.«<sup>73</sup> Moreover, aligning Spinoza and Glisson in their commitment to necessary existence and necessary animation respectively, More identifies the vitalism shared by his two opponents as a variety of constitutive panpsychism that is meant to render the belief in a creator distinct from the one living substance of nature superfluous to account for the emergence of life: »And certainly, bolstered by the Spinozist view of the necessary existence of every substance as substance, the Glissonian way is such that it clearly supposes that there is no need of a creator God at all.«<sup>74</sup> Several of the arguments against Glisson's panpsychism advanced in the scholia may well be seen as »an exercise in question-begging of astonishing impudence«.<sup>75</sup> Time and again, the English Platonist simply restates his cherished doctrine of the spirit of nature without offering any further philosophically substantial argument, simply placing the *onus probandi* upon his hylozoist opponent. Thus, he disagrees with Glisson's hylozoist conclusions regarding Bacon's typology of motions which, in contrast, he chooses to view as originating in a spiritual principle distinct from matter. Likewise, More shares Glisson's admiration for the beautifully-wrought structures of apparently inanimate phenomena like »snow, rime, hail and the like in a microscope«, quoting with approval the Cambridge physician and metaphysician's praise of their »exceeding elegance

72 Deeply steeped both in Francisco Suarez's late medieval metaphysics and Francis Bacon's early modern science, the Cambridge physician and philosopher's Glisson's concept of energetic substance has only very recently been recognized as a deeply original panpsychist metaphysics. There is a fine thesis devoted to Francis Glisson: Hartbecke 2006, which examines the author's thought in relation to his scholastic role model Suarez. A brief analysis of More's refutation of Glisson's principal work is provided in Henry 1987: 15-40.

73 *Scholia in Epist. ad V.C.* (Op. Omn. II/1, 604).

74 *Ibid.* (II/1, 605).

75 Henry 1987: 32.

and well-nigh inimitable art«. <sup>76</sup> However, while Glisson takes nature's artful design to be evidence of the life of energetic matter, More instead attributes it to the purposeful, albeit unconscious, work of the spirit of nature which pervades the whole of nature as a mediating principle inferior to God, but superior to matter: »For I, too, acknowledge gladly that the shapes of so-called inanimate bodies are the effects not of mechanism, but the spirit of nature. And it is manifest that these phenomena do not by any means indicate a life of matter proceeding or unfolding from it, but only the life of the universe or the spirit of nature actuating the whole of worldly matter.« <sup>77</sup> Finally, while More is right in pointing out that a projectile sustaining its motion hardly bears out a perceptive and appetitive power in lead, his own recourse to rising quicksilver in a thermometer is equally unlikely to be considered a compelling argument for the existence of his own »hylarchic principle« or »the hylostatic power of the spirit of the universe«, <sup>78</sup> i.e. the spirit of nature.

Still, although many of his arguments against Glisson may be said to fall flat, More's refutation is remarkable on two grounds. For one thing, More himself, for all his misgivings about panpsychism, comes close to restating his early panpsychist doctrine of his correspondence with Descartes and endorsing a variety of »hylozoism« on theological grounds. All of reality, proceeding as it does from the Deity's supreme life, is seen as the latter's »ultimate emanation« and as such may possess some rudimentary living »self-motion« after all: »Hence, it is manifest that there may be a life without perception or appetite and without any original *αὐτοκίνησις*. A life modifiable by an immaterial principle in various ways is the one and only life that I am prepared to admit as being deeply rooted in matter. In fact, I am all the more willing to concede that lest the ultimate emanation from the first source of life seem entirely devoid of life.« <sup>79</sup> For another, More holds that panpsychism, while being consonant with, and perhaps even implied by, the soul's innate notion of a benign deity as all-diffusive life, cannot by itself account for the unity characteristic of the animate cosmos as an ordered whole and its living parts. The emergence of advanced animal and human life, let alone that of the living order of creation, is bound to remain as mysterious on the principles of Glisson's panpsychism as it is on those of Hobbesian or Cartesian mechanism:

Indeed, if there were a kind of primordial life of matter, it would only be generic. As regards its *specific modifications*, it would be spread and disseminated across

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<sup>76</sup> *Scholia in Epist. ad V.C.* (Op. Omn. II/1, 606).

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* (II/1, 608).

vast distances. It is no more helpful to assume such a kind life to account for the order and beauty of the world than none at all. If there is not something pre-conceiving and foreseeing the whole fabric of the world and the mutual relationships between its single parts at once, its creation will indeed occur as blindly and fortuitously as if it were created by mere mechanical motion. Of so little worth is the notion of that primordial life that is to split up into various physical forms afterwards.<sup>80</sup>

More's counterargument hinges upon the combination problem which deprives panpsychism of its alleged explanatory power. The complexity of an animal organism militates strongly against the truth of modern Glissonian panpsychism. It is inherently unlikely that the single parts of the generic life of matter, »spread and disseminated across vast distances«, should consciously and purposely collude in producing the »specific modifications« required for a well-functioning living organism. Among the examples adduced are the aquatic bird whose wings have come to be such that it can easily cast off the water on re-emerging from the sea or that of a cock capable of taking part in a fight, which More describes with obvious gusto. Perhaps drawing upon his own eye-witness experience, he ridicules the conclusion inevitable on panpsychist principles that each single body part of a cock, quite implausibly, must have been aware of the finer details of a cock fight from its birth: »Oh, what express ideas and imaginings must they hence possess, notably of their bladeliike spurs with which to gouge out or tear apart their rivals' brains in a consciously-dealt out blow!«<sup>81</sup> Moreover, even if such knowledge were to be granted to the single body parts, an emergence of complex organisms from simple atom lives would call for a degree of cooperation on their part that is clearly at odds with the egotism inherent to Glisson's Spinozist concept of each body's self-centred *conatus*. Assuming that all natural atoms were to possess the same knowledge about the future organism, whether it is an aquatic bird or a cock, they would be most unlikely to subordinate their own interests to the greater good of the one living whole. Instead, More imagines the atom lives to engage in a fierce struggle as they vie with one another for the privilege of constituting the higher faculties of the future organic whole of which they are supposed to be parts:

After all, all parts of earthly matter and the matter surrounding it are believed to be intent solely upon their own condescence and substance. Thus, if these substances chance to act upon one another in their condescence, they seek to realize their own form only. Yet, none of them is animate so that it would be either impossible or completely fortuitous if any living form were to emerge from

80 Ibid. (II/1, 608-609).

81 Ibid. (II/1, 609).

that. However, living forms are the greatest mark of wisdom and providence that we find in the universe.<sup>82</sup>

The aporia of the combination problem is further exacerbated by the existence of self-conscious subjectivity. If the chaotic multiplicity of conscious or proto-conscious matter cannot account for the organic unity of animal life, Glisson's Spinozist panpsychism is even less qualified to render intelligible the existence of the supreme oneness of a self-conscious human mind. Again, the many simple perceptions attributed to the atoms of living matter fail to add up to the unity of a human mind's complex perception, nor does Glisson's postulate of the energetic nature's »perception of perception« remedy the aporia of a strong emergentism marring his panpsychism altogether. »Duplicate perception«, by which energetic matter is supposed to appropriate the many »simple perceptions« of all living forms and shapes allegedly caused und sustained by it, fails on numerous grounds. For one thing, perception, by its very nature, is simple. There is no such thing as a visual perception of the human eye which is consecutively perceived by the common sensorium and the intellect so as to yield a unified sense impression. Instead, perception, while involving the soul's »plastic power« by which it interacts with the spirit of nature shaping its bodily sense organs, is grounded in the strict unity and simplicity of the consciousness of sense perception which is the *sine qua non* of the epistemic process in question: »By the same act by which a sentient being perceives an object, it also perceives that it perceives the object. And this does not require a new act unless perhaps someone should raise a doubt whether it perceives«. <sup>83</sup> The single act of perception, hence, is not that of matter particles mutually perceiving each other's perceptions which then somehow add up to acts of complex sensation. Instead, it is identical with a single soul's consciousness of its sense impressions which is prior and superior to the inferior plasticity of its sense organs. For another, the postulate of atom lives endowed with perception cannot but lead into the aporia of the emergent subject's necessary awareness of, if not detailed knowledge about, all the many distinct centres of consciousness of which its own subjectivity is supposedly made up. In other words, as More is careful to point out in an *ad hominem* argument against the physician Glisson, if the hylozoism of the Spinozist variety were true, the subject or, in Glissonian parlance, the complex »suppositality« or »modal subsistence« that is the conscious rational self, would have to possess an anatomic expertise on a par with that of the author of the *Treatise on the Energetic Nature of Substance* himself:

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82 Ibid.

83 Ibid. (II/1, 610).



If the single natural atoms of matter which are joined together or coalesce into my ›suppositality‹ or my ›modal subsistence‹ understand the structure of the whole fabric of my body and its organisation in which their plastic power consists and if, as is held by that famous Glisson, the plastic power or natural life persists in the animals formed, overseeing their natural constitution and governing it by means of its perception, appetite and motion, then it seems clearly impossible that I who am this ›suppositality‹ or ›supposite‹ should not understand the plastic perception of this supposite, i.e., of myself, and should not have the most accurate anatomical understanding of my body.<sup>84</sup>

This absurd inference is avoided on the principles of More's own refined Platonist variety of panpsychism which denies consciousness to the soul's lower powers, notably its plastic ones of organic self-formation. Since perception originates in the soul's higher substance, its ignorance about the minutiae of its physical functions does not pose a problem to Morean panpsychism with its complimentary axioms of the creative *ens perfectissimum* and the top-down-causality exercised by it. The first cause must not be conceived as a distracted multitude, but as a supremely unitary intellect contemplating in itself the structured whole of the universe. Hence, if it were not for a consummate mind, a creation of spiritual substance conceived as a myriad of unconnected centres of consciousness would be every bit as random as a creation from material substance:

How, for example, should matter which is the least unitary of all substances, consisting of countless physical monads and natural atoms only, fulfil those tasks which require unity in the most absolute sense imaginable? For such must be that substance which foresaw and understood the most beautiful order and the mutual relationships of all the ideas of all these things at once, always contemplating in itself the ideas of all things with one single stabile and immutable glance. It is a kind of eternal perfect mind which preconceives in itself the ideas of all future created things and which pours them forth into its vicarious power, the spirit of nature, and all over matter in a vital, not in an intellectual fashion.<sup>85</sup>

Returning to his original position outlined in his early correspondence with Descartes, More, in response to Spinoza's and Glisson's »hylozoism«, subscribes to a panpsychist ontology himself. However, it is supplemented by the boniform vision of God's universal goodness and perfect mind which continuously guides the many centres of consciousness and agency towards the participation in the fullness of his own »perfect life«.

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84 Ibid.

85 Ibid. (II/1, 608-609).

## 5. God or Living Space—The Relevance of Morean Trialism of Extended Substance

More provides a first major response to the most influential early modern systems of panentheism and panpsychism. His own metaphysics which is meant to remedy the shortcomings of Cartesian mechanism and Spinozist hylozoism emerges as an original system of early modern rationalism in its own right.

On More's principle of panentheism of space and panpsychism of life and nature, there are three closely-linked, yet distinct, strata of being each of which is endowed with its own kind of autonomous agency. At the apex of More's hierarchy of animate being is God who is defined as an infinitely-extended consummate mind of absolute creative goodness. Throughout, the unshakeable foundation of More's Platonism is God's universal and disinterested goodness intuited by the soul as an indubitable first truth in immediate vision. It calls for an ontology that does justice both to God's transcendence to and immanence in all things. God, for one thing, must be transcendent since he cannot be the author of evil, whether natural or moral. Instead, God endows all of material reality with a spiritual agency of its own by which it may gradually come to participate in his universal self-communication. Of the possible finite worlds which God is at liberty to create, he chooses the one which allows all of reality to participate in him. The best possible world, in other words, is a panpsychist one in which all creatures have the capacity for participation in the fullness of the divine life. For another, God must be omnipresent as the formal and final cause of all reality. His infinite extension is such that it, quite literally, contains in itself all finite extensions upon which God acts both through the laws of nature embodied by the universal spirit of nature and in occasional miraculous intervention.

More's metaphysical system is clearly not without weaknesses. Surprisingly, he fails to address the relationship between space and the spirit of nature which should be seen as co-extensive spiritual extensions. As well as being important for reasons of the general coherence of his metaphysical system, it is crucial to More's theory of divine agency, as it is difficult to see how space may act upon or »touch« the finite agents and atoms that inhabit its infinitely many places. It is particularly problematic considering More's strict interventionism which poses formidable problems of its own in terms of theodicy. Throughout, More himself seems to vacillate between an identification of God and space and an interpretation of the latter as a mode of the former's omnipresence. On the principles of his Christian Platonism, spatial infinity, suffused by the principle of organic life, should best be seen as a symbol and image of the *ens perfectissimum's* supreme creative goodness whose vision is the first cause

and final purpose of all natural and moral agency, calling upon all creatures to share its riches.

More's doctrine of God as the infinite space of the divine life in nature provides both a powerful response to Spinoza's *Deus sive natura* and a remarkable system of early modern pantheism and panpsychism.

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# Varieties of Panpsychism

*Philip Clayton*

Panpsychism is not like pregnancy. A woman either is or is not pregnant. In such cases more generally, either  $x$  or not- $x$ . By contrast, you are not either warm or not warm, tall or not tall, smart or not smart. You can be more or less slow, more or less prompt, more or less witty. The discussion of panpsychism is changed in important and fruitful ways when we recognize that the topic is better understood in the latter way than in the former.

»Panpsychism is Not Like Pregnancy« would have been a strange title for a conference paper. Perhaps the paper would better have been titled »Panpsychism without the ›Pan.« At first glance, the panpsychism debate appears to be a question of all or nothing, just as the thief either takes all William's money or he doesn't. But I suggest that we need to think our way beyond this way of approaching panpsychism. Particularly in the context of panentheism, panpsychism should be more complex than, say, the thesis that all levels of evolution can be summarized under the heading of *pan-psyche* or, following David Ray Griffin, *pan-experience*. Instead, I will argue, the discussion of God, evolution, and psyche needs to be expanded to include the full variety of qualities, including awareness, intention, goal-directed behavior, mental representation, cognition, and consciousness. Clearly this shift has implications for understanding the nature and scope of metaphysics and theology, a topic to which I shall return at the end of the discussion.

Three things will happen when we return to the panpsychism question after this analysis. We need to have a better grasp of the issues that are raised by the evolution of consciousness. We should be able to specify the sense in which evolution produces qualities that were not actually already in the parts. Finally, we should reach a more complex understanding of the relevance of panentheism to questions of the evolution of consciousness, and hence a more complex understanding of the Divine itself. The upshot is a more limited affirmation of panpsychism, in contrast to the more »maximal« affirmation of the existence of psyche in all things, or all things *as* psyche.

The qualities that we call mental or proto-mental are extremely diverse. Because the differences are greater than is often acknowledged, I propose calling the result minimal or »gradualist« panpsychism rather than traditional or »maximal« panpsychism. It will not have escaped you that *minimal* and *maximal* are terms on a quantitative scale rather than expressions of a forced either/or choice. Panpsychism in this more minimal form, I will argue, is the

more compelling view; and the quantitative nature of the discussion should help us to more fully nuance the discussion as the debate continues.

First, though, let's get a full sense of the range of questions raised by the topic. If we are going to make progress in areas where stalemates have previously arisen, we will need to understand the questions that need to be raised ... and the questions that are less productive.

## 1. Clarifying the Questions

(1) *Mind and mental entities.* Of course, many philosophers today doubt whether mentality as such even exists or, more accurately, whether mental states or qualia have a primary rather than derivative existence. Most readers will be well aware of this debate, and some engage in it professionally. For this reason I will not repeat the well-known arguments against the major advocates of physicalism such as Wolf Singer, Francis Crick, and Dan Dennett. Whether anything mental exists may be a major debate, but I don't think it's the topic de jour.

I thus recommend that we begin instead with the assumption that some mental attributes or things exist and exercise causality *qua* mental. (I will problematize »the mental« in a moment.) Mentality is not merely an epiphenomenon. It is not merely supervenient on physical states, nor is it merely a weakly emergent property of physical matter/energy, where all true causal forces reside.

As the old American metaphor puts it, we have more important fish to fry than reductionism. Leaving aside reductionism at the start will allow us to focus in on a different set of questions. For example: Does finite mentality arise at some point in cosmic evolution, such that it was not actually present at one point in time and then later was? If mentality is emergent, then must it always be linked to something physical, say a body? Do *separate* mental units, say souls, exist, or are they just multiple manifestations of one mental reality (call it God)? Skrbina puts it nicely:

The central issue here is whether we speak of such mind as »mind of single universal« (God, the Absolute, the World Soul, and so on) or of mind as attributable to each thing in itself (of each object's possessing its own unique, individual mind). The former view would be a monist concept of mind, the latter a pluralist concept. (Skrbina 2005: 21)

Whitehead's famous notion of *actual entities* (Whitehead 1978) moves in the direction of radical pluralism. Assume for the moment that he is right and that



an extremely large number of actual entities (AEs) exist. This requires us to think of each such moment of creative becoming as a separate entity or occasion, existing on its own. Of course, one can be a radical pluralist in this way and still hold that AEs are so interdependent that they are internally related. That would mean a radical pluralism of psyches.

The specter of *panpsychism* poses a further question: does the world contain anything that is *non*-mental, such as purely physical objects? As suggested at the outset, I strongly resist this either/or frame; it leads too quickly to a simple syllogism:

Some mental things exist.  
Nothing exists that is purely physical.  
Hence, all things are mental things.

I will suggest that the more interesting discussion is of the *varieties* of mentality or »psychisms.« Interesting nuances of »psychism« surface when one explores options such as limited panpsychism, emergentist panpsychism, or the panpsychism of potentiality and actuality. They cause us to reflect on the differences, and thus on the status of the unifying concepts.

To proceed in this way is to hypothesize that *das Mentale* is not an either/or quality, such that an entity either is mental (has the attribute of mentality) or isn't. (For now I use »a mental entity« and »an entity that has mentality« interchangeably.) It is more fruitful to ask, »To what extent, and in what sense, is this entity mental?«

(2) *Panentheism*. A series of questions arise at the intersection of panpsychism and panentheism. Some represent difficult challenges for classical panpsychism.

If there is a plurality of mental entities, how is God related to each one? For Whitehead, of course, actual entities are ultimate, not more dependent on God than God is on them. But actual entities could be dependent on God in a stronger way, existing only through the continuing will of God; or they could be real individual expressions of a single divine Spirit (this is the view of the Indian philosopher Ramanuja); or, following Spinoza, what we call individuals might merely be ways that the one divine substance is manifested in a particular time or place—modes of the One. How would one decide between these options?

Panentheism might also raise some critical questions for classical panpsychism. What is God's relationship to finite mental entities if they are really present »all the way down«? If God lures even an electron, what does God lure it to do? Or does theological panpsychism instead support monism? That would mean that the psyches that seem to be in all things are actually just one

psyche: the one mind of God, or *Nous* in Plotinus's sense. For that matter, how would one distinguish finite »natural« mentality from infinite divine mentality? Can the one be *within* the other without compromising the integrity of either? Do classical panpsychisms maintain that it's the God question that supports the dichotomy *either everything is mental or nothing is mental* and, if so, why?

In contrast, a gradualist panpsychism begins with the question *To what extent, and in what sense, is a given entity mental?* Formulating this question, one immediately recognizes that the relationships between panpsychism and panentheism are rather more complex than one might have thought. There are no simple entailments: one can be a panpsychist without being a panentheist, for example if one is a pantheist. Conversely, one can be a panentheist without being a panpsychist, for example if one holds that the world is God's (material) body. Above all, gradualist panpsychism shifts the conversation in that one must now ask about the relationship between the panentheistic God and the whole history of emergent mentality.

## 2. Emergent Mentality

Gradualist panpsychism seeks a theory of consciousness that is consonant with the results and the methods of the sciences as well as with human phenomenal experience. Let's call this a theory of *emergent mentality*. It's the view that the particles and physical states of (say) macrophysics and physical chemistry do not manifest an actual mentality; they do not have intentions, for example. The first self-reproducing cell, by contrast, does have a primitive awareness of its environment. Increasing complexity across biological evolution brings more and more complex awareness, with human consciousness being the most advanced form of embodied awareness that we have yet discovered.

Emergent mentality as I use the term stands in contrast to a classical position such as Whitehead's panpsychism or »panexperientialism.« Famously, Whitehead holds that all units of reality are occasions of creative becoming. Each actual (as opposed to merely potential) entity is thus its own center of experience. If given only a single argument to defend this view, Whiteheadian panpsychists will generally argue that mentality cannot come from something that is non-mental. But Whiteheadians are by no means the only philosophers who object to gradualist theories of mentality. All dualists do, as well as many neuroscientists who are drawn toward exclusively material explanations of thought and consciousness. So let's call this particular critique the »no

mind from matter« (NMfM) Objection. Thomas Nagel sometimes expresses a similar intuition as fundamental or »schematic« for him: »In its schematic, pre-Socratic way, this sort of monism attempts to recognize the mental as a physically irreducible part of reality.« (Nagel 2012: 62) I will argue that this intuition does not stand up to closer examination, at least not in this particular (non-theistic) form.

Finally, I do not think that theism as such falsifies one option and verifies the other. It is not inconsistent for advocates of most (but not all) forms of theism to affirm either Whiteheadian panpsychism or emergent mentality. But I do think that setting panentheism in dialogue with contemporary philosophy and science supports gradual over maximal panpsychism.

The argument proceeds in four steps.

(1) *Evolutionary Mentality and Emergentist Panpsychism*

The evolutionary evidence suggests the emergence of the various phenomena that we call mentality, a position sometimes called emergentist panpsychism. Of the various forms of limited or gradualist panpsychism, this position is in my view the most convincing. Once again, it starts by challenging the assumption that all existing things either are or are not centers of experience. Limiting or conditioning the »pan« in panpsychism is an important part of making this case.

Thomas Nagel is a famous anti-emergentist panpsychist. He argues, for example:

The implausibility of the reductive program that is needed to defend the completeness of ... naturalism provides a reason for trying to think of alternatives—alternatives that make mind, meaning, and value as fundamental as matter and space-time in an account of what it. The fundamental elements of physics and chemistry have been inferred to explain the behavior of the inanimate world. Something more is needed to explain how there can be conscious, thinking creatures whose bodies and brains are composed of those elements... . Everything, living or not, is constituted from elements having a nature that is both physical and nonphysical—that is, capable of combining into mental wholes. So this reductive account can also be described as a form of panpsychism. (Nagel 2012: 20, 57)

Nagel and I agree in opposing the reduction to physicalism but disagree concerning *when* this »something more« is needed. He thinks that, in order to beat physicalism, mind must be fundamental to all things, whereas I argue that the first time it becomes fundamental is in the role it must play to explain self-reproducing cells. From cells on we no longer disagree.

For the emergentist panpsychist, »mind«—in the minimal form of awareness and goal-directed behavior—is first discernible with the emergence of self-reproducing life; as a concept it only begins to play a role after that. From the birth of cellular agents, the two positions walk side by side. For example, both Godehard Brüntrup and I agree that unicellular organisms possess a rudimentary form of awareness. This awareness is a matter of life and death to the cell. After all, cells can live and reproduce, or they can die. From an evolutionary point of view, they have an interest in living. To move up a glucose gradient and receive more nutrition is in the interest of a unicellular organism; it is »good.« To move toward a toxin is »bad.« The cell's (chemically mediated) awareness of its environment, which differentiates between the two, is of its very essence.

It's fascinating to trace the evolutionary process from primitive awareness and goal-directed behavior at the birth of the biosphere to the most complex conscious cognition and subjective experiences. Note that, once a certain threshold is passed, the anti-emergentist panpsychist appears to be as willing as the emergentist panpsychist to affirm the emergence of ever more complex mental phenomena.

## (2) *Mind in potentia*

The more plausible the transition from potential to actual mentality becomes, the more the NMfM Objection is undercut. Although in the end my argument will require a theological dimension, the first step of the argument can be made without it.

Although each cell is aware, each can potentially become part of (say) a human being, a being with the attribute of consciousness. So the cell is potentially conscious if the right circumstances occur; specifically, it is potentially conscious in the sense that it can become part of a whole to which we attribute consciousness (say a human person).

This topic raises some complex dilemmas concerning location and part/whole relations. Not every property of a whole is a property of its parts (redness), nor is every property of a part also a property of the whole (weighing less than one kilo). But *some* properties of parts are also properties of the whole (having *some* weight), just as some properties of a whole may also be properties of its parts (if the whole orchestra is in tune, then each instrument is in tune). Regarding location, it's easier to say »Beth is conscious, though consciousness is not the kind of property that has a location.« Surely consciousness does not have a location in the same way that her hat does; still, if Beth is in California, we wouldn't say that her consciousness resides in Tokyo. Is Beth's consciousness located in each neuron of her brain, or in her brain as a whole,

in her body as a whole, or in her personhood (whatever that is)? It seems most adequate to say that Beth's consciousness is present in Beth as a whole. Clearly, these philosophy of mind questions are relevant to panentheism as well.

Now consider an analogy. The cell as a whole is aware. And the actual chemical components of a given cell had the potential to become part of that cell. Take for example one of the cytosine molecules (chemical formula  $C_4H_5N_3O$ ) that pairs with guanine to make up a rung in the DNA double helix. This particular molecule is potentially aware in the sense that, if the right circumstances occur, it becomes part of a whole cell to which we attribute awareness.

The analogy does two things. It treats both consciousness and awareness as whole-part relationships, which seems right. And it treats consciousness and awareness as existing in two forms: potential and actual. If the analogy holds, it allows us to say that consciousness already exists *in potentia*, in the parts that compose a conscious person, and that, analogously, awareness exists *in potentia* in the parts that compose a cell.

Now consider the NMfM Objection to emergent mentality, viz., that you can't get consciousness from something that is not conscious. For a Cartesian, this is right; *res cogitans* and *res extensa* are dichotomous. For Descartes one can never emerge from the other because he presupposes from the start that no potential for this transition exists. By contrast, Western philosophy and science offer a number of ways of understanding the transition from potential to actual. We could explore science-based analogies such as superposition, as in the »collapse« of the (probabilistic) Schrödinger wave equation to a particular macrophysical state.<sup>1</sup> More broadly, Western metaphysics offers a rich legacy of ways to conceive the transition from potential to actual, for example in metaphysical systems inspired by Aristotle and in the dialectical philosophies of the German Idealists. These achievements offer crucial resources for conceptualizing the transition from potentially aware to actually aware. To the extent that the transition becomes comprehensible, the NMfM Objection is answered.

1 Quantum physics offers an empirical basis for thinking about the concepts of the actual and the possible or potential. »Potentially aware« and »actually aware« can exist in a way that is analogous to a quantum superposition. We know that the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum physics allows for states that are superpositions of actual and possible. In the famous thought experiment known as Schrödinger's cat, the cat exists in a state of superposition of dead:alive until a measurement causes the collapse of the wave function into either dead cat or alive cat. A so-called quantum computer (if one can be constructed) would be powerful because each bit (»qubit«) could manifest not two but three different states: on, off, or indeterminate. So far physicists have been able to prepare hundreds of individual atoms in individual »traps.« These matrices extend quantum potentials far beyond the scale at which they normally occur.

### (3) *Gradualist Panentheistic Panpsychism*

- (1) God is a mental entity, the source of all mentality
- (2) Everything is in God
- (3) So all entities are mental entities.

At an academic conference in Munich in August 2017, Benedikt Göcke (among others) argued persuasively that the affirmation *everything is in God* is not sufficient to demarcate panentheism from various forms of classical theism. In any event, a position would surely not count as panentheism if it does *not* affirm (2) in some sense. For its part, (1) is an affirmation about God that is held in one form or another across most of the history of theology. For example, even if God has a body, God is not simply a material being. Applied to God, »mental entity« could mean a variety of different things: *has (or essentially has) mental attributes*, or *is solely mental* in the sense of having no physical attributes, or *is the source of all mentality*, or *is mentality as such*, etc. If (3) then follows, then from panentheism one can infer panpsychism.

Reflecting on the argument teaches us several things. First, its inference is not valid.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps if (2) affirmed that »Everything *is* God,« the conclusion would follow. But that would be pantheism, not panentheism.

The argument also begs for a closer analysis of what is meant by *mental entity*. Given the imprecision of the term, it can only serve as a rough label for a set of different concepts. Thus Uwe Meixner writes in the Brüntrup and Jaskola collection, »The immediate consequence of this idea [panentheism] is that everything is in God (qua being in this total experience, which at the same time is the totality of all experiences), whether as an experience, as a subject of experience, or as an object of experience.« (Meixner 2017: 399) Process theologians have explored these options in some detail. For example, Whitehead's »*objective* immortality« affirms that only the outcome of creative activity (concrecence) is in God, whereas Marjorie Suchocki's »*subjective* immortality« places the actual entity in its very becoming within God.

The ambiguity of »mental entity« and of the »in« in panentheism make it impossible to make a direct inference from panentheism to panpsychism in the full or »maximal« sense.<sup>3</sup> Panpsychism does not follow if the panentheistic »in« is interpreted as the spatial »in,« nor if it is the finite »in« the

2 To succeed, (2) would need to read »Everything *is* God.« (And even then there are problems, as we can learn from Shankara's philosophy.) Panentheism is distinct from pantheism precisely because it does *not* make this assertion.

3 The question of whether panpsychism is helpful to the panentheist is an interesting one, although I will not have the chance to develop this argument fully here. Robert C. Whittmore

infinite. Unless and until it is shown that the »in« of panentheism requires each existing entity to be in itself a mental entity (to have mentality as one of its own properties), one is not compelled to affirm maximal panpsychism. Of course, one can attempt to defend maximal panpsychism on other grounds. But panentheism alone will not get one there.

Panentheism *is* helpful to the emergentist panpsychist, however. Even a minimal (panen)theism affirms divine creative intent and a continuing lure toward a telos that is consistent with the divine nature. Since the divine nature is or includes mentality, one would expect that the telos is or includes mentality as well. That created mentality may not be instantiated at the time of the big bang; it may be the product of a universe continually lured toward the divine nature. This result is consistent with what we now know about cosmic evolution: the mathematical laws of astrophysics that seem to reflect the constancy of God; the self-organizing patterns of biochemistry; the emergence of awareness and goal-oriented behavior at the dawn of the biosphere; and the gradual development of the capacity to know and worship God. Gradualist panentheistic panpsychism becomes the affirmation that God lures creation from »potentially aware« to »actually aware« in ways that preserve both the transcendence and the immanence of God.

#### (4) »*God in All Things*« and the Ground of Mentality

We have discussed *all things in God*; now we must turn to the second »in« of panentheism: *God in all things*.

- (1) God is in all things.
- (2) Wherever God present, mentality is present.
- (3) Mentality is present in all things.

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maintains that panpsychism can become panentheism or, even more strongly, that panpsychism may imply or entail panentheism. He uses a passage from John Fisk:

Panpsychism becomes panentheism in the realization that this »Life« manifest in all nature is »only a specialized form of the Universal Life,« which is that »eternal God indwelling in the universe, in whom we live and move and have our being.« For if, as noted earlier, God cannot be conceived as something outside the universe (as maintained in anthropomorphic theism), and if, as has been shown, we cannot identify Him or It with the universe phenomenally manifest (since this would be pantheism), then it must be that the one (theistic) alternative remaining is the truth: the universe is (as panentheism teaches) inside God! (John Fisk, quoted in Whittemore 1964: 303.)

Whittemore is right to note the inference from panpsychism to panentheism, adding only that the inference does not require maximal panpsychism; it works just as well from the standpoint of minimal panpsychism.

Proposition (1) restates a major biblical theme, such as Acts 17:29, where Paul speaks of God as the one »in whom we live and move and have our being.« The same assertion is present in most forms of Western theism. Göcke and others have shown that (1) is not distinctive to panentheism. But »God in all things« does express one of the two »in's« that even a more minimal panentheism must affirm. Again, (2) should be non-controversial for theists. If (3) follows, we have a second entailment from panentheism to panpsychism. Again, though, we must ask: panpsychism in what sense?

Skrbina put the point nicely:

There is a lingering and problematic sense in which Christian theology does allow for a weak form of panpsychism. If God is omnipresent, then he is obviously »in« all things; this points toward panentheism. If a portion of God is in a thing, and this portion assumes any sense of independent individuality, then this could qualify as a »monistic panpsychism.« (Skrbina 2005: 274 n. 24)

Skrbina recognizes that »panentheism can be confused with panpsychism.« As we saw in the previous section, the two cannot be identified, but the former does imply, at minimum, an evolutionary sense of the latter.

Finally, Skrbina notes, »On the traditional view, God is omnipresent. If God represents spirit or mind, then all things can be said to contain mind—the mind of God.« (Skrbina 2005: 21) One wonders, then: does the second »in« of panentheism (God in the world) entail panpsychism in a stronger sense than the first (the world in God)?

In order to respond to this final objection to a gradualist panpsychism, it's helpful to take a short detour. Thomas Nagel is a non-theist who affirms a fundamental role for mind: »Mind, as a development of life, must be included as the most recent stage of this long cosmological history, and its appearance, I believe, casts its shadow back over the entire process and the constituents and principles on which the process depends.« (Nagel 2012: 8)<sup>4</sup>

Nagel holds that the gradual appearance of mind across cosmological history requires one to affirm that mind was present in the universe from the beginning as a fundamental principle, analogous to the way that physicists affirm that physical laws and mass/energy were present from the beginning. He argues:

So if mind is a product of biological evolution—if organisms with mental life are not miraculous anomalies but an integral part of nature—then biology cannot

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4 This is part of his non-emergence thesis, that is, his claim that there are no truly emergent properties of complex systems.



be a purely physical science. The possibility opens up of a pervasive conception of the natural order very different from materialism—one that makes mind central, rather than a side effect of physical law. (Nagel 2012: 15)

Examining this passage, however, one begins to discern the disanalogy between physics and biology. It's true that physicists have to postulate that the fundamental physical particles and forces were present from the big bang, since they are essential for explaining even the first minutes of cosmic history. (See Weinberg 1977) We do not have to postulate the presence of mental entities, or properties such as awareness, in the same way. One might want to affirm that mind is »central« in the first million years of cosmic history, but there are no empirical reasons for doing so; it's not a postulate that one actually needs at that point.

That brings us back to the NMfM Objection. Anti-emergentists such as Nagel respond that, if we don't postulate the presence of mind from the beginning, it can't play a role in biological or psychological explanations. That might be true if the only options philosophy had were *x exists* or *x does not exist*. In fact, though, our resources include powerful theories of becoming, the movement from the one to the other. The Aristotelian tradition(s) offer compelling analyses of the status of potentiality and the transition from potential to actual. As a scientist, Stuart Kauffman ascribes to »the adjacent possible« a quasi-causal role in quantum physics and a role as formal or structural cause in biological evolution. (See Kauffman 2016) These contributions deflate the power of the NMfM Objection.

Once the NMfM Objection is set aside, an area of shared agreement becomes visible, namely, *some ground for the gradual evolution of mentality must exist*. Here we can affirm Nagel's contention: »We ourselves are large-scale, complex instances of something both objectively physical from outside and subjectively mental from the inside. Perhaps the basis for this identity pervades the world.« (Nagel 2012: 42) Interestingly, when one attempts to speak of this »basis,« it is difficult to avoid theological language. As Philip Goff notes at one point:

Or maybe, as Colin McGinn (1989) famously argued, human beings are constitutively incapable of grasping the nature of the properties underlying consciousness; it could nonetheless be that the emergence of consciousness from non-consciousness is intelligible to God if not to us. (Goff 2017)

More precisely, Goff might have written, »the emergence of consciousness from non-consciousness is intelligible to God ... and intelligible to us if we include, however hypothetically, the notion of God and divine creation.« Many panentheists hold that divine mind precedes the creation of the universe, so

that creation manifests divine intention and other features of God's nature. The Westminster Shorter Catechism boldly formulates the telos of God's ongoing creative act: »Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.« This goal does not require that mentality have been actually present in created beings from the first moment of cosmic history. But it does require that it have been present *in potentia*. That condition is met as long as the universe as a whole reflects the mind of its creator and the divine intent that mentality would eventually emerge and be manifested in the created world.

### 3. Conclusion

Thinking back over the argument, one realizes that this debate represents one particular instance of a much broader project: reflecting one's way to sophisticated responses that address core theological commitments on the one hand and the best of contemporary philosophy and science on the other. Success is impossible without participants who are willing to keep the doors open in both directions. The Richard Dawkinses and Dan Dennetts on the one side construe the natural world in such a way that mentality, and thus God, cannot play a fundamental role. Strong advocates of the separateness of God, Cartesian dualism, or interventionist divine action close down the discussion from the other side.

We are familiar with theologians willing to do the hard work in philosophy and science to open up the discussion, but equally important are scientists such as Stuart Kauffman and secular philosophers such as Thomas Nagel. In the following passage, note how deeply the non-theist Nagel enters into the conceptual world of theism:

My preference for an immanent, natural explanation is congruent with my atheism. But even a theist who believes God is ultimately responsible for the appearance of conscious life could maintain that this happens as part of a natural order that is created by God, but does not require further divine intervention. A theist not committed to dualism in the philosophy of mind could suppose the natural possibility of conscious organisms composed, perhaps supplemented by laws of psychophysical emergence. To make the possibility of conscious life a consequence of the natural order created by God while ascribing its actuality to subsequent divine intervention would then seem an arbitrary complication. Some form of teleological naturalism should for these reasons seem no less credible than an interventionist explanation, even to those who believe that God is ultimately responsible for everything. (Nagel 2017: 95)

Nagel's words here beautifully reflect the goal of this paper, and in some ways also its outcome. I have embraced teleological naturalism by eschewing mind/body dualisms and affirming mentality only where it is observable and plays some explanatory role. At the same time, I have pursued the questions from my standpoint as a panentheist. These two commitments required me to find a version of emergent mentality compatible with the double »in« of panentheism: all things in God and God in all things. The requirements of theology, philosophy, and science are best met, I argued, by a gradualist panpsychism that affirms the actuality of divine mind, the potentiality of mentality from the moment of creation, and the actual emergence of mentality over the course of evolution.<sup>5</sup>

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5 I am again grateful to Andrew M. Davis, who has worked as my research assistant on this paper. Our conversations together were important in formulating the key questions of this paper, and some of its key ideas emerged in discussions with him. (This is not to say that Mr. Davis agrees with the final thesis of the paper, however.) Every author knows the importance of the formative discussions that come just before writing, and it is a particular pleasure when these discussions can occur with one's graduate student.



# Orthodox Panentheism: Sergius Bulgakov's Sophiology

*Uwe Meixner*

## 1. Theism, Pantheism, Panentheism, Monotheism

Not only the use of language as a whole but also its philosophical use is changing all the time. For example, some philosophers start to use a certain philosophical term in a sense which is not at all its original sense. In this sense, they *misuse* the term; but instead of censuring this, others imitate them; the misuse catches on, and soon the misuse becomes normal, and thus ceases to be a misuse—at least within certain philosophical circles. This is what happened to the term »phenomenology«: formerly, it was used by philosophers—very properly, in view of its etymology—to designate a human science which is dedicated to *the description of the phenomena* (of some stripe or other); nowadays, many philosophers use it exclusively for designating something which, presumably, not only humans but also mice, bats, and even bugs have: *phenomenology* (i.e., conscious experience, which is full of *what-it-is-like*).

And this—the replacement of the original use of a term by its misuse, which then becomes normal and ceases to be a misuse—is precisely what seems to be happening to the term »theism« these days. Formerly, it was used by philosophers—again, very properly—to designate a position which acknowledges *the existence of at least one god*. In fact, the present use of the term in such combinations as »polytheism,« »monotheism,« »henotheism,« or »tritheism« in no way contradicts this former use, and one would expect that the same is true of its use in the combinations »pantheism« and »panentheism.« *But no:* Quite a few philosophers nowadays believe that *pantheism* and *panentheism* are so far from entailing *theism* that these positions entail *the negation of theism*—also known (formerly at least) as *atheism*.

Contrary to this somewhat infelicitous replacement of an original meaning by a new meaning (a replacement which can seem to turn pious Spinoza into an *atheist*), I will describe a version of pantheism/panentheism which is not only, in the old sense, *theistic* (as is Spinoza's version of pantheism/panentheism) but also *prosopon-theistic* (as Spinoza's is not): a version which acknowledges a *personal* god, but *no* impersonal god. What I have in mind is the Christian panentheism of the Russian-Orthodox philosopher-theologian

Sergius Bulgakov (1871–1944). Bulgakov's speculative theology, as will be seen, is thoroughly Christian and at the same time thoroughly panentheistic. In a sense which will become plain, it is a panentheism which is *orthodox* according to the Abrahamic tradition (what Spinoza's panentheism is not), and even *orthodox* according to the *Christian* tradition; it is another question whether Bulgakov's panentheism is also *Orthodox* (it certainly is not quite *Roman Catholic*).

Note that it does not matter much whether one says »panentheism« or »pantheism«; for if these two terms are accorded their most reasonable interpretations, then they—and, of course, also the corresponding adjectives »panentheistic« and »pantheistic«—are logically equivalent. It cannot be that there is a god with whom everything is identical; otherwise (by the logical laws of identity) *this table* would be identical with *this shoe*, which is plainly not the case. And it cannot be that everything is a god: plainly, neither *this table* nor *this shoe* is a god. Thus, two *prima facie* possible interpretations of the term »pantheism« are simply absurd. The most reasonable interpretation of it is this: »pantheism« designates the doctrine that *the world* is a god. Now, it is natural to understand the term »the world« in its most comprehensive sense, the sense according to which *everything is in the world*. Indeed, it is mandatory to understand it in this way if one wishes to interpret the term »pantheism« by making use of the term »the world«; if one used a less comprehensive sense of the term »the world,« then one would not do justice to the meaning of the word »pan« in »pantheism.« It follows that *pantheism entails panentheism*: If the world is a god, as pantheism holds, then—because *everything is in the world* (which is an analytic, broadly logical truth)—everything is in a god,<sup>1</sup> just as panentheism holds. It also follows that *panentheism entails pantheism*: If everything is in a god, as panentheism holds, then—because *everything is in the world*—that god (in whom everything is) and the world (in which everything is) are in each other; which can be *literally true*—*literalness* being required at this level of abstract metaphysical discourse—only if they are (numerically) identical; hence the world is a god, just as pantheism holds.

Note also that panentheism (and therefore also its logical equivalent: pantheism) entails monotheism with respect to the concept of an *all-including* god (though *not* with respect to the concept of a god *simpliciter*). According to panentheism there is an all-including god: *g*; suppose there is another

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1 »Everything is in a god« is here to be taken in its logically strong interpretation: *Some god is such that everything is in him (her, it)*, not in its weak interpretation: *Everything is such that it is in some god*. Only the logically strong interpretation of »Everything is in a god« is true to the normal sense of the word »panentheism.«

all-including god besides  $g$ :  $g'$ . Since both gods are all-including,  $g'$  is in  $g$ , and  $g$  is in  $g'$ . Therefore (according to the required metaphysically literal—*mereological*—reading of »is in«),  $g$  and  $g'$  are identical. Thus, the assumption that there is another all-including god besides  $g$  is refuted and the final conclusion from the premise of panentheism is that there is one and only one all-including god. Monotheism with respect to an all-including god is not yet monotheism *simpliciter*, or (unre)strict(ed) monotheism: besides the *one* all-including god, there may be other gods, gods that are not all-including. However, for thinkers for whom the concept of an all-including god is the only legitimate concept of a god, it is indeed true that *strict* monotheism follows from panentheism. For them, monotheism *simpliciter* results from panentheism in virtue of the fact—just demonstrated—that monotheism *with respect to an all-including god* follows from panentheism; for, for such thinkers, the one all-including god must be *the one god*.

## 2. Spinoza and Bulgakov

Spinoza, the most famous pantheist in the history of philosophy (so far, at least), was also a panentheist and strict monotheist; in his metaphysics, the logical connections of the three »theisms« which were pointed out in the preceding section do certainly not fail to be manifest. Paradigmatically, in Proposition XV of the first part of his *Ethica*, he asserts of the One Substance: »Whatever is in God, and nothing can be, nor can be conceived of, without God.«<sup>2</sup> There is a parallel of this in Bulgakov, who—presumably without having Spinoza in mind at all—asserts:

Nothing can exist outside God, as alien or exterior to him. [...] There is only the one God in his divine Wisdom, and outside him nothing whatever. What is not God is *nothing*.<sup>3</sup>

Bulgakov does not mean to propose that what is not identical to the one God does not exist; for obviously there are many things which are not identical to the one God but exist nonetheless. He means to assert (with rhetorical emphasis) that everything (everything which *is*, everything which exists) is in God, and that what is not identical to God cannot exist, cannot *be, without God*. The

<sup>2</sup> My translation. For the Latin original, see (for example) Spinoza 1977: 34.

<sup>3</sup> Bulgakov, *Sophia. The Wisdom of God* (Bulgakov 1993): 72 and 148; the italics and the capitalization—as all italics and capitalization (or lack of it) in quotations in this essay—are already in the edition quoted from (the reader may be sure of this).

consonance in thought between Spinoza and Bulgakov is evident. In other respects, however, the two pantheisms of these two thinkers are very different indeed. The difference is not that Spinoza is a pantheist, and Bulgakov is not:<sup>4</sup> qua *pantheists*, as we have seen, both thinkers are also *pantheists* (the two italicized words being accorded their most reasonable interpretations). The differences are the following: (1) Bulgakov employs more than one concept of a god, Spinoza only one (namely, only one of the god-concepts Bulgakov employs: the concept of an all-including god). (2) Bulgakov employs more than one concept of a world, Spinoza only one (namely, only one of the world-concepts Bulgakov employs: the concept of an all-including world). (3) Spinoza's cosmotheology is perfectly static; Bulgakov's cosmotheology is dynamic and, as a consequence, has a historical dimension—which is completely absent in Spinoza's. (4) For Bulgakov, a god must be a person; for Spinoza, a god must be a non-person; as a consequence, Bulgakov's pantheism is *prosoption-theistic*, Spinoza's is not. Obviously, this last difference between the two thinkers is the most important difference. In what follows, I will explore Bulgakov's pantheism in some detail; keeping Spinoza's pantheism in mind will certainly provide a useful point of comparison.

### 3. Two Christian Dogmas

Bulgakov developed his own pantheism—as a part of »sophiology«—mainly in six theological publications: the so-called »minor« trilogy (*The Burning Bush* [1927/2009] on the Virgin Mary, *The Friend of the Bridegroom* [1927/2003] on John the Baptist, *Jacob's Ladder* [1929/2010] on the angels), and the so-called »major« trilogy (*The Lamb of God* [1933/2008] on Christology, *The Comforter* [1936/2004] on Pneumatology, *The Bride of the Lamb* [posthumously 1945/2002] on Ecclesiology).<sup>5</sup> As a compendious source of Bulgakov's views, I shall use his own outline of sophiology, *Sophia. The Wisdom of God*.<sup>6</sup> In

4 Due to thinking (locally) *too small of the world*, identifying it not with *the all* but with space-time, Bulgakov does think that he is only a pantheist, not also a pantheist; see *Sophia*: 72.

5 The first number in the square brackets indicates the year of publication of the original work in Russian, the second number indicates the year of publication of its translation into English. The English titles are the titles of these published translations. (One of the English titles does not accord well with its Russian original: »The Burning Bush« should rather be »The Unburnt Burning Bush.«)

6 That book is the revised edition of a book published in 1937, *The Wisdom of God: A Brief Summary of Sophiology*, which itself is a translation from a (so far) unpublished manuscript in Russian.



addition, I shall quote from *The Lamb of God* (and, finally, from a book called *A Bulgakov Anthology*).

Bulgakov's panentheism seeks to be compatible with, and indeed to positively incorporate, two central dogmas of orthodox Christianity: the Dogma of the Trinity (*the Nicene dogma*), and the Dogma of the Two Natures in Christ (*the Chalcedonian dogma*). The Dogma of the Trinity (it can be found *more or less* explicitly expressed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitanian Creed) consists in the assertion that there are three divine *hypostases*—or *persons*: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—of one and the same divine *ousia*—*substance*, or *essence*, or *nature*.<sup>7</sup> The Dogma of the Two Natures in Christ consists in the assertion that Christ is the incarnate second person of the Trinity (the Son) in two distinct natures (essences), one divine and one human, which natures are united in Christ »unconfusedly, immutably, indivisibly, inseparably.«<sup>8</sup>

Bulgakov rightly remarks:

We must here draw attention to the meager interest displayed in the doctrine of the one Ousia in trinitarian theology. [...] It may even be said that the conception of Ousia has remained in the lifeless scholastic form in which it was taken over from Aristotle. It [...] had been more of a theological symbol than a theological doctrine. Such a state of things could not last forever, and sophiology has come in our time to [...] reveal the meaning of this symbol.<sup>9</sup>

Indeed, giving to the *ousia* of the Trinity—to the identical nature of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—the great measure of theological attention it deserves is a necessary (though certainly not a sufficient) condition for entering into sophiology and into Bulgakovian panentheism.

7 The consubstantiality of the Holy Spirit with the other two hypostases is left very much implicit in the Nicene-Constantinopolitanian Creed (in contrast to the consubstantiality of the Father and the Son). But later the term »consubstantial [*homoousios*]<« was extended to the whole Trinity (see *Sophia*: 24).

8 The quotation is from »The Definition of Faith of the Council of Chalcedon« (see Schaff 1900: 262-265).

9 *Sophia*: 53 (fn). See also *ibid.*, 24: »[T]he doctrine of the relationship between the three hypostases [...] has been to a certain extent elucidated in the process of the Church's dogmatic creativity. But [...] the doctrine of the consubstantiality of the Holy Trinity, as well as the actual conception of substance or nature, has been far less developed and, apparently, almost overlooked.«

#### 4. The Divine Sophia

The fundamental sophiological definition is this: The Divine Sophia is the *unfolded* Divine Ousia (Divinity, Godhead), the one nature of the three persons of the Trinity *unfolded* as to *content* (Divine Wisdom) and *manifestation* (Divine Glory).<sup>10</sup> Bulgakov differentiates between Wisdom and Glory as distinct but inseparable aspects of the Godhead (the Divine Ousia) *in its self-revelation—in its unfoldedness*, as one should say in order to emphasize the purely ontological, entirely non-epistemological character of the *self-revelation* that is meant here.<sup>11</sup> It is important to keep in mind that the fundamental relation between the Divine Sophia and the Divine Ousia is (numerical) *identity*, since, of course, the *unfolded* Divine Ousia is identical (as is the *enfolded* Divine Ousia) with the Divine Ousia. The relationship between the Divine Sophia and the Divine Ousia is, therefore, the same relationship as the relationship between the *standing* Socrates and Socrates (and the *sitting* Socrates, to boot), except for the fact that the different »ways of givenness« (to use Fregean terminology) of the Divine Sophia (the *unfolded* Divine Ousia) and the Divine Ousia (*simpliciter*, »Ousia as such« [*Sophia*: 54]) have nothing to do with the passage of time whereas they do have something to do with the passage of time in the case of the *standing* Socrates and Socrates. Saying it far less clearly but in Bulgakov's own words: »[U]sing an abridged and simplified terminology, we can say: the divinity in God constitutes the divine Sophia (or glory), while at the same time we assume that it [the divine Sophia, the divinity in God] is also the ousia [as such]: Ousia=Sophia=Glory.«<sup>12</sup>

It is evident from this quotation that the Divine Sophia can also be defined as »the divinity in God,«<sup>13</sup> that is, as the Divine Ousia (Godhead) *in God*, in other words, as the Divine Ousia *as hypostatized (had, possessed) by God*. This second definition does not only cast light on the first—the Divine Sophia *as the unfolded* Divine Ousia—(for the *unfoldedness* of the Divine Ousia, in Wisdom and Glory, is seen to be due to its being *hypostatized by God*), it also displays the fundamental relationship between God and the Divine Sophia: Since God hypostatizes (has, possesses) his *ousia*: Divinity, Godhead, the Divine Ousia,

<sup>10</sup> *Sophia*: 31-33.

<sup>11</sup> In defining the Divine Sophia, Bulgakov himself prefers to speak of *revelation* (rather than *unfoldedness*): »Sophia is Ousia as revealed« (*Sophia*: 54); »the two persons [the Word and the Spirit] together disclosing the Father in one revelation—Sophia« (*Sophia*: 98).

<sup>12</sup> *Sophia*: 33.

<sup>13</sup> For this definition, see also *The Lamb of God* (Bulgakov 2008): 107.

he hypostatizes the Divine Ousia inevitably *just as it is hypostatized by him*,<sup>14</sup> which is by definition (the *second* one) the Divine Sophia—*alias*, again by definition (now the *first* one), the *unfolded* Divine Ousia (*unfolded* in Wisdom and Glory). Or as Bulgakov himself says it: »[T]he one personal God possesses [hypostatizes] but one Godhead, which is expressed [unfolded, revealed] at once in Wisdom and Glory.«<sup>15</sup>

But what is *God* for Bulgakov? The last quotation implies that God is a person for Bulgakov. In fact, Bulgakov—whether he would be ready to admit it or not—believes that the three persons of the Trinity, each hypostatizing the Divine Ousia (see the Nicene dogma), collectively constitute *yet another person*, the one God: »The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are three distinct divine persons, together constitute one God.«<sup>16</sup> Clearly God, thus conceived of, is not identical with either the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit; he is the whole group, or »family,« of the three. And yet (see above) he is a person for Bulgakov and hypostatizes the Divine Ousia (and thereby, *ipso facto*, the Divine Sophia). The following quotation makes it explicit *how* the one personal God hypostatizes the Divine Ousia:

[T]he first thing one must say about the Divine Person is that, as trihypostatic, this Person is equally real in one hypostasis [of the Divine Ousia] and in three hypostases, that this Person is the pre-eternally realized reciprocity of love that totally vanquishes personal isolation and identifies three in one, while itself existing by the real being of these personal centers.<sup>17</sup>

Yet, the fundamental problem remains: If God is to be the entire Trinity *and* a person, then one is confronted (*a*) with the difficulty that it seems impossible that a group of distinct persons is a person (it would seem that three consciousnesses with three distinct subjects of consciousness cannot also be or form one consciousness with one subject, no matter how much high-quality love there is between the three subjects)<sup>18</sup> and (*b*) with the difficulty that if the three persons *together* were indeed *another* person (in spite of apparent impossibility), that then, undoubtedly, there would be a *fourth hypostasis* of the Divine Ousia,

14 Consider for comparative illustration: Since I carry my load, I carry my load inevitably *just as* (i.e., *precisely in the manner*) *it is carried by me*.

15 *Sophia*: 32.

16 *Sophia*: 23.

17 *The Lamb of God*: 95.

18 But listen to Bulgakov, who is not touched by any such misgivings whatsoever: »These three centers in the Holy Trinity are equally real and equally subjects, so to speak. Each of them is a separate, equally divine I, but all three are one Divine I in its absoluteness—the consubstantial and indivisible Trinity.« (*The Lamb of God*: 190.)

consubstantial with the other three—which is contrary at least to the spirit of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. It seems that Bulgakov would have done better to let the Trinity be a non-person, just as every human family that consists of two, three, or more persons is (ontologically) a non-person. But then, if he had done so, *who* would have been *the one personal god* that not only Bulgakov but every prosopon-theistic monotheist—that is, *in practice* every believer in the Abrahamitic tradition—believes in?<sup>19</sup>

Be that as it may, Bulgakov is eager to rebut the objection (no doubt actually raised against his sophiology) that the Divine Sophia—the *unfolded* Divine Ousia—is a *fourth hypostasis*.<sup>20</sup> He seems unaware of the fact that, according to his theological views, already the Trinity appears to be a *fourth hypostasis*. Yet Bulgakov does certainly not believe that God (for him, the Trinity) is a *primary, non-derivative* hypostasis of the Divine Ousia: God—the trihypostatic, triune God: the Trinity—is a hypostasis («a trihypostatic hypostasis»<sup>21</sup>) of the Divine Ousia only in virtue of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit being hypostases of the Divine Ousia. The Divine Sophia, in turn, is, by definition (the second one), the Divine Ousia *as hypostatized by God*—that is, as hypostatized *by each person of the Trinity*; but it is, for all that, not a hypostasis at all. Being hypostatized does not turn the Divine Ousia into a *hypostasis*: by being hypostatized it does not become an *individual which is bearer of an essence*; it stays an essence. However, what hypostatization does do to the Divine Ousia is to make it *be* in a certain manner, namely, makes it be *as hypostatized by the hypostatizer* (i.e., *unfolded* in such and such a way):

The three persons of the Holy Trinity have one life in common, that is, one Ousia, one Sophia. Nevertheless this *unity* of divine life coexists with the fact that the life of each of the hypostases in the divine Ousia-Sophia is determined in accordance with its own personal character [...]. One and the same Sophia is possessed *in a different way* by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit [...]

19 This question is, of course, pressing only for Christians, not for Jews or Muslims. What a Christian prosopon-theist, qua prosopon-theist, cannot do is to assert godhood of the Trinity and deny personhood to it (since for a prosopon-theist, although there is a god, there is no impersonal god). I suggest that a Christian (trinitarian and monotheistic) prosopon-theist had best accept only the familiar three divine persons (in this sense, *three gods*), one of which, however, is *the one personal god in the highest sense*, since he is the origin of the other two (and of *everything* to boot): the Father Almighty. *He*, I believe, is what a Christian (trinitarian and monotheistic) prosopon-theistic pantheism must refer to as God, and *not* the Trinity, as Bulgakov believes.

20 See *The Lamb of God*: 105; *Sophia*: 35.

21 *The Lamb of God*: 189.

The tri-unity of the hypostases is reflected in the threefold modality of the one Ousia-Sophia of the Godhead.<sup>22</sup>

In the unfolding of the Divine Ousia into the Divine Sophia—which is the *unfolded* Divine Ousia—the Son and the Holy Spirit are the disclosing (revealing) hypostases, the Father the disclosed.<sup>23</sup> Thus the Son and the Holy Spirit are, so to speak, *closer* to the Divine Sophia than the Father.<sup>24</sup> This makes it possible to say such things as that the Son (or Logos) is »Wisdom in person,«<sup>25</sup> and that »the Holy Spirit too *is* Wisdom,«<sup>26</sup> »the personal Spirit of Wisdom.«<sup>27</sup> But Bulgakov urges that the »is« which is used here must not be literally understood as the »is« of (numerical) identity; it is the »is« of predication and of representation at once: of *representative predication: exemplariness* (with respect to the revelation of the Divine Ousia). Indeed, one can say that »the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Trinity ›is‹ [...] Ousia or Sophia,« but one cannot (within orthodoxy) reverse these »is«-statements,<sup>28</sup> which shows that they are not literally *identificative*; properly understood, they are *predicative*: »Each of these [each of the triune hypostases] in its specific way possesses Sophia and in this sense is Sophia.«<sup>29</sup> Those »is«-statements cannot be literally identificative because »Sophia [...], once more, is *not* a Hypostasis, but only a quality belonging to a Hypostasis, an attribute of hypostatic being.«<sup>30</sup>

This latter Bulgakovian assertion, however, must be a massive understatement; for a few pages further on, Bulgakov speaks of »the common scholastic misunderstanding which makes Wisdom no more than a particular ›property‹ or quality, comprised in the definition of God, and therefore devoid of proper subsistence.«<sup>31</sup> One might even conclude that Bulgakov is contradicting himself here. This is not really the case; but it is certainly difficult to find the proper ontological place for Bulgakov's Divine Sophia. For Bulgakov, the Divine Sophia is, indeed, not a *hypostasis* (that is, not an *individual which is bearer of an essence*); *a fortiori* the Divine Sophia is not a »fourth hypostasis.« However, »she too loves. [...] Sophia loves God without being a hypostasis.«<sup>32</sup>

22 *Sophia*: 37 and 38.

23 *Sophia*: 46, 98, 105-106.

24 *Sophia*: 52.

25 *Sophia*: 98.

26 *Sophia*: 46.

27 *Sophia*: 98.

28 *Sophia*: 52.

29 *Sophia*: 53.

30 *Sophia*: 52.

31 *Sophia*: 54.

32 *The Lamb of God*: 105.

And God loves Ousia-Sophia: »It is loved by the Holy Trinity as life and revelation. [...] All life in God, in itself, is love. [...] Apart from this the tri-hypostatic relation between God and his Ousia is inconceivable.«<sup>33</sup> Is the Divine Sophia then a *person* (though not a hypostasis!) for Bulgakov? Certainly not: »Sophia is not a person,« he declares.<sup>34</sup> But he also declares: »[W]e must insist on the full ontological reality of Ousia-Sophia.«<sup>35</sup> Then, what *is* the Divine Sophia?—*ontologically*, in addition to what its (two) definitions say about it? From the following five quotations it emerges that the Divine Sophia is for Bulgakov the *subsistent* (though non-hypostatic) *life of God*: »Ousia, and therefore Sophia, exists for God and in God, as his subsistent divinity« [or equivalently: »exists for the persons of the Trinity and in them, as their subsistent divinity«]; »the nature of God (which is in fact Sophia) is a living and, therefore, loving substance, ground, and ›principle‹; »Ousia-Sophia is the life of a hypostatic spirit, though not itself hypostatic«; »Sophia is not [a?] hypostatic being, but she is a living *entity*. The divine world is alive, for nothing nonliving can be conceived in God«; »Sophia [...] is his eternal divine life.«<sup>36</sup>

Two difficulties need to be pointed out here: (I) In what does the fine distinction between »subsistent« and »hypostatic« consist such that the Divine Sophia is subsistent (an *individual substance* in some legitimate sense) but *not* hypostatic (not a hypostasis)? (II) How can the Divine Sophia be at once a *life* (that is, something that *is lived*) and *alive* (that is, *living*)? For answering these questions it does not help to be told that »the nature of spirit is not a thing, but a living principle, even though it is not personal.«<sup>37</sup> Nor does it help to remember the following lines from a poem by William Butler Yeats: »O body swayed to music, O brightening glance, / How can we know the dancer from the dance?«<sup>38</sup> For, do we really not know in the case in question, in the divine case, *Those Who Live* (»the dancers«) from *The Life* (»the dance«)? It certainly seems that we *do* distinguish two ontological sides here and are quite right about this. Bulgakov himself writes: »Ousia-Sophia is distinct from the hypostases, though it cannot exist apart from them and is eternally hypostatized in them.«<sup>39</sup> If this is correct, Ousia-Sophia cannot be two things at once: be what is hypostatized and be one of its hypostatizers; Ousia-Sophia cannot both *be*

33 *Sophia*: 35.

34 *The Lamb of God*: 107.

35 *Sophia*: 55.

36 In the order of quotation: *Sophia*: 55, 35, and 34; *The Lamb of God*: 105-106; *Sophia*: 54. See, moreover, the quotation footnote 22 refers to.

37 *Sophia*: 34.

38 »Among School Children,« Yeats 1980: 117.

39 *Sophia*: 34.

The Life and *be among* Those Who Live (those who live The Life). It would seem that Those Who Live are the three persons of the Trinity (and in a derivative, secondary sense also the Trinity itself) and that the Divine Sophia is The Life they live and love. This chimes well with Sophia being a non-person and a non-hypostasis, but it agrees ill with Sophia's supposed ability to love God. If the Divine Sophia is not alive after all (since those who live in the divine region are, it would seem, only the three persons of the Trinity and, in a derivative sense, the Trinity itself), how can Sophia *love*, if only in a non-personal, non-hypostatic way?<sup>40</sup>

The way out of this apparent impasse is to hold that the Divine Sophia is not only The Life, the divine life, but also has *subsistence* (hence *individuality*), but subsistence *in a weak sense*—subsistence in the strong sense would be hypostaticness, which Sophia has not. This non-hypostatic subsistence enables it to live and to love, to be a *subjectum* (*hypokeimenon*) of life and love—albeit in a *modified*, a non-hypostatic sense. Thus, the »fine distinction« between *subsistent* and *hypostatic* that question (I) addresses is, in fact, a distinction within the concept of subsistence itself: it is the distinction between *weakly subsistent* and *strongly subsistent* (or *hypostatic*).

This, of course, is not yet a sufficient answer to question (I): one would still like to know *what* the fine distinction between weak and strong subsistence consists in. Well, perhaps this distinction is primitive, undefined—in fact, indefinable. Then, in order to get used to it, it may help to consider that it is not an *ad hoc* invention; for the ontological situation of the Divine Sophia is by no means a singularity. An analogue of it is found in juxtaposing *the humans* with *humanity as hypostatized by the humans*. In contrast to the humans themselves, humanity as hypostatized by the humans is not a hypostasis (for otherwise it would be a human being, which it is not); yet one can say that it *subsists* (and is, therefore, an individual), that it subsists *in a weak sense*. This makes it possible to say, *in a modified sense*, that humanity as hypostatized by the humans *lives and loves* (though it loves not always what it should love). *In the normal sense*, however, it neither lives nor loves; in the normal sense, the humans, its hypostases, live and love (and not always what they should love). It is precisely this latter fact which makes it also true to say that humanity as hypostatized by the humans is *the (loving) life* of (all) the humans.

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40 On Sophia's non-personal, non-hypostatic love of God, see *Sophia*: 35.

## 5. The Divine Sophia and the Creaturely Sophia

Even more than his identification of the Divine Sophia with the divine life, Bulgakov's identification of »her«—the *unfolded* Divine Ousia—with *the divine world* brings out Sophia's *unfoldedness*, Sophia's *richness*. The two identifications may, in fact, go side by side, as in the following quotation: »The life of God in His Divinity, or the divine world as an objective and living principle, is precisely what Scripture calls Sophia, or the Wisdom of God.«<sup>41</sup> But each of the identifications also occurs by itself, without the other, which fact has already been demonstrated for »Sophia = the divine life« and which, as follows, is also demonstrated for »Sophia = the divine world«: »Sophia as the Divine world, as the fullness of Divinity [...], is not only the Wisdom but also the *Glory* of God.«<sup>42</sup> For the purpose of discerning the pantheism in Bulgakov's work and the character of that pantheism, Bulgakov's identification of the Divine Sophia with the divine world is rather more telling than his identification of »her« with the divine life. The former identification becomes especially revealing of Bulgakov's views if one takes into account *what* »the Divine world, as the fullness of Divinity«—the (in Wisdom and Glory) *unfolded* Divine Ousia, the Divine Sophia—*comprises*: »Sophia, as the ›world‹ of God, represents a ›pan-organism‹ of the ideas of all in the all,« and »[t]he divine Sophia, as the revelation of the Logos, is the *all-embracing unity*, which contains within itself all the fullness of the world of ideas.«<sup>43</sup> A very momentous conclusion follows: If the Divine Sophia, the divine world, contains *all ideas* (that is, all types, all forms in the Platonic sense), really *all* of them, then the divine world (Sophia) must be—*among other things*<sup>44</sup>—the prototype of *the created world*, of creation, of »the world« (in the usual acceptance),<sup>45</sup> which means »that the species of created beings do not represent some new type of forms, devised by God, so to

41 *The Lamb of God*: 107. Consider here once more (because the instance is particularly striking, occurring in one and the same sentence) Bulgakov's letting the Divine Sophia be at once *a life* and *something living*. There is a way to make (some) sense of this (see the previous section), but straightforwardly understood it is nonsense: a life does not live, and something living is not a life.

42 *The Lamb of God*: 108.

43 *Sophia*: 59 and 69.

44 This caveat is justified in view of what Bulgakov himself says: »That inner self-revelation of God which is described as fullness in reference to his Wisdom and Glory can also be defined as the ›world‹ of God in reference to the personal life of the Deity itself.« (*Sophia*: 59.) The ideas in the divine world that concern the personal life of the Deity—of the three persons of the Trinity—are presumably not exhausted by the ideas in the divine world that concern the created world.

45 See *Sophia*: 65.



speak, *ad hoc*, but that they are based upon eternal, divine prototypes.«<sup>46</sup> Thus, the ground of *the (created) world* is the Wisdom of God (the Divine Sophia). »To admit this,« Bulgakov says, »is to affirm, in a sense, the fundamentally divine character of the world, based upon this identity of the principle of divine Wisdom in God and in the creature.«<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, he comes to the conclusion: »The world exists in God: »For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things« (Rom. 11.36).«<sup>48</sup>

However, *understood literally*, this conclusion does not yet follow. What, at this point, is *in literal acceptance* reached (that is, if one has followed Bulgakov so far and accepts his views) is this: The prototypes of the species of the created world are (*not* literally in God, *not* literally in the Trinity, but literally) in the divine world, that is, in the *unfolded* Divine Ousia, in the Divine Sophia, and »the [created] world bears within it the image and, as it were, the reflection of the divine prototype.«<sup>49</sup> From this piece of prosopon-theistic Platonism it does not follow that, in particular, the world in time and space is (or exists) in God, in the (sufficiently) literal sense that literal panentheism requires. *A fortiori* it does not follow that *everything*, the world qua totality of being (and not only the space-time world and its parts), is literally in God. There is, thus, at this point still a considerable gap that separates Bulgakov from true panentheism.<sup>50</sup> In order to close the gap, it will be necessary to make one considerable compromise: We will have to allow that any given *x* is already *literally in God* if it is literally in the unfolded Divine Ousia, the Divine Sophia (which is *not* God, as has become amply clear by now), *or else* if it *perfectly exemplifies* (in particular, *perfectly hypostatizes*) something which is literally in the Divine Sophia. Thus, it is true (let's say it is true)—*literally* true—that »God contained within himself

46 *Sophia*: 70.

47 *Sophia*: 71.

48 *Sophia*: 72.

49 *Sophia*: 64.

50 Bulgakov, to boot, locally—see *Sophia*: 72—confuses *panentheism* with *space-time-panentheism*: the doctrine that the *space-time* world (everything in *space-time*, including *space-time* itself) is in God. *Space-time-panentheism* is certainly *not* logically equivalent to *space-time-pantheism*: the doctrine that the *space-time* world is God. In harmony with this non-equivalence, Bulgakov accepts—at *Sophia*: 72—*space-time-panentheism*—to his mind there: *panentheism*—and rejects *space-time-pantheism*—to his mind there: *pantheism*. There is nothing wrong about this from the orthodox Christian standpoint; but Bulgakov is wrong to believe that this is the correct general attitude of a *panentheist vis-à-vis pantheism* (compare footnote 4); it cannot be correct if panentheism and pantheism are taken in their maximal and most reasonable—their »true«—conception (as they are taken in this essay and, on the whole, also by Bulgakov); for then they are, as we have seen, logically equivalent.

before the creation of the world the divine prototypes [...] of all creatures.«<sup>51</sup> But it is true in virtue of these prototypes being contained in the Divine Sophia (which, too, is *in* God, but not in the same sense in which the prototypes are *in* the Divine Sophia; a transitivity of *in*-being is out of the question here).

Bulgakov asserts that the (created) world »exists outside God« on the same page (*Sophia*: 72) where he also asserts that »[t]he world exists in God.« He is not contradicting himself, since, at this point, the world's »existence in God« is *not* meant literally by Bulgakov (not even meant by him in the *extenuated* literal sense just introduced): as we have seen, it only means for Bulgakov that the created world is an image and reflection of the divine world, rather in the sense of Plato and Plotinus. Bulgakov states this view also in the following way, and thereby gives a decidedly prosopon-theistic (therefore non-Plotinian) and sophiological turn to it:

[I]n creating the world [...] from ›nothing‹ God [...], in the divine Sophia, unites the world with his own divine life. Insofar as the creature is able to bear it, God communicates Sophia, the creaturely Sophia, to creation. [...] Sophia unites God with the world as the one common principle, the divine ground of creaturely existence. Remaining one, Sophia exists in two modes, eternal and temporal, divine and creaturely.<sup>52</sup>

If *this*—this prosopon-theistic Platonism—were all there is in the direction of panentheism in Bulgakov's thought, then Bulgakov could, after all, not really be counted as a panentheist. But it is not all, of course.

## 6. Bringing the (Created) World Home

The last quotation in the previous section suggests that the creaturely Sophia, Sophia in the temporal mode, is identical to the Divine Sophia, Sophia in the eternal mode. That the Divine Sophia and the creaturely Sophia are identical is, in fact, Bulgakov's view<sup>53</sup>—*a somewhat rash* view. For is it really true that the *entire* unfolded Divine Ousia—the *entire* Divine Sophia, the *entire* divine world—is reflected in creation? On consideration, the view that the creaturely

51 *Sophia*: 64.

52 *Sophia*: 73 and 74.

53 See *Sophia*: 76. Bulgakov is unaware that there is no paradox in an identity with rather different *modes of givenness* (as Frege would say) of the identicals; for this reason, he thinks that the (alleged) »identity in distinction, and distinction in identity« between the Divine and the creaturely Sophia »is the primary and ultimate antinomy of sophiology« (*ibid.*).

Sophia is a *proper essential part* of the Divine Sophia—namely, that entirety within it which is reflected in creation—seems closer to the truth than the simple assumption of their identity (see footnote 44).

Now, the divine world and the Divine Sophia are *perfectly congruous* with each other, are even (necessarily) *identical*, as we have seen. Numerical identity, however, is out of the question for the *created* world and the *creaturely* Sophia, as long as the created world is what it is and not, *per impossibile*, something else than it is—and it must be emphasized in this context that the creaturely Sophia is called »creaturely« qua being reflected in creation, but *not* qua being created, since it is an essential—and presumably proper—part of the uncreated Divine Sophia; whereas the created world is indeed something created—something created from »nothing.« *Perfect congruence*, in contrast, is certainly not out of the question for the *two* (which are *necessarily two*): the created world and the creaturely Sophia. Yet, *so far*, the created world and the creaturely Sophia are not perfectly congruous with each other—far from it; they are only on the way to perfect congruence; *at present*, their congruence is only rather partially realized:

The fundamental mark of the created world is becoming, emergence, development, fulfillment. [...] The world of becoming must travel by the long road of the history of the universe if it is ultimately to succeed in [perfectly] reflecting in itself the face of the divine Sophia, and be ›transfigured‹ into it. The creaturely Sophia, which is the foundation of the being of the [created] world, [...] is at present in a state of potentiality, *dynamis*, while at the same time it is the principle of its [the world's] actualization and finality.<sup>54</sup>

Here we have the dynamical and teleological—and therefore *temporal*—aspect of Bulgakov's panentheism (which aspect is absent in Spinoza's). *History* is metaphysically important to Bulgakov—who did take biblical eschatology seriously and was, moreover, a receptive reader of the German idealists (of Hegel in particular). In fact, there is according to Bulgakov a predetermined end to history: this end is the perfect congruence of the created world with the creaturely Sophia, which congruence *ultimately*—at the end of time—matches the eternal identity of the divine world with the Divine Sophia. The end of history is, in other words, the perfect (that is, as perfect as possible) exemplification of the creaturely Sophia by the created world—»pan-entheosis, or simply pantheosis, the complete penetration of the creature by Wisdom,«

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54 *Sophia*: 75.

as Bulgakov puts it.<sup>55</sup> *This* is God's predetermined plan for the created world, which plan, nevertheless, is *not* deterministic:

God shall be all in all, and divine Wisdom fulfilled in the created [world]. This accomplishment has an inner inevitability and predeterminacy, which yet does not suppress created freedom. For that freedom is not substantive but rather modal; it determines not the ›what‹ but the ›how,‹ not the existence and final issue of the cosmic process, but only the manner of its accomplishment.<sup>56</sup>

The end—panentheosis/pantheosis—is already fixed from eternity, the way to it is not, but is a matter of creaturely—specifically, of *human*—free choice in the course of time, in *history*. For this reason the arrival of »the end of the world« may take a longer or a shorter time:<sup>57</sup> its date is not predetermined but depends on human freedom. There are, indeed, »limits to the penetration of creation by Wisdom, involved in its [creation's] freedom to develop«<sup>58</sup>—but only *temporary* limits; for »freedom unto evil has no substantive foundation, no resources to endure to eternity, and sooner or later must inevitably wither before the radiance of Wisdom.«<sup>59</sup>

Evidently, Bulgakov's panentheism is an *eschatological panentheism*. But what is *the point* of this metaphysical »arrangement«? What is its deep meaning, which may win heads and hearts and dispose Christians (first of all, Bulgakov himself) to believe in it? Bulgakov himself anticipates an acute critical question: »Is not the creation of the world, as it were, a sort of duplication of the divine Sophia?«<sup>60</sup> The first thing that can be said in seeking to answer these three questions is this: »God created the world only that He might deify it and himself become all in all to it.«<sup>61</sup> Thus, creating the world is not merely a matter of »the force of God's love overflowing beyond the limits of its own being to found being other than his own«<sup>62</sup> (although it is a matter of *that*, too). For the love of God for the created world is of a peculiar kind (as the second-to-last quotation intimates); it is a love that *ultimately raises up*: a love »to the end that he [God, in the person of the Son] might [...] raise the creaturely up

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55 *Sophia*: 147.

56 *Sophia*: 146.

57 See *The Lamb of God*: 436-437.

58 *Sophia*: 126.

59 *Sophia*: 147.

60 *Sophia*: 76.

61 *Sophia*: 136.

62 *Sophia*: 73.

to the heavenly«<sup>63</sup> (as Bulgakov puts it, speaking of the ultimate purpose of the kenosis of the Lord).

Now, for God there is no raising-up (of anything at any time) without *first* having thrown down (something at some time): if *the former* is to be accomplished by him, *the latter* must have been done by him *first*. Thus, what John Donne writes at the end of his »Hymne to God my God, in my sicknesse« is entirely appropriate metaphysically: »Therefore that he may raise the Lord throws down.«<sup>64</sup> God's creating from nothing is, metaphysically, a *throwing-down*. This wording certainly has a *negative* ring to it. There are considerations that more than justify that wording. The questions at the beginning of the preceding paragraph become especially disquieting if one considers that there is a *dark side* to the proposed metaphysical »arrangement«: When Bulgakov says (as already quoted above) that »[t]he fundamental mark of the created world is becoming, emergence, development, fulfillment,« he could have added—and he would have told the truth—that a very conspicuous mark of the created world is also *destruction, submergence, degeneration, frustration*. Bulgakov is not blind to this; he is not blind to *negativity*, to *evil*: he imputes it to human (and angelic) freedom.<sup>65</sup> Yet, in view of what we know about the world, this imputation is rather hard to believe to be true; for destruction, submergence, degeneration, frustration—and the staggering amount of pain and suffering they entail—and *death* seem *natural* features of the world. They were present long before the appearance of humankind, and they would have been present even if humankind had never existed. Angels do not seem to have anything to do with them, and what these features certainly seem *not* to be (except for very minor parts of them) is »wages of sin« (cf. *Romans* 6:23). But if they are indeed *natural*, how can the consequence be avoided that God, in creating, *intended* them? Are they not, in the main, consequences of the inexorable rule of the laws of nature, in other words, of *the laws of God* (enforced by God)? It seems, thus, that the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (*John* 1:29) is not only the lamb who takes away the sins the world—more precisely speaking, its inmates—committed (countlessly many, doubtless), but that it is also the lamb who takes away *the sin the world is*<sup>66</sup>—committed by the world's creator, by creating and upholding it: a *necessary* sin, necessary for the realization of *raising-up* love (without which God, who is Love, *the paradigm of love*, could

63 *Sophia*: 89.

64 Gardner 1982: 90.

65 *Sophia*: 145-147.

66 Note in this context that the original Greek (of *John* 1:29) has the singular »the sin,« not the plural »the sins«: ἴδε ὁ ἄμωδός τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου.

not be),<sup>67</sup> indeed of *deifying* love, but nevertheless *a sin against the good, a wrong that must be righted*.

## 7. Anthropocentric Panentheism

Bulgakov, however, appears to be far from these *unorthodox* ideas (although they are adumbrated in Schelling's so-called *Freiheitsschrift*,<sup>68</sup> which Bulgakov may have read). It is in their consequence that, like the creation and progression of the world to its end, so also the *kenosis* of the Son of God is a *throwing-down* (indeed, to the bottom of hell), but a *throwing-down* for love, terminating in a glorious *raising-up*. It is in their consequence that the divine-human drama of Christ, with its terrible climax and astounding anti-climax, is last but not least a just self-punishment of God for the sin of creating (a sin it seems to be, even though the creating is love-enabling), a divine expiation and atonement, *which*, in the end, becomes God's true and glorious self-justification: *the perfect theodicy*—*perfect* not least because a form of love, *raising-up love*, is extended in it, first of all, to a person of the Trinity itself (which fact, without the drama, would not have existed); and *perfect* not least because amnesty and glorification is handed to the sinning creature *for free: raising-up love again*—if the sinning creature wants it and accepts it. Bulgakov, however, seems far from these thoughts; instead, he merely repeats the *orthodox* Christian view (which, it would seem to me, is not the entire truth):

Many texts [of the New Testament] express the general idea that Christ offered the redemptive sacrifice in His blood and took upon Himself the sins of the world. This is a fact irrefutably attested by Scripture and just as irrefutably obvious for our immediate religious consciousness. In Christ we become reconciled with God. Christ is the intermediary for us; by faith in Him we recognize that we are justified before God.<sup>69</sup>

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67 Love, and especially raising-up love, cannot be without negativity it overcomes, and an arena—the (created) world—is needed for negativity and the love by which it is overcome. Thus it is quite true what Bulgakov says: »There is no God without the world« (*The Lamb of God*: 399), although there is no »natural necessity« to this world-God relation, only a »free necessity« (*Sophia*: 73): the necessity of love. Note, incidentally, that Bulgakov immediately adds the following remarkable coda to the sentence just quoted (from *The Lamb of God*): »and there is no world outside of God: the world is in God.«

68 The full title in English: *Philosophical Investigations into the Essence of Human Freedom*.

69 *The Lamb of God*: 343.

This—the *voluntary-scapegoat-soteriology*, as one might term it—is the ground Bulgakov declares *we* (we human beings), and he among us, are standing on (though, of course, this is can be obvious to us only if we are Christians). It is a part of the conspicuous *anthropocentrism* of Bulgakov's panentheism. This anthropocentrism goes much further than the anthropocentrism of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, where we read that because of us human beings and because of our salvation *the Son*—»true god of [from; out of] true god,« but certainly a god in a different sense than the sense in which the entire Trinity is God for Bulgakov—descended from heaven and became himself a human being and was crucified for us. Already in the Creed it is all for *us* and because of *us*. In fact, Bulgakov's anthropocentrism not only exceeds the Creed's, it exceeds also the Bible's:

[H]umanity [i.e.: humankind, the entirety of the humans] was really made to be lord of creation. [...] Through humanity, created Wisdom can inform the formless elements, the *tohu-bohu* of matter, until it becomes an extension of the human body [!]. [...] [A]ll in history can and must be wrought out by humankind in human fashion. For in Divine-humanity is included the whole fullness of humanity [i.e., the ideal human form], with its freedom and creativity.<sup>70</sup>

The created world belongs to humanity [i.e., humankind]. [...] Humanity [...] is the representative of all creation [...] In this sense we may say the world is humanity, which includes in itself the formality of all the rest. [...] God's image in creation is the human form. [...] This ›image‹ is the *ens realissimum* in humanity, it establishes a true identity [a perfect relation of representation?] between the image and its prototype, which involves not only the ›divinity‹ of humanity on account of the image of God in it, but also a certain ›humanity‹ of God.<sup>71</sup>

Bulgakov makes the proud statement (no doubt in humility): »There is something in human beings which is directly related to the essence of God [i.e., the Divine Ousia].«<sup>72</sup> What is it? »It is no one natural quality, but our whole humanity, which is the image of God. [...] It lies within us, something as yet unrevealed, yet surely to be revealed, if only when ›God shall be all in all

70 *Sophia*: 140 and 141. Note that Bulgakov is of course not advocating humanistic triumphalism (be it capitalist or socialist): »The Satanic principle in humanity is only strengthened by its unspiritual technical conquest of nature ›in its own name.« (*Sophia*: 140.) What he really has in mind (*ibid.*) is »a good and true humanization of nature, accomplished in the name of Christ.«

71 *Sophia*: 77 and 78. There are two deviations from this truth: »The secularist divorce of the human from the divine principle in humanity, with its sequel in the idolatry of the human, is an error; but equally false is the denial of the human principle in the name of the divine.« (*Sophia*: 141.)

72 *Sophia*: 79.

(1. Cor. 15.28).<sup>73</sup> Now, according to »the doctrine of Divine-humanity or of Sophia«<sup>74</sup> (which, no doubt, is the same doctrine as »the doctrine of Sophia, the divine Wisdom in creation«<sup>75</sup>), »the fullness of Divine-humanity shall be attained, when God shall be all in all.«<sup>76</sup> From these quotations (which underscore the dynamic character of Bulgakov's panentheism) and previous expositions in this essay it can be gathered (a) that Divine-humanity is identical with the Divine Sophia (which is thus provided with yet another identification,<sup>77</sup> in addition to its identification with the *unfolded* Divine Ousia, with the Divine Ousia *as hypostatized by God*, with the divine life, and with the divine world) and (b) that, therefore, the ideal form of *creaturely humanity* is contained in Divine-humanity (since every ideal form is contained in the Divine Sophia: in Divine-humanity), but is not yet fully realized, though it will be. Moreover, in the perspective of Bulgakov's anthropocentrism (see »the world is humanity [that is, is epitomized by humankind],« quoted above), this creaturely humanity is a perfect representation of the creaturely Sophia: »[Creaturely] humanity is<sup>78</sup> the created form of divine Wisdom,<sup>79</sup> which [i.e., divine Wisdom] is simply God's nature revealing itself [i.e., the *unfolded* Divine Ousia].«<sup>80</sup> In its present appearance, creaturely humanity—and thereby the creaturely Sophia—is seriously impaired by the defects of its exemplifiers (bearers, hypostases): »Obviously, in humans, created Wisdom is obscured by sin.«<sup>81</sup> As has become amply clear, this will not remain so forever.

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73 *Sophia*: 79.

74 *Sophia*: 102.

75 *Sophia*: 114.

76 *Sophia*: 112.

77 Further evidence for this identification: »[T]he Son and the Spirit [...] are two, yet the bond which unites them appears in the one self-revelation they share in Sophia, alike in eternal Divine-humanity in God and in the appearing in time among human beings of the God-human.« (*Sophia*: 102.) Moreover, Bulgakov speaks of »heavenly humanity, Sophia« (*ibid.*, 99). No doubt, he is using the shorter name »Sophia« in abbreviation of the longer »Divine Sophia« (as he often does).

78 This cannot well be the »is« of numerical identity, it must be the »is« of (perfect pars-pro-toto) *representation*; it can therefore be replaced by »represents.«

79 Bulgakov should have said »the creaturely part of divine Wisdom« instead of »the created form of divine Wisdom.« For the creaturely Sophia, which he is here referring to, is, properly speaking, not *created*, though it is *creaturely* by being exemplified by creatures; and it is not a *form* but a *part* of the Divine Sophia (Bulgakov even proposes its identity with the Divine Sophia, as we have seen in section 6).

80 *Sophia*: 88. It is not accurate to say that God's nature »reveals itself.« Properly speaking, it is revealed by its hypostases.

81 *Sophia*: 88.



## 8. The Work of Salvation

Bulgakov anthropocentric sophiology—»Divine Sophia as humanity«<sup>82</sup>—is a panentheism which is *Christian*; being Christian, it has not only eschatological but also Christological, Pneumatological and Mariological aspects. What will be fully achieved *in the end*—that is: *the pan(en)theosis*, the perfect congruence of the created world with the creaturely Sophia (via *perfect* creaturely exemplification of the forms in the creaturely Sophia), the greatest ontologically possible union of the created world with the Divine Sophia,<sup>83</sup> with the divine world—is begun *in the middle of time*. It is physically begun in a strictly local, merely exemplary fashion; but spiritually, already some all-embracing work, too, is begun at that time: the work of salvation (and theodicy, I would add), resulting (among other things) in the *freeing* of humankind, and thereby of all creatures, to the real possibility of being *ultimately raised up*, of being *deified*. It is the work of Christ in Sophia, with Mary and the Holy Spirit as necessary helpers:

According to the sophiological interpretation of the definition of Chalcedon, the two natures in Christ correspond to the two forms of Sophia, the divine and the created. The created humanity of Christ[,] the God-human[,] came to him from the Mother of God. It belongs to her. In a true sense it is possible to say that she herself personally is this created humanity of Christ, that she is the created Sophia. [...] [I]t is in this sense, as sharing the human nature of the God-human, that his holy Mother is the created Sophia.<sup>84</sup>

She *is* created Wisdom, for she is creation glorified. In her is realized the purpose of creation, the complete penetration of the creature by Wisdom, the full accord of the created type [*better*: token] with its prototype, its entire accomplishment. In her[,] creation is completely irradiated by its prototype. In her[,] God is already all in all.<sup>85</sup>

Here, as so often in Bulgakov's texts, there is reason to deplore Bulgakov's indiscriminate use of the word »is,« with which he is prone to connect non-literal senses, to the considerable detriment of clarity of meaning. To put it straight: Mary is, *literally*, neither identical to created Wisdom, the created Sophia, nor

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82 *Sophia*: 79.

83 By perfectly exemplifying a form in—literally in—the creaturely Sophia, *x* is perfectly exemplifying a form literally in the Divine Sophia (the creaturely Sophia being literally a part of the Divine Sophia), and hence *x is in God*, literally in God, as we have *stipulated* (in section 5).

84 *Sophia*: 126-127.

85 *Sophia*: 126.

to creation glorified, nor to Christ's created humanity.<sup>86</sup> All that can be said *literally* (and truly) is that she, first among all humans, *perfectly exemplifies* (namely, is a perfect hypostasis of) creaturely humanity, creaturely human nature (»Christ's created humanity«), and that she *thereby*, due to the onto-theological centrality of humanness (implicitly confirmed by the Chalcedonian dogma), is a *perfect representation* (a living symbol, an epitome) not only of creaturely humanity but also of the creaturely Sophia (because creaturely humanity—perfectly exemplified by Mary—is a representative part of the creaturely Sophia) and of creation glorified (because Mary—perfectly exemplifying creaturely humanity—is a representative part of creation glorified). Only in a *non-literal*, in a *representational* sense, can it be said that *in Mary* creation is »completely irradiated by its prototype«—that is, made perfect vis-à-vis its ideal, the creaturely Sophia—and that *in Mary* »God is already all in all.«

Still non-literally, still merely representationally, but certainly in a more telling, more »encompassing« way than *in Mary alone*, God—for Bulgakov: the Trinity—is already all in all *in the risen Christ*; who *risen* (and *raised up*) is no longer kenotic and, anyhow (kenosis or not), has all the time (according to orthodoxy) been *both* a perfect hypostasis of the unfolded Divine Ousia (of the Divine Sophia, of Divine-humanity), just like the Father and the Holy Spirit, *and* a perfect hypostasis of creaturely humanity, just like Mary (»[h]er humanity became his [the Son's] humanity«<sup>87</sup>). The Holy Spirit in this local and exemplary beginning of pan(en)theosis, in this singularity in the middle of time, cannot be separated from Mary or from Christ; for *the Annunciation* and *the Incarnation*, in which the Holy Spirit essentially participates, are the beginning of that beginning:

In the Annunciation both the Word and the Spirit are sent from the Father to reveal Sophia to the world, and thus to reveal, in the earthly, the heavenly humanity. The next point to note in this mystery is that the Spirit must come on the Virgin, and be accepted by her, before she can conceive and give flesh to the Word. [...] In the Incarnation, the Son and the Spirit come down from heaven together, for the Spirit, who rests on the Son inseparably and unconfusedly, in his descent on the Virgin brings down the Word too in person, in virtue of which she, conceiving the Son, becomes the birthgiver of God.<sup>88</sup>

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86 To repeat (see footnote 79): the use of the word »creaturely« instead of the word »created« would have been more adequate to the truth.

87 *Sophia*: 116.

88 *Sophia*: 101.

In all of this, »[t]he originating Hypostasis throughout remains, as before in all missions *ad extra*, the Father.«<sup>89</sup> Presumably, therefore, the Father *knows* what is the ground of the necessity of *What is not assumed [by God] is not healed [redeemed by God]*—the principle of Gregory of Nazianzus, which has almost universally (among Christians) been supposed to govern *the mission of all missions*. To a Christian (but not to a Jew or Muslim), the necessity of Gregory's principle may at first seem obvious; on thinking about it, it may become more and more enigmatic. Why couldn't God save (heal, redeem) us without assuming—in the second Divine Person—our nature? In contrast, the necessity of the following principle can only be, and remain, immediately evident: *What is not thrown down [initially by God] is not raised up [ultimately by God]*. Far as this latter principle may be from the Orthodox mind of Bulgakov (though apparently not from the Anglican mind of John Donne), it nevertheless seems worthwhile to rethink *the mission of all missions* in its light.<sup>90</sup>

## 9. Panpsychism?

Prima facie *panpsychism* is the thesis that *everything has mental states*. Since neither non-objects, nor abstract entities, nor merely possible entities, nor impossible entities seem at all capable of having mental states, and since it is not absolutely certain that there are no entities which are non-objects, no entities which are abstract, no entities which are merely possible, and no entities which are impossible, it is recommendable to formulate the thesis of panpsychism in a less general way than seems right prima facie, as follows: *Every actual concrete object has mental states*. Yet even this restricted version of panpsychism may still assert too much: Does an actually existing table or stone have mental states? That they have mental states seems somewhat doubtful. Perhaps the thesis of panpsychism should, therefore, be put in the following way: *Every actual concrete object which is a fundamental entity has mental states*.

No matter which of the three formulations of panpsychism is chosen, it is obvious that *panentheism*—the thesis that everything is in a god (this thesis being taken in its logically strong interpretation: see footnote 1)—does not logically entail panpsychism, nor is logically entailed by it. Nevertheless, it turns out that *Bulgakovian panentheism* is not without *Bulgakovian panpsychism*. What *Bulgakovian panentheism* amounts to has been amply described in the previous sections. But what, now, is *Bulgakovian panpsychism*? The key

89 *Sophia*: 102.

90 More on this matter can be found in Meixner 2017.

to answering this question is the fact that the Divine Sophia—the unfolded divine essence—is *alive and conscious* for Bulgakov<sup>91</sup> (because, according to him, it is alive and loving God: see section 4). We may take it that the creaturely Sophia, too—which Bulgakov identifies with the Divine Sophia (see section 6) and which, in any case, is certainly not something that could exist apart from the Divine Sophia—is *alive and conscious* for Bulgakov. Therefore, in the pan(en)theosis, when the created world will be brought into perfect congruence with the creaturely Sophia (that is, will enter into its maximal ontological nearness to the creaturely Sophia, and thereby also to the Divine Sophia), the created world—»nature,« »the cosmos«—will certainly be *as alive and conscious as it can possibly be*, in all its parts. However, the created world *is alive*—certainly in a *consciousness*-implying sense—even *now*, although this fact is presently obscured by sin, obscured to the point that the created world appears to be *dead* (and, doubtless, *is dead* in some measure). Bulgakov had a vision—or rather, a strong intimation—of the resilient aliveness of the created world (and it proved to be the first step of his long way back to the Christian faith):

This was my first sight of the mountains. I looked with ecstatic delight at their rising slopes. I drank in the light and the air of the steppes. I listened to the revelation of nature. My soul was accustomed to the dull pain of seeing nature as a lifeless desert and of treating its surface beauty as a deceptive mask. [...] Suddenly, in that evening hour, my soul was joyfully stirred. I started to wonder what would happen if the cosmos were not a desert and its beauty not a mask of deception—if nature were not death, but life. If he existed, the merciful and loving Father, if nature was the vesture of his love and glory ...<sup>92</sup>

This, if anything, is *Bulgakovian* panpsychism, and no doubt, it is *orthodox* panpsychism.

91 The Neo-platonic origin of this idea is obvious if one considers what Plotinus has to say about the νοῦς: »Admiring the world of sense as we look out upon its vastness and beauty and the order of its eternal march, thinking of the gods within it, seen and hidden, and the celestial spirits and all the life of animal and plant, let us mount to its archetype, to the yet more authentic sphere: there we are to contemplate all things as members of the Intellectual—eternal in their own right, vested with a self-springing consciousness and life—and, presiding over all these, the unsoiled Intelligence and the unapproachable wisdom.« (Plotinus 1991 [Ennead V.1, 4]: 351.) The Divine Sophia (with the creaturely Sophia as part of it) is—among other things it is—the Christian form of the pagan Neo-platonic νοῦς.

92 Bulgakov 1976: 10.

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# Panentheism and Panexperientialism for Open and Relational Theology

*Thomas Jay Oord and Wm. Andrew Schwartz*

Open and relational theologies have a particular affinity for panentheism and panexperientialism (panpsychism). These theologies come in various forms, however. And scholars propose various forms of panentheism and panexperientialism. Diversity reigns.

We begin this essay by describing open and relational theology. We also describe panentheism and panexperientialism, broadly understood. We note reasons why open and relational theists would be attracted to each. And we argue that panentheism and panexperientialism complement one another, although a person could be attracted only to one.

Much of the essay argues for one form of open and relational theology we think makes the best sense overall. This form includes belief in a personal/relational God, makes distinctions between God and creatures, affirms God everlastingly creates (thereby denying *creatio ex nihilo*), and offers a solution to the theoretical aspect of the problem of evil. Adopting panexperientialism and panentheism offers ways to overcome theoretical problems in contemporary thought, while arguably motivating adherents of the view to love (promote overall well-being).

## 1. Open and Relational Theology

The label »open and relational theology« serves as an umbrella designation for a family of theologies.<sup>1</sup> This family shares at least two core convictions. The »open« aspect refers to the idea that both creatures and God experience the ongoingness of time. Consequently, both God and creatures face an open, yet to be determined future. Because the future is not actual, it is inherently

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1 These include theologies using labels such as open theism, process theism, various relational theologies, some Wesleyan theologies, some feminist theologies, some ecological theologies, some Arminian theologies, some postcolonial theologies, and more. Thomas Jay Oord coined the »open and relational theologies« label in 2001 when forming a group that meets annually at American Academy of Religion (AAR) meetings. Andrew Schwartz currently serves as the group's chair.

unknowable as actual. Open and relational theists believe God is time-full rather than timeless.<sup>2</sup> Theistic presentists often adopt this view of divine time-fullness.

The open view is perhaps best known for rejecting the traditional view of exhaustive divine foreknowledge. That traditional view says God knows with certainty what happened in the past and present, and God foreknows the future with certainty. Open theism rejects the portion of that view that says God foreknows the actual future with certainty. Most open theists maintain God is omniscient, however, because God knows all actual and potential events and beings. God knows everything knowable.

The »relational« aspect of these theologies refers to the give-and-receive interactions that characterize all existence. Creatures and other elements of creation relate with one another, in this sense of being causally influencing. God also engages in give-and-receive relations with others. Open and relational theists reject classic theistic views of divine impassibility and immutability, which say God in all respects remains unaffected by creation and unchanging. Relational theists believe God relates experientially with creatures.

Open and relational theists typically embrace a set of other ideas. Most emphasize love as God's primary attribute and the moral imperative for at least complex creatures.<sup>3</sup> Most affirm some form of libertarian freedom, at least for God and complex creatures.<sup>4</sup> This freedom is genuine but limited by the capacities of the agents and the influences in their environments. Most open and relational theists affirm some version of epistemological realism, whereby reality actually exists prior to one's perception of it. This realism means, among other things, we can know something but not everything about God and the world.<sup>5</sup> Open and relational theologians affirm differences and similarities between God and creation. Most believe creation matters, and what we do makes an ultimate difference. And so on.

Self-identified open and relational theists disagree among themselves on issues other than the ideas we have noted. Some reject *creatio ex nihilo*, for instance, while others affirm it.<sup>6</sup> Some affirm the salvation of nonhuman

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2 For arguments on God as »time-full,« see Oord 2010a.

3 See Wynkoop 1972.

4 See Pinnock 2005.

5 When we speak of the »world« as that which God relates, we mean the cosmos most broadly (i.e. reality) and do not intend to restrict this relation to planet Earth and its residents—although Earth and its inhabitants are certainly part of this broader cosmos. The same is true when we refer to »creation.«

6 See Thomas Jay Oord, ed. *Theologies of Creation: Creatio Ex Nihilo and its New Rivals* (New York: Routledge, 2019).



creatures, but others do not. Some stress the importance of traditional views of Trinity; others seek novel Trinitarian formulations; still others eschew Trinitarian ideas. Some place special emphasis upon the Bible as their primary source for knowledge of God, others emphasize the Bible less.

We see this diversity as a strength. Open and relational theologies avoid rigidity. Most in this tradition try to be humble in their claims about what we can know, even the core views of open and relational theology. But being humble is compatible with working boldly to make better sense of reality by speculating about God, creation, values, causation, relations, ethics, beauty, and more.

Given these general characteristics of open and relational theologies, we turn to two topics on which open and relational theologians differ among themselves: panentheism and panexperientialism.

## 2. God and the World: Panentheism

Many open and relational theists are attracted to panentheism. In fact, prominent supporters of panentheism in the past and present fit comfortably under the open and relational label.<sup>7</sup>

Panentheism's defining insight is that »all is *in* God.« This brief phrase has been interpreted in various ways.<sup>8</sup> Thomas Jay Oord identifies more than a dozen interpretations of what »in« means to self-identifying panentheists. Some versions of panentheism are spatial, for instance, others comparative, some metaphorical, and still others causal. This diversity indicates a lack of clarity, but a measure of imprecision and disagreement are understandable given the subjects in question: God and everything else!<sup>9</sup>

7 Among the many examples that could be listed, we note especially Ian Barbour, Bradley Artson, Joseph Bracken, Philip Clayton, John Cobb, Carol Christ, John Culp, Roland Faber, Matthew Fox, Benedikt Göcke, Neils Gregersen, David Ray Griffin, Charles Hartshorne, Nancy Howell, Catherine Keller, Michael Lodahl, Jay McDaniel, Sallie McFague, Jürgen Moltmann, Thomas Jay Oord, Arthur Peacocke, Wm. Andrew Schwartz, Marjorie Suchocki, Donald Wayne Viney, Keith Ward, Michel Weber, Kirk Wegter-McNelly, Alfred North Whitehead, and Anna Case Winters.

8 For an example of this variety of panentheism meanings, see Clayton and Peacocke 2004. See also Barbour 1990, Cooper 2006, Göcke 2013, Jantzen 1984, Peacocke 1979 and 2004, Peterson 2001, and Ward 2007.

9 See Oord's comments in *In Whom We Live and Move and Have our Being: Panentheistic Reflections on God's Presence in a Scientific World* (Oord 2004). R.T. Mullins also addresses the problem of various definitions in »The Difficulty with Demarcating Panentheism« (Mullins 2016).

We think panentheism, at a minimum, says creation is *in* God's all-embracing, moment-by-moment *experience*. Being in God's experience implies that God is experiential and affected by creaturely others. God is passible. Panentheism differs from theologies of passibility that claim only humans or complex creatures affect God's experience. It says all actual entities affect God's passible experience. Although saying creatures affect God does not require believing deity is personal, most open and relational theists think of God this way.<sup>10</sup>

Saying creation affects God directly opposes the classic views of divine impassibility and immutability. Theologians like Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, and John Calvin thought God was unaffected and unchanging in all respects. To them, this is the essence of divine perfection. Augustine explains it this way, »There is no modification in God, because there is nothing in him that can be changed or lost ... he remains absolutely unchangeable.«<sup>11</sup> Carl F.H. Henry states the view succinctly: »God is perfect and, if imperfect, can only change for the worse.«<sup>12</sup>

The 20th century's leading proponent of panentheism, Charles Hartshorne, believed classical theism was partly right. God's *essence* is perfectly unchanging and unaffected. But a fuller sense of divine perfection adds that God's *experience* perfectly changes because God is affected by creation.<sup>13</sup> Nearly all open and relational theists agree with Hartshorne. Some use the label »dipolar« theism to describe this. Thomas Jay Oord calls it God's »essence-experience binate.«<sup>14</sup>

Open and relational thinkers point to God's steadfast but relational love to illustrate this double perfection. God's love is steadfast in the divine essence, because God consistently loves creation. This never changes. But insofar as love involves giving and receiving, God's loving experience changes in dynamic relationship with creation. God is the »most moved mover,« to use Abraham Heschel and Clark Pinnock's description of divine passibility.<sup>15</sup>

The Psalmist points to both forms of perfection: God »repents according to the abundance of his steadfast love« (Ps. 106:45). To »repent« means to change;

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10 As will be explored more fully below, consciousness and personhood is not a prerequisite for »experience« as outlined by Griffin and other panexperientialists.

11 Augustine 2012.

12 Henry 1982: 304. For another who endorses the argument that God cannot change in any sense, see Charnock 2015.

13 Hartshorne 1984: 2.

14 Many process-oriented theists prefer the »dipolar theism« label. Charles Hartshorne raised the label to prominence. For instance, see his essay »The Dipolar Conception of Deity« (Hartshorne 1967) and Viney 2007.

15 Pinnock: 2001.

»steadfast« means to change not. God's love involves both forms of perfection: perfect flexibility and perfect stability.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. Immanence and Transcendence

Advocates and opponents of pantheism use the labels »immanence« and »transcendence« to portray God and creation. Diversity reigns in the use and meanings of these words, however, so confusions abound.

Most open and relational theologians stress God's nearness. God is with us. When immanence and transcendence are understood spatially, pantheism affirms divine immanence: God is present to all creation. But the spatial meaning of pantheism is controversial. Opponents of pantheism also believe an omnipresent God is near to all. Despite the ambiguity, many advocates of pantheism emphasize this view of immanence as motivating their preference for this view of the God-world relationships.<sup>17</sup>

The spatial distinction sometimes relies upon the mode of God's knowing creation. Theologians who affirm God's impassibility in all respects often say God knows creation by »seeing« it. »The eyes of the Lord are on all creation« (Prov. 15:3). This metaphor implies a distance between the seer and the objects seen. By contrast, open and relational theologians often stress God's »feeling« or »relating with« all creation. God »is not far from each one of us; for in [God] we live and move and have our being« (Acts 17:27-28). Experiential knowledge implies God's near and direct presence.

Theologians sometimes use immanence and transcendence language to describe God's relation to time. If immanence points to God »in« time (pan-temporal) and transcendence to God »outside« time (nontemporal), open and relational thinkers opt for God's experience as immanent. God experiences the unfolding of reality in sequential moments, analogous to how creatures experience it. Open and relational theologians affirm, however, that God transcends creatures by existing everlastingly.

The version of pantheism we embrace also says that God is aware, purposive, responsive, and partly free. These elements support the view God is a person or personal, although many open and relational theologians prefer to say God is »relational.« Unfortunately, »personal« connotes the notion of a localized body (»see that person over there?«) or preferential treatment (»why

<sup>16</sup> See especially Oord 2010: chs. 3-5.

<sup>17</sup> For instance, see Davis and Clayton 2018.

does she get a personal trainer?«). We think God is an incorporeal, omnipresent Spirit who loves all creation without playing favorites.<sup>18</sup>

Open and relational thinkers differ among themselves on whether God necessarily or contingently experiences creation. Those who say God's relations with the world are metaphysically contingent typically believe God once existed alone and decided to create the universe out of nothing (*ex nihilo*). God's relationality with creation is contingent on God choosing to create and be in relation with creaturely others. In this view, primacy is given to God's freedom from creation. Insofar as an act of love is free, some argue, God must be free to love or not love. Many in this group think God essentially relates within Trinity and contingently relates to creation.<sup>19</sup>

Open and relational thinkers who say God necessarily relates with creatures typically believe God has always been creating and relating with creaturely others. They deny God once existed alone and decided to create from absolute nothingness. On this second view, God essentially loves and relates to creation. A few in this group believe God essentially relates both with creation and in Trinity, making God doubly essentially related and loving.<sup>20</sup> God is not free *whether* to love creaturely others, because God's nature requires such love. But God is free to decide *how* to love creaturely others.

Despite these variations, open and relational theists typically agree with Charles Hartshorne when he says, »The primacy of love means that there is no possible value that any being could have simply in and by itself, or simply by its own decision.«<sup>21</sup> In other words, love is necessarily relational, whether between creatures, between God and creatures, and/or within the Triune self.

#### 4. Theocosmocentrism

We find most plausible the form of panentheism that says God necessarily or essentially relates to creation. To distinguish our view from other forms, we call it »theocosmocentrism.« As we define it, this view affirms an epistemological

18 Open and relational theologians in the Latter-day Saints (Mormon) tradition believe God has a localized body. We do not follow this tradition, opting for the more widely embraced view that God is an incorporeal spirit (*pneuma* or *ruach*).

19 For example, see Bracken 2004, and Clayton 2005.

20 Thomas Jay Oord explores doubly necessary divine relations in *The Nature of Love*. (Oord 2010a) For an argument focused on Jesus as the key insight for such double necessity, see Moltmann 1993.

21 Hartshorne, 1984.

commitment that both God (theo) and creation (cosmos) are central to understanding reality.

Most theists deny that anyone can offer an overall adequate explanation of creation without reference to God. Theocosmocentrism agrees. But it adds that one also cannot offer an overall adequate explanation of God without reference to creation. We cannot know God well without God's revelation in the world. While God comes logically first and is not co-equal with creation, both the Creator and creatures play necessary roles in understanding existence. This view plays an important role in how one thinks about issues in the science-and-theology dialogue.

The epistemological commitment of theocosmocentrism entails ontological commitments as well. This view of panentheism says God necessarily loves and relates to creation. Unlike forms of panentheism that say God's love for creation is contingent or arbitrary, theocosmocentrism says God's love for creation is an essential aspect of God's eternal nature. »God is love,« from this perspective, means God essentially loves *ad extra* and not merely *ad intra*. And this is necessarily so everlastingly.

From the perspective of theocosmocentrism, the view that God once existed alone and then created from nothing (*creatio ex nihilo*) has numerous liabilities. We propose a doctrine of initial creation that says God always creates out of that which God previously created. God everlastingly creates. We might call the view *creatio ex creatione sempiternaliter en amore* (God creates out of creation everlastingly in love) if we want the Latin. God is ever Creator, not the at-one-time-started-to-create Creator.

Attributing necessarily divine properties is common (if not logically necessary) for Christian theologians. The idea God everlastingly creates says creating is an essential attribute for God. We resist the label »infinite regress« to describe our view, however. »Infinite« says nothing positive; it simply says »not finite.« We prefer »everlastingly« to describe a beginningless and unending sequence of God's creating activity.<sup>22</sup> »Regress« suggests backward causation, which we reject. We argue time necessarily flows forward, so creating is always progressive.

Rejecting *creatio ex nihilo* allows one to reject the problematic view of divine power implied in it. The God who creates from nothing is ultimately responsible for setting up all cosmological laws of existence, deciding them by fiat. This God could break those laws on occasion to prevent evil. The *ex nihilo* Creator could make something new in the present from nothing instantaneously to stop evil. A God with that kind of power is culpable for failing to prevent the

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22 For further analysis of divine infinity see, Göcke and Tapp (eds.) 2018.

genuine evil we see in our lives, and therefore that God does not consistently love. To put it differently, because genuine evils occur that a loving God with *creatio ex nihilo* power ought to prevent, we reject God has ever or even could create *ex nihilo*. We also have biblical, ecological, conceptual, revelational, and scientific reasons to reject creation from nothing.<sup>23</sup>

Theocentricism rejects traditional views of divine power that say God does or could unilaterally determine creatures or situations. Instead of conceiving of God's power in terms of singlehanded coercion, this form of panentheism conceives of God's power as persuasive, relational, and inviting. C. Robert Mesle describes this nicely: »God's power is the power that enables all of reality to continue its creative advance that makes creatures free, that shares the experience of every creature and is experienced by every creature.«<sup>24</sup>

Thomas Jay Oord argues for an »essential kenosis« view of divine power. This view says God's love is kenotic, in the sense of self-giving and others-empowering. Love so conceived comes logically first in God's nature, prior to the divine will. This means God is essentially self-giving and others empowering, and God could not choose to be otherwise. Out of love, God must therefore give freedom, agency, self-organization, or existence to creatures (depending on their complexity). God *cannot* withdraw, override, or fail to provide creatures or creation these capacities. In sum, God's love makes God incapable of controlling others. Among other advantages, essential kenosis solves the central conceptual question in the problem of evil: God does not have the power to prevent evil singlehandedly.

Theocentricism says God essentially relates to creation. This is meant in two distinct but complementary ways. First, insofar as God's nature is love and love requires relations with others, God necessarily relates with others. These »others« at least include creation if not also relations within Trinity.

Second, theocentricism says existence is constituted by relations. In so far as the structure of existence is relational, God—like all existing beings—is necessarily relational. While the Creator differs from creatures in many ways, the meaning of »relates with« applies to both. Just as there was no absolute beginning to God's creative activity, God has also always been relating to *all*

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23 A brief explanation: the Bible doesn't explicitly reveal *creatio ex nihilo*, it's hard to be motivated to save ecosystems or the planet from collapse if God can create another universe *ex nihilo*, we know of no empirical examples of *ex nihilo* and the ancient phrase seems to *ex nihilo nihil fit* apply, the God with *ex nihilo* power is capable of providing and preserving inerrant revelation, and the amount of dark energy and dark matter in the universe is apparently inconsistent with big bang cosmologies tied to *creatio ex nihilo*.

24 Mesle 1993: 14.

others: past creation, present creation, Godself, and future creation when it comes into being.

## 5. Ontological Distinctions between God and Creation

Critics sometimes accuse forms of panentheism of failing to distinguish God's ontology from creation's.<sup>25</sup> Because of their emphasis upon divine immanence, panentheists are sometimes charged with anthropomorphism. Such criticisms apply to some forms of panentheism but not all. Theocosmocentrism makes careful ontological distinctions between the Creator and creation.

Theocosmocentrism describes a God who transcends creatures in many ways. For instance, it says God is everlasting: God had no beginning and will have no end. By contrast, all creatures, worlds, or universes have beginnings and ends. This form of panentheism says God is omnipresent, in the sense of being present to all creation. By contrast, creatures are localized.<sup>26</sup> Theocosmocentrism says God is transcendent by existing necessarily; creatures exist contingently.<sup>27</sup> It says God necessarily loves, although *how* God loves is freely contingent. Creatures capable of love must choose both whether and how to love. As noted above, theocosmocentrism affirms a form of transcendence most theologies do not: it says God everlastingly creates. Creatures temporarily create as created co-creators in response to God.<sup>28</sup> Like most theologies, this form of panentheism affirms the transcendence of divine omniscience: God knows *all that can be known*.<sup>29</sup> Creatures are not omniscient.

Theocosmocentrism says God is distinct numerically from any creature and creation as a whole. The being of God is *not* the being of creation; the world is *not literally* God's body. This numerical difference does not mean spatial

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25 For instance, see Cooper 2006.

26 While the spatially location of creatures is distinctive, it's important to avoid thinking of this location in terms of atomicity, permanence, or individual independence. Doing so is to commit the fallacy of simple location, as Alfred North Whitehead called it.

27 To clarify, while particular creatures exist contingently, the notion of God as ever Creator implies that some non-particular creatures (abstractly) or another exist necessarily. Like a woman who exists everlastingly but is always married to temporarily existing men—each man being born and dying in succession—God exist everlastingly and creates and relates with contingent creatures—each being temporary.

28 Given that theocosmocentrism redefines God's power as relational (not unilateral), all acts of divine creation can be understood as acts inviting cooperative co-creation.

29 Particular creatures always »know« as particular creatures, always in a particular context from a particular perspective. Therefore, the epistemic limits to creaturely knowledge are tied to the ontological limits of creatures as embodied and spatially-temporally located.

distance, as if God were watching creation from somewhere else. God is distinct from and not the same as creation, but God relates directly with creation. God necessarily exists (*a se*) but necessarily relates to creation. This interdependent and essential relationality of God and the world is a unique marker of theocosmocentric panentheism.

God and creation share some similarities. Without such sharing, absolute apophatism would be true. Such similarities prompted Alfred North Whitehead to say God is »not an exception to the metaphysical principles« of reality.<sup>30</sup> For instance, God and creatures are experiencing beings, and creation is comprised of experiencing entities. God and creatures perceive others, although as we will explain later, this perception is nonsensory. God and creatures both exert causal influence. The formal definition of love applies both to God and creatures capable of love, but there exist differences in degrees, expressions, and modalities.<sup>31</sup>

In sum, theocosmocentrism offers a matrix of claims about God's transcendence and immanence in relation to creation.<sup>32</sup> The content of this matrix distinguishes it from other forms of panentheism. A full explication of this matrix extends beyond the constraints of this essay.

## 6. The Experiencing Aspect of Panexperientialism

Open and relational thinkers believe that at least complex creatures experience God. The most complex sometimes experience God with a measure of cognitive awareness. But open and relational thinkers differ among themselves

30 Whitehead 1978 (1929): 343.

31 Some of the most systematic and comprehensive work on formal definitions of love can be found in Thomas Jay Oord's works, including *Science of Love: The Wisdom of Well-Being* (2004), *The Nature of Love: A Theology* (2010a) and *Defining Love: A Philosophical, Scientific, and Theological Engagement* (2010b). In *Defining Love*, Oord offers a formal definition of love, stating, »To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic response to others (including God), to promote overall well-being« (15).

32 Roland Faber argues for an alternative view of panentheism worth particular note. To capture an often-overlooked nuance in Whitehead's views of the God-word relationship, Faber speaks of the notion of mutual immanence *as* mutual transcendence. He proposes a new term »transpantheism.« As Faber notes, God and the world »exceed one another, and only for that reason, can be seen by Whitehead to be mutual instruments of novelty for one another« (*The Divine Manifold* [2014] and *The Becoming of God* [2017]). Because we think God and creation are ontologically distinct in the sense of their not being identical (pantheism), we affirm that creation exists in different ways than God exists. Consequently, Faber's transpantheism is compatible with theocosmocentrism, and both are forms of panentheism.



on the precise meaning of »experiencing.« They also differ on which creatures are capable of experiencing in general and experiencing God in particular. Some distinguish between humans and other creatures, others between animate and inanimate creation. Some believe experience is an emergent phenomenon arising at some time in the evolutionary process.<sup>33</sup> Others believe all creatures and created entities—from the most complex to the simplest—experience others. We count ourselves in this last group.

The view that *all* existing entities experience is often called »panpsychism.« The label is problematic, however, for several reasons. The »psych« in the panpsychism label might suggest all things—from quarks to rocks to cells to amoeba to elephants to galaxies—have conscious experiences. We reject that view.

The »panpsychism« label also highlights the mental dimensions of existing entities without reference to the physical dimension we think present in all existing entities. One might think panpsychism is a form of idealism saying ideas are the only real things in the universe or that physicality is ultimately an illusion. By contrast, we think actual things possess physical aspects.

We prefer the word David Ray Griffin coined: »panexperientialism.« All existing entities are experiencing entities.<sup>34</sup> Panexperientialism, as we conceive it, says all creatures have both mental and physical dimensions.<sup>35</sup> Thomas Jay Oord calls this duality, »dual-aspect monism.« One of panexperientialism's great strengths is its ability to account for what's true about both physicalism and idealism, while overcoming the shortcomings of the reductionist forms of these metaphysical views.

Key to understanding dual-aspect monism is distinguishing between how the creatures and things of the world are organized internally. Charles Hartshorne referred to some creatures as »compound individuals« and other things as »aggregates« (or aggregational societies).<sup>36</sup> With some exceptions, we might say existing things are organized as animate and inanimate.<sup>37</sup>

Animate creatures have some central entity around which the individuals and groups comprising those creatures organize. In humans, we call this

33 For example, see Clayton 2006.

34 Griffin first coined the term »panexperientialism,« in his article »Panexperientialist Physicalism and the Mind-Body Problem,« (1997).

35 We distinguish between »actual« entities and »real« entities. All actual entities are real, but not all real entities are actual. Real but not actual entities include the color blue, mathematical equations, and the (current) possibility that Andrew Schwartz will one day become president of the United States.

36 Hartshorne 1970: 90.

37 Some things in the world have both animate and inanimate dimensions. Plants are perhaps the best examples of these things. Other entities are real but don't actually exist. Possibilities are good examples of real but not actually existing entities.

central member the mind. But in less complex creatures, the organizing entity might be far less complex. Examples of animate creatures include dolphins, dogs, mice, worms, and cells. But »even macromolecules, ordinary molecules, and atoms might be supposed to be compound individuals,« argues Griffin.<sup>38</sup>

Aggregates, by contrast, are inanimate. They have no central member and are therefore not organized as individuals. Consequently, inanimate objects cannot act or respond as a whole. Examples include buildings, chairs, rocks, plastic, and water. An inanimate object has no »overall experiential unity that allows it to feel and act as an individual,« explains Griffin. Because an inanimate object has no experiential unity, it has no power to respond to its environment as a unity.<sup>39</sup> To put it differently, an inanimate entity cannot act *qua* inanimate entity, but its individual constituents do act.

The distinction between animate individuals and inanimate aggregates proves important for talking appropriately about diverse creatures and entities in creation. We rightly say mice respond to stimuli, for instance, but rocks don't. »Respond« implies a degree of unity, agency, and freedom, although it may be small. Mice have a central member around which much of their being organizes. The rock *as a whole* cannot respond. While the smallest entities that comprise a rock are themselves experiential, they are not organized around a central member. Consequently, humans, dolphins, dogs, mice, worms, cells, and molecules experience their environments and respond. But buildings, chairs, rocks, plastic, and water do not experience their environments and respond.

As implied in our reservations about the label »panpsychism,« we distinguish between mentality and conscious experiences. We use »mentality« in a very broad way, of which conscious mentality is a rare case. Only the most complex creatures enjoy conscious experiences. Simple but animate creatures and inanimate objects do not experience consciousness.<sup>40</sup> The capacity for consciousness emerged in evolutionary history smoothly from less complex species with mentality but not consciousness. We call this »smooth emergence.«<sup>41</sup>

Complex creatures capable of conscious experience represent a minuscule percentage of entities known to exist. Conscious experience represents a minuscule percentage of the experiences of conscious beings. For example,

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38 Griffin 1998: 186.

39 Griffin 1998: 186.

40 We prefer the term »non-conscious« to »sub-conscious,« because sub-conscious implies consciousness in a way that would either require assigning consciousness to entities like rocks, or denying that rocks have experiences. We believe the term non-conscious allows a way to speak of rock experiences without imply rock consciousness.

41 We are grateful to Joanna Leidenhag for suggesting this label in private conversations.

humans are not conscious of the vast majority of their bodily experiences (from basic activities like breath to interactions on a cellular level). But they are conscious of some of their experiences.

## 7. Duality without Dualism

Understandably, many people want to avoid dualistic views that lead to insurmountable conceptual difficulties. To this point in the essay, we've explored ideas that speak of dual components. In this section, we explain that these ideas involve dualities. But they avoid insurmountable conceptual difficulties inherent in dualism. In fact, they overcome those dualisms.

One way to speak of dualities without dualism is to speak of distinctions without absolute separation. A coin, for instance, has both heads and tails. These are distinct but part of the same coin. If they weren't distinct, the coin toss at the Super Bowl's beginning would be useless.

Dualities as distinctions are present throughout reality. God and creation are distinct yet, according to theocosmocentrism, inseparable: duality without dualism. Panexperientialism says the physical and mental dimensions of all existing things are distinct but inseparable: dual-aspect monism.<sup>42</sup>

We addressed earlier problems that arise from an absolute God-world dualism that leads to apophatism. We believe that although God transcends creation in some respects, God and creatures share other respects. We also rejected the God-world dualism that says God's relations with creation are in all senses metaphysically contingent. We said God necessarily or essentially relates with creation. Rejecting *creatio ex nihilo* leads to affirming a necessary God-world duality too. And so on.

Understanding how our minds and bodies relate has been a central concern since at least the seventeenth century. The problem derives from commonsense experience. We naturally believe we have minds that experience the world. And we naturally believe our bodies influence our minds. But how can a purely mental and nonphysical thing—a mind—interact with purely physical and nonmental things—the constituents of our bodies?

Reductive physicalist views say existence is purely material/physical. If true, such physicalism allows no room for explaining our unity of experience, sense of freedom, values, and more. If humans are entirely comprised of physical entities with no mental dimensions, we have no way of explaining

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42 Alfred North Whitehead describes actual entities as »dipolar,« consisting of both a physical and mental pole (Whitehead 1978[1929]: 239).

unified conscious experience.<sup>43</sup> Sometimes referred to as the »hard problem of consciousness,«<sup>44</sup> the challenge for physicalists is explaining the empirical data we know best: our conscious experiences.

Idealist views come in various forms, but some suggest reality consists entirely of mentality and ideas. If true, such idealism allows no room to explain how the apparently physical world outside our minds exerts physical influence. The world explored by science seems comprised of physical things independent of our minds. The challenge for at least some forms of idealism is explaining the physical world as actually physical and not our mental construct or simply ideas.

In response, many affirm a form of mind-body dualism we reject. This mind-body dualism says we have purely mental minds that interact with purely physical bodies and other entities in the world. How two entirely different things can be causally influential—what Jaegwon Kim calls »the combination problem«<sup>45</sup>—remains a mystery. Rene Descartes appealed to the pineal gland; others appeal to the unilateral action of God.

The dual-aspect monism of panexperientialism overcomes Cartesian mind-body dualism. It rejects the view that our minds are purely mental and our bodies and other entities purely physical. Dual-aspect monism affirms the duality of the physical and mental in each existing thing: our minds have both a mental and physical aspect, and every entity, cell, organ, and member of our bodies and other entities in the world have mental and physical aspects.<sup>46</sup>

In so far as dual-aspect monism attributes a physical dimension to the mind, it naturalizes it.<sup>47</sup> In so far as dual-aspect monism attributes a mental dimension to all physical entities, it offers a robust form of non-reductive physicalism to account for mentality. In so far as dual-aspect monism is central to smooth emergence, it provides a conceptual account for the emergence of consciousness from less complex entities with an iota of mentality but not consciousness.

Panexperientialists often call their view »organismic.«<sup>48</sup> This word points to the relational, experiential, and vital aspects of the view. In biology, for

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43 We would extend this to include other (non-human) conscious entities as well, though for dualists like Descartes, only humans are thought to have a »mind/soul.«

44 See Chalmers 1995.

45 Kim 2005.

46 While non-dualism is much more common in Eastern philosophy (e.g. Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta), many Western philosophies have been non-dual in orientation (e.g. most forms of Christian mysticism, Whitehead's philosophy of organism).

47 Griffin 1998: 78.

48 In *Process and Reality*, Alfred North Whitehead refers to his work as a »philosophy of organism.«

instance, organisms are alive and dynamic, always adapting to their surroundings. In social terms, organisms are interdependent parts that make up a whole. In these cases and more, the language of organism connotes a sense of relational becoming, which appeals to open and relational thinkers.

Organismic views stand in contrast to mechanistic ones. Mechanistic views connote substantial, nonrelational, and nonexperiential ontologies. Unfortunately, much contemporary philosophy of science adopts the mechanistic worldview. Despite acting with purpose, feeling, and consciousness, many scientists assume the world and its creatures have no purpose, feeling, or mentality. The dual-aspect monism of panexperientialism overcomes this self-contradiction.

We readily admit that we cannot *prove* in a deductive way the truth of dual-aspect monism or panexperientialism. We cannot deduce from first principles that experience-based and organismic ontologies are truer explanations of existence than substance-based and mechanistic ontologies. There is no proof that every existing individual and entity *is* or is *not* comprised of mentality and physicality. We do find advantages to panexperientialism, however, that combined with theocosmocentrism lead us to prefer it to alternatives.

## 8. Some Advantages to Our Views

Panexperientialism and theocosmocentrism account well for reality. We've already mentioned several advantages above. In this section, we list several more.

***Ecological advantage:*** A growing number of people believe creatures great and small deserve respect and protection. This deserving is based not just on the value these creatures have for human flourishing. A growing number of people believe all creatures have value in and for themselves; they are intrinsically valuable. Recognizing the intrinsic value of creation initiates a fundamental shift from the commodification and exploitation of natural resources.

Panexperientialism provides a conceptual framework for affirming the sense that all creation and all creatures possess intrinsic value. Panexperientialism says not only that all creature's experience, but it also says all experiences are valuable. In so far as an entity is a subject, it feels values. In so far as an entity is an object, it offers values that others feel. Values are thus understood as intrinsic qualities of reality. Those who care about animals and the environment have panexperientialism as a conceptual ally.

***Evolutionary consistency advantage:*** The evolutionary picture of reality says increasingly complex creatures emerged over long periods. This

emergence was gradual; it occurred as the result of mutations, environmental factors, self-causation, and (in the opinion of theists) divine action. A puzzle arises, however: How can experiencing creatures like ourselves (and apparently other complex organisms) gain the ability to experience from nonexperiencing simpler entities? Some call this puzzle the »genetic problem« in evolution.

So-called »strong emergentists« claim that in some mysterious way, the conditions in and among species became complex enough for simple creatures to attain the ability to experience. This claim feels like a wave of the hand, however, much like the compatibilist purporting God fully controls creatures and yet they are free.

Panexperientialism does not rely on such hand waving. It affirms smooth emergentism, because experience—with its dual-aspect monism—is present all the way down to the smallest entities of existence. What emerges, therefore, are increasingly complex expressions of experience, with conscious experiences emerging only in the most complex creatures.

*The mind-body advantage:* It bears repeating that panexperientialism overcomes the Cartesian mind-body problem. Instead of separating mind from body by saying one is entirely mental and the other entirely physical, panexperientialism unites mind and body. It recognizes mentality and physicality as two dimensions of all existing beings. For more details, see our discussion above.

*The other minds advantage:* Philosophers have long realized the importance linked to each person thinking that others have minds something like their own. This »analogy of other minds« is crucial for communication, deep relationship, and moral responsibility. We cannot know with certainty other minds exist, of course, but there are powerful reasons to infer their existence. Our writing this essay is an exercise in such inference!

Panexperientialism allows us to infer the possibility of minds in human and some nonhuman animals. It thereby provides a conceptual framework for overcoming solipsism. And it helps us make far better sense of the activities, habits, motives, and expressions we experience in other creatures. This provides a conceptual basis for believing others are morally responsible in some ways similar to how we consider ourselves. It provides a conceptual basis for political engagement, scientific programs, and so much of what we take for granted in our lives. Reductive physicalist views provide no such basis.

*The freedom and agency advantage:* For a number of reasons, many have come to believe complex creatures—at least humans—have genuine but limited free will. This sense of freedom arises in nearly every human, because they sense it of their own experience. It appears that less complex creatures exert

some measure of agency. Simple entities seem capable of self-organization. Even at the quantum level, a measure of indeterminacy seems present.

Panexperientialism makes sense of these degrees of freedom, agency, self-organization, and indeterminacy. It says no entity, from the smallest to the largest, is entirely controlled by external forces. Because self-causation occurs from the smallest forms, what we typically call full-blown (but limited) freedom is possible through smooth emergence.<sup>49</sup> Panexperientialism provides a conceptual framework to talk about degrees of self-causation among creatures of varying complexity.

*The problem of evil advantage:* The logical problem of evil (*theodicy*) is essentially constituted of three propositions: 1. An all-loving God would want to prevent genuine evil; 2. An all-powerful God would be capable of preventing genuine evil; 3. Genuine evils occur. Given these, one could conclude (a) an all-loving and all-powerful God does not exist, (b) God exists but is not all-loving, (c) God exists but is not all-powerful, or (d) God exists, but genuine evils do not occur.<sup>50</sup>

Among these possibilities, we prefer option »c.« We believe God's power ought to be conceived in terms of uncontrolling love. This reconception retains the view that God is the most powerful being (almighty) without claiming God can singlehandedly control. A God incapable of such control is also not culpable for failing to prevent genuine evil.

The notion that God's love is inherently uncontrolling fits nicely in the panexperiential framework. If degrees of experiential self-causation are present in the most complex creatures to the least and if God cannot control creaturely self-causation, evil can occur that God cannot prevent. Panexperientialism also provides a framework of essential relationality, in which God feels the pain of all creation upon its occurring. God is the fellow sufferer who understands.<sup>51</sup> An open and relational theist of the theocosmocentrist variety

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49 We contend that freedom should always be understood as limited. At the very least, freedom is limited by space-time, history, and context. In so far as all agency is exerted by a particular physical entity in a particular place and time, in a particular historical, social, political context, the available possibilities that can be actualized at any given moment are limited. Hence, while freedom itself isn't necessarily constrained, the possibilities that can be freely actualized at any given moment are limited.

50 One might include the claim of mystery in addition to these four, but that isn't a solution to this problem.

51 Alfred North Whitehead famously called God the »fellow sufferer who understands« (Whitehead 1978 [1929]: 351).

who adopts a panexperientialist perspective can affirm that all-loving God feels all pain but is not culpable for failing to prevent any of it.

*The divine action advantage:* Joining the dual-aspect monism of panexperientialism with the God-world relationship portrayed by theocosmocentrism offers a conceptual framework for identifying key features of divine action. Panexperientialism says God and all creatures are experiential. God and all creatures exhibit dual-aspect monism.

As a universal spirit, God has both a mental and physical aspect analogous to creaturely mental and physical aspects. The divine Spirit is similar to creaturely minds, in so far as both are not perceptible by our five senses but exert causal influence and receive causal influence. But Spirit differs from creaturely minds by being omnipresent, everlasting, and so on.

Just as our experiences are deeply shaped by the experiences of our bodies (at various levels), so too God's experiences are deeply shaped by creation. Just as the mind, with its physical and mental aspects, exerts influence on the body whose members also have physical and mental aspects, so the God with physical and spiritual aspects exerts influence on creation and creatures with physical and spiritual aspects.

Some call what we're describing the »World-Soul« analogy, »the world as God's body,« »God as the Mind of the Universe,« or »proprioception.«<sup>52</sup> Charles Hartshorne, for instance, says God as the world's soul is analogous to the human mind's relation to the body. »Mind-body relation is not a one-to-one relation but a one-to-many relation,« says Hartshorne. »The body is a *society* of billions of cells, each a highly organized society of molecules and particles or wavicles. At a given moment, each of us, as a conscious individual, is a single reality; but our body is no such single reality.« Hartshorne then draws the analogy: »Similarly, God's cosmic body is a society of individuals, not a single individual.«<sup>53</sup> Or as Dan Dombrowski puts it, »It makes sense to say both that the cosmos is ensouled and that God is embodied.«<sup>54</sup>

The »world is God's body« has important disanalogies, however. It does not mean the world is *identical* to God, which is pantheism. Saying God is the soul or mind of the universe—from the dual-aspect monism perspective—does not embrace Cartesian dualism, which says God is a wholly mental substance and the world comprised of wholly physical substances. Nor does it mean God

52 Among the many who think of the world as God's body, see McFague 2001. On proprioception, see Forrest 2016.

53 Hartshorne 1984: 59.

54 Dombrowski 1996: 86.



as mind controls the world.<sup>55</sup> And so on. Saying the world is God's body or God is the soul of the universe works if one assumes the truth of dual-aspect monism, panexperientialism, and theocosmocentrism.

*The love advantage:* As the authors of this essay, we are especially concerned with promoting overall well-being. In other words, we aim to love. We think adopting panexperientialism and theocosmocentrism helps us contribute to the common good. This relational worldview provides a metaphysical, epistemological, and ethical framework for living lives of love.

We are more likely to treat others and ourselves well, for instance, if we think we all have value and can experience value. We are more motivated to love God if we think our actions affect God's well-being. We are more likely to think it possible to »imitate God, as beloved children, and live lives of love« if we think God's being and our being have some similarities. We have no grounds for blaming God for evil, for instance, if a loving God cannot prevent evil single-handedly. We can believe our lives and loves are ultimately significant if God always loves and cannot control us or creation. And so on.

## 9. Conclusion

One doesn't have to adopt theocosmocentrism or panexperientialism to be an open and relational theologian. However, we believe these views are especially congenial to the open and relational perspective. Both provide a foundation for understanding God and the world in a deeply relational way. We offer these ideas in the hope that some would find them valuable.

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55 Anna Case-Winters expresses this concern in Winters 1995: 249-267.

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# A Panpsychist Panentheistic Incarnational Model of the Eucharist

*James M. Arcadi*

## 1. Introduction

According to the guidance of the seven Ecumenical Councils as explications of the Christian Scriptures, Christianity teaches not only that there is a God, but that this God is triune and that one member of this Trinity has become incarnate in the person of Jesus Christ. Traditional explications of this teaching show Christ as being both fully God and fully human, while remaining only one person. That is, whereas most everything else in the cosmos only has one nature, Christ is unique among entities in having two natures—divinity and humanity. Hence, Christ is properly named »Emmanuel,« »God with us.« When one turns to Christian practice to find those instances wherein humanity's encounter with God is most profound, the Eucharist serves as the pinnacle of Christian worship and—or, perhaps, because of—a direct encounter with God. This is because the majority opinion teaching of the Christian tradition has it that in some fashion Christ—the God-human—becomes so related to the mundane elements of bread and wine, that the predications »This is the body of Christ« or »This is the blood of Christ« become warranted. Hence, the tradition teaches an increasing concretizing of God's being with humanity: in the cosmos, in Christ, and in the Eucharist.

What is not laid out explicitly in the Christian Scriptures or the pronouncements of the Councils, are specific statements regarding the ontology of the cosmos. The Christian theologian, then, is free to pursue fine-grained expositions of ontology that can be said to fall within the more thick-grained determinations of these authoritative sources.<sup>1</sup> Hence, well-intentioned Christians have pursued such radically distinct fundamental ontologies as idealism, dualism, and materialism as possible ideologies within which to make sense of the Scriptural and Conciliar material. This essay proposes a route for explicating a model of the Eucharist—and its Christological infrastructure—within a panpsychist panentheistic ontological framework. Hence, the model offered here

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<sup>1</sup> On the distinction and relation of fine-grained and thick-grained explanations in theology, see Arcadi 2018a.

is a hypothesized conclusion of the conjunction of numerous conceptual data points (all of which will receive further elaboration anon), including:

- 1) The Christological determinations of the seven Ecumenical Councils.<sup>2</sup>
- 2) A Corporeal Mode model of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.<sup>3</sup>
- 3) Panentheism.
- 4) Panpsychism.

In order to explicate this model of the Eucharist, each of the aforementioned data points must be laid out and explained. Since a description of the Eucharist is the *telos* of this essay, I will first set out some key distinctions and desiderata within the Eucharistic sphere of inquiry. Because the model of the Eucharist I favor utilizes the metaphysical infrastructure of Conciliar Christology, I will in the section following discuss these conceptual guidelines and show how they are brought to bear on the Eucharist. Subsequently, I will briefly discuss both panpsychism and panentheism. This will give rise to a discussion of how the Incarnation may be understood within a panpsychist and panentheistic framework. Finally, I bring all the data points to bear on the Eucharist in order to construct a panpsychist panentheistic incarnational model of the Eucharist.

## 2. Preliminary Framework

### 2.1 *The Eucharist*

According to the accounts of Christ's life from the Synoptic Gospels, Paul's letter to the Corinthians, and in light of the liturgical traditions of broadly catholic Christianity, on the night before he was handed over to suffering and death, Jesus Christ took bread, blessed it, gave it to those with him, and said, »Take, eat, this is my body.« Likewise, Christ took some wine, similarly blessed it, similarly gave it, and similarly said, »Drink this all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant.«<sup>4</sup> How properly to understand these locutions, however, has been the subject of no small amount of controversy over the course of the history of Christian theological reflection.

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2 What has been called in the recent analytic theological literature, »Conciliar Christology.« See Pawl, 2016.

3 This terminology will be explicated further on and is derived from Arcadi 2016a: 402-412. For the record, my most thorough examination of the Eucharist comes in Arcadi 2018a. For a discussion of models of the Eucharist within an idealist ontological framework—and hence, support for the claim that one may realize at least one aspect of the traditional teaching of Christian theology within different ontological frameworks—see Arcadi 2016b.

4 The most relevant Scriptural pericopes are: Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:17-20, I Corinthians 11:23-26.

As I see it, the traditional explanations of these words fall into three main families. First, we might designate those interpretations that join the bread and the wine in a metaphysically-robust sense to the body and blood of Christ. These are, as I call them Corporeal Mode explications of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. This is the majority opinion family of views in the tradition and the genus under which my specific model will fall, hence further discussion of this family will come further on.<sup>5</sup> Another family of views on the relation between Christ and the elements of bread and wine is the Pneumatic Mode.<sup>6</sup> This family emphasizes a spiritual connection between either Christ and the elements or Christ and the recipient by means of the elements. Finally, a third family of views I refer to as the No Non Normal Mode.<sup>7</sup> This mode states that there is no more significant connection between Christ and the elements or Christ and the recipient of the elements by means of the elements than is found in any other locale in the cosmos. Perhaps one or more of these modes would fit more or less easily within a panpsychist panentheistic framework, but due to its popularity in the tradition, this essay pursues a species of a Corporeal Mode explication of Christ's presence in the Eucharist.

The Corporeal Mode family of views can be further subdivided into three main descendants: transubstantiation, consubstantiation, and impanation. The former can be defined as holding to the twin beliefs that after the consecration of the bread and the wine, the consecrated object is (a) no longer bread or wine, yet is (b) the body or blood of Christ, respectively. These metaphysical claims, however, obtain with no corollary empirical change in the consecrated objects. The objects remain empirically the same prior and subsequent to the consecration of these elements. What does change is the underlying reality of the objects. The proponent of consubstantiation—found, not by that name, in many Lutheran quarters—holds (b) with the transubstantiation theorist, but does not endorse (a). That is, the consubstantiation theorist holds that the body and blood of Christ comes to be located »in, with, and under«<sup>8</sup> the bread and the wine. Yet in addition to retaining all their empirical qualities, the

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5 Specific communions that tend, either implicitly or explicitly, to endorse proposals in this family are the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and some Anglican traditions.

6 Representative examples from the tradition of views falling in this family are the Reformed theological descendants of John Calvin, some Anglicans, and Methodist theological descendants of John Wesley. It is a point of dispute in the history of interpretation, but I would place views inspired by the 20th century Roman Catholic theologian Edward Schillebeeckx in this latter category as well. For discussion, see Arcadi 2016a and Arcadi 2018b.

7 This view is largely found among the theological descendants of Ulrich Zwingli including—but not limited to—some Reformed, Baptist, Pentecostal, and Free Church traditions.

8 As the traditional Lutheran quip goes.

consecrated objects remain bread and wine. Finally, like consubstantiation, the impanation theorist holds to (b) but not (a). However, what differentiates impanation from consubstantiation is the desire of the proponent of impanation to offer an account of the union between the bread and the body of Christ—or the wine and the blood of Christ—in a manner patterned after the Incarnation. It is my contention here—as elsewhere—that impanation is to be preferred as most adequately satisfying the Scriptural, liturgical, linguistic, metaphysical, and theological desiderata pertaining to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.<sup>9</sup>

Although transubstantiation, consubstantiation, and impanation are all Corporeal Mode cousins, there are subtle differences between them. What is desired by Scripture and the liturgy is a metaphysical state of affairs such that it is apt to say of the consecrated bread, »This is the body of Christ.«<sup>10</sup> Each Corporeal Mode view attempts to offer such a metaphysical state of affairs. The transubstantiation theorist holds that the best way to secure the aptness of this predication is to hold that the post-consecration consecrated object is no longer bread. Oftentimes, in the Roman Catholic tradition this phenomenon is explicated with recourse to an Aristotelian substance ontology. However, this is not a necessary feature of the official Roman Catholic position. What is necessary for the Roman Catholic is the denial of the continued presence and existence of the bread, post-consecration.

My purpose in this essay is not to show the necessary falsity of non-impanation views of the Eucharist. Hence, I briefly just gesture in the direction of a response to the transubstantiation model. I do so by raising the question of: to what does »this« in the sentence »this is the body of Christ« refer? It is not the object empirically and phenomenally present to potential recipients, for that is merely the empirical features of bread, which the object no longer is. If the indexical refers to the body of Christ, we might reasonably ask about just where this body is? Aristotelian substance ontology has been deployed to argue that while the accidents of the bread remain where and what they always are, the substance of the bread changes to become the substance of the body of Christ. But then one is forced to accept the severing of the relation between substance and accident that is the bedrock of that ontology. Absent this modification to this ontology, we are left wondering just what »this« is.<sup>11</sup>

9 This is, of course, absent the constraints of the official teaching of the Roman Catholic magisterium.

10 I will here focus on the bread and the body of Christ; a similar analysis applies, *mutatis mutandis*, for the wine and the blood of Christ.

11 Of course, modifying Aristotelian substance ontology is just what the medieval schoolmen did. See McCord Adams 2010. Again, my purpose is not to show the necessary falsity



A similar linguistic—and then by extension metaphysical—query can be raised in regard to the consubstantiation theory. The theorist in this camp typically holds that the body of Christ comes along with the consecrated bread to be consumed by the recipient. What is oftentimes lacking in this sphere of explanation is a robust account of the union between the consecrated object and the body of Christ. »With-ness,« if it even meets the vagueness objection, does not seem to be any more intimate a relation than co-location. While this view can provide for the reality of the empirical features of bread in the consecrated object—because it is still indeed bread—it does not seem as though this view can countenance the predication that this object, »this,« is the body of Christ. Rather, on this construal, »this« refers to some imperceptible entity co-located with the bread. Yet, the bread is what draws the attention of the recipients and the bread is that which the minister holds and says, »*this* is the body of Christ.« More specifically speaking, if this metaphysical situation were apt, the minister should refer to the bread and say, »the body of Christ is around here.« But this, of course, is not what ministers following the catholic liturgies, following the words of Scripture, in fact say.

By contrast, impanation has the virtues of both countenancing a natural interpretation of the indexical and reusing a metaphysical infrastructure with the weight of Ecumenical Councils behind it. According to the traditional teaching regarding the Incarnation, the faithful are to say both that Jesus Christ »is God« and that he »is a human being,« while remaining one person. Hence, unity and duality are at the heart of the traditional teaching; Christ is unified in personhood, but dual in natures. In like manner, the impanation theorist holds that post-consecration the consecrated object is both bread and the body of Christ, yet remains unified by being only one object. In the Incarnation, the notion of the hypostatic union is deployed to describe the union between the divine nature and an instance of human nature. In a similar manner in impanation, the notion of a sacramental union is deployed to describe the union relation between the bread and the body of Christ. Hence, the impanation theorist holds that the metaphysical state of affairs undergirding the predication of the bread that »this is the body of Christ,« is parallel to the metaphysical state of affairs undergirding the predication of Jesus Christ that »this is God.« As, however, should be clear by this paragraph, since impanation is based on a traditional explication of the Incarnation, we must first offer an examination of that doctrine.

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of non-impanation views, but rather to show that there are more attractive features to this view in just those places where others are less attractive.

## 2.2 *The Incarnation*

Anyone who reads the Christian Scriptures with the grain of the determinations of the seven Ecumenical Councils will see that Christians think that Jesus Christ is both God and a human being. For instance, the, so-called, ›Definition‹ of Chalcedon states:

Jesus Christ is one and the same Son, the Same perfect in Godhead, the Same perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, the Same [consisting] of a rational soul and a body; homoousious with the Father as to his Godhead, and the Same homoousious with us as to his manhood ... made known in two natures [which exist] without confusion, without change, without division, without separation ... concurring into one Person and one hypostasis—not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son ... the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>12</sup>

This statement, among others in Scripture and the proceedings of the Councils, gives rise to the two-natures doctrine—that one member of the Trinity is incarnate as Jesus Christ, being one person with two natures. How to understand this doctrine, and defend the logical coherence of it, has been the focus of much recent work in analytic theology.

In tracing the conceptual frameworks in the analytic literature's discussions of the two-natures doctrine, we can see a number of streams of explication. For instance, Jonathan Hill delineates a first branching of the Christological tree between those who hold to *transformationalist* models of the Incarnation from those who hold to *relational* models of the Incarnation. For the transformationalist, when the Christian tradition says that the second person of the Trinity became human, »to become human means being *transformed into a human* ... just as a caterpillar becomes a butterfly by being transformed into one.«<sup>13</sup> However, one worry that might be raised to this explanation is that, on the analogy of a butterfly, once the caterpillar is transformed into a butterfly it ceases to be a caterpillar. If the second person of the Trinity were transformed into a human and ceased to be divine, then we would no longer have a two-natures doctrine of the Incarnation, as Conciliar Christology seems to require. Moreover, following the theo-logic of panentheism, we might see the transformationalist view as not being apt. On panentheism, much of God remains beyond or outside the cosmos, but then by application to the Incarnation, in the Incarnation we would want some or much of God to remain beyond or

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<sup>12</sup> Coakley 2002: 143.

<sup>13</sup> Hill 2011: 8.

outside the human nature in Christ.<sup>14</sup> Hence, the two-natures proponent may go looking for other models to describe the Incarnation.

A second family of views on the Incarnation in the recent analytic literature are called *relational* views. These views typically hold that the second person of the Trinity—in the Incarnation—comes to be related in a particularly intimate way with a concrete particular that is an instance of human nature. Hence, on this view, Christ is composed of two concrete natures, the divine nature and an instance of human nature. Thus, this view is also termed »concrete-compositionalism.« Given the panentheistic framework to be sketched, we must specify that this view is relational by God in Christ being more intimately related to a segment of the cosmos than is God's normal *modus operandi*. The panentheist is always going to think that God is related to the cosmos in a particularly intimate way (more on this anon). What occurs in the Incarnation, then, must be either of a different kind or different intensity of relation than is God's relation to other parts of the cosmos. Yet, just what this relation is and how it might differ from God's general relation to the cosmos remains a bit obscure.

There is a potential mediating position between transformationalist and relationalist views, even as it might be characterized as one or other of the two. This view can be referred to as an »*additionalist*« perspective.<sup>15</sup> The idea here being that the second person of the Trinity merely »adds on« whatever necessary and sufficient features for being human are requisite. In this manner, the second person need not transform into a human and thus cease to be divine. Nor, however, does one need to hold that the second person becomes related to something somehow somewhat independent of the second person. Rather, whatever it is to be a human can be added on to the second person of the Trinity such that this person can properly said to be both divine and human. As will be seen further on, this is the most promising route of explication for Conciliar Christology within a panpsychist framework.

### 2.3 *Panentheism*

I turn now from Christology to panentheism. Panentheism is a theory about the nature of God and God's relation to the cosmos. However, there does not seem to be a consensus in the tradition or the contemporary literature as to

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14 The notion of the second person of the Trinity extending beyond the human nature sometimes falls under the doctrinal heading of the (somewhat anachronistically termed) *extra Calvinisticum*. For a helpful historical theological examination of this doctrine, see McGinnis 2014.

15 See discussion in Arcadi 2018c.

just how to characterize God or the God-cosmos relation.<sup>16</sup> Hence, I want to here offer a brief *apologia* for a deflationary account of pantheism. A deflationary thesis about pantheism simply says that God exists, the cosmos exists, and the relation between God and the cosmos is sufficiently intimate to warrant the attribution of »in« of the cosmos to God. The pantheist can account for intimacy in this relation by a diversity of means: ontological, mereological, causal, axiological, teleological, or others. What I am keen to show, however, is that although how one characterizes the intimacy of this relation has bearing on how one conceives of the nature of God, this bearing need not be taken as necessity. And thus a number of very disparate views on the nature of God and God's attributes can be held in conjunction with the deflationary pantheistic thesis.

For instance, deflationary pantheism can allow for such disparate conceptualizations as either the strong divine immutability of classical theism or the strong divine mutability of process theism, and just about everything in between. The distinction turns not necessarily on the nature of God, but on the nature of the cosmos. If the deflationary pantheistic thesis is granted, and one has a corollary commitment to, say, four-dimensional eternalism, one can still seemingly preserve strong divine immutability. This picture would have it that there exists God and in God is a four-dimensional whole that presently—from the divine present—contains all that there was, is, and will be, from our phenomenal experience. This can be as strongly a hard determinism, with a related strong divine immutability, as one likes. Likewise, on the contrary, one can lodge a presentist view of time within the deflationary pantheistic thesis and articulate a divine that is as changing, shifting, and mutable as the process theist likes. To determine one extreme or the other, or something in between, is not settled by accepting or demurring from pantheism.

A properly Christian appropriation of the pantheistic model of God's relation to the cosmos must remain faithful to the credal affirmations regarding the Trinity and the Incarnation, as well as the creaturely dependence relation the cosmos has on God as denoted in the first clause of the Creed. A project—such as this present study—that attempts to maintain fidelity to the Christological teachings of the Ecumenical Councils would be inconsistent if it did not maintain fidelity to the non-Christological teachings of those Councils as well. However, assenting to the creaturely status of the creation, does not necessarily rule pantheism out from the start. Rather one can maintain this notion with an understanding of pantheism as well. Göcke characterizes

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16 See especially the helpful discussion in Mullins 2016 and Göcke 2012.

panentheism in this way: »Although there is a distinction between God, as the ultimate ground of reality and reality itself, a distinction that is epistemologically needed for ultimate explanation, there cannot be a substantial ontological distinction between them.«<sup>17</sup> The conjunction of a thesis about God's status as creator and the non-substantial ontological distinction between creation and creator do not need to be seen as entailing a contradiction. Rather, one can hold that the creation was brought into being out of God's own being.

This conception might seem to push against the traditional Christian notion of *creatio ex nihilo*. However, this need not be the case. This standard phrase can easily be interpreted to hold that God created out of nothing distinct from Godself, as if there were some entity or entities co-eternal with God from which God fashioned the creation.<sup>18</sup> One does not need to hold that creation out of nothing entails that »nothing« is some space or area outside of God from whence God created the cosmos. Rather, the concern in this line of inquiry has to do more with God's aseity than the process of creation. The Christian panentheist can maintain God's aseity just as firmly as the classical theist, if she so wished. And hence she can similarly endorse the doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*—which is ordered to this end—just as much as the classical theist; again, if she so wished.

One plausible mode for explicating the intimacy of the relation between God and the cosmos—an intimacy sufficient for holding the cosmos to be »in« God—is a causal mode. God is in the cosmos in that God is fundamentally and continually causing the cosmos whose existence is necessarily dependent on this divine causal activity. Drawing on my action model of God's omnipresence, Georg Gasser makes the causal relation between God and the cosmos one of the central planks in his account of panentheism.<sup>19</sup> According to Gasser, a traditional way of explicating God's omnipresence has been to see God's presence in a threefold manner: by God's knowledge of all things, by God's providential conservation of all things, and by God's being the author of the nature and existence of all things.<sup>20</sup> My account of omnipresence holds that the second manner, God's causal activity, is all that is requisite to get an explanation of omnipresence off the ground. For Gasser, panentheism is such that, »All of creation is within the sphere of God's creative, sustaining and caring agency or it

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17 Göcke 2017: 6.

18 Here the recent discussion around the relation between God and abstract objects is paramount. See, for instance, Craig 2016.

19 Gasser 2019: 43-62 and Arcadi 2017.

20 Gasser 2019: 57.

is not at all.«<sup>21</sup> Being »within the sphere of,« for Gasser, is sufficient to capture the »in« of panentheism. This causal account is but one among many ways of characterizing deflationary panentheism, but it will be particularly useful for my explication of the Incarnation and the Eucharist within a panentheistic framework. However, before we turn to the task of conjoining panentheism, the Incarnation, and the Eucharist, I have next to discuss the final data point of this hypothesis, panpsychism.

#### 2.4 *Panpsychism*

Similar to panentheism, if one asks ten philosophers of mind about the nature of panpsychism, one will likely get a dozen different answers. Hence, all I can do here is to adopt a version of panpsychism that seems to have particular potential for my Eucharistic aims. The fundamental tenet of this ideology is that each and every object in the cosmos is composed or constituted by mentality (or proto-mentality) and physicality. Call this a monism, call this dualism all the way down, call this something else, but the basic idea is that mentality is ubiquitous in the cosmos. The basic motive for panpsychism is that it certainly seems as though we humans have phenomenal consciousness that is not reducible to purely physical entities. However, a pure or simple dualism is fraught with many issues. Hence, if like comes from like, then this consciousness or mentality or proto-mentality must be a part of the whole cosmos since it is part of at least one part of the cosmos, namely humans.

I take it that the microexperiences of less complex subjects can fuse together into more complex objects with governing macroexperiences. In an analogous manner as we think of the human body as a complex system of nerves, bones, blood, and flesh, the human mind (related to these bodily parts) arises as a macroexperiencer out of the microexperiences of its constitutive parts. This entails, however, that one can find consciousness or proto-consciousness at all manner of varying levels of complexity. Whether objects vastly less complex than animals like rocks, bread, or wine actually have consciousness is up for interpretation and debate, but the determination of this discussion is not relevant for my purposes. All that is needed is that mundane objects have at least some level of mentality or proto-mentality that can be incorporated into larger complexes that do clearly have macroexperiences.

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21 Gasser 2019: 60.

### 3. Conjunction of the Preceding

In what follows I draw together the various conceptual strands relating to panpsychism, panentheism, Christology, and the Eucharist.

#### 3.1 *Panpsychist Panentheism*

This volume in its entirety is about just this topic of this section, the conjunction of panpsychism and panentheism. Accordingly, I will not offer an exhaustive discussion of the implications of this conceptual marriage outside what is specifically required for the Eucharistic task at hand. As there are multiple ways to construe panpsychism and there are multiple ways to construe panentheism, so too are there multiple ways to construe a panpsychist panentheism. I suggest but one way here which, *prima facie*, fits the other conceptual data points of the current essay.

When we discuss panentheism, we are inquiring into how the cosmos is in God. When we fuse this view to panpsychism, we begin to inquire how God is in the cosmos. As indicated above, one plausible way to construe panentheism is through the continuous and fundamental causal activity of God at every location in the cosmos. This would entail that God is causally active on each and every object in the cosmos, no matter how simple or complex, small or large. I propose that at least one action God performs on the cosmos is to push simple objects into configurations of greater complexity. That is, God acts teleologically on the cosmos to push (or pull) a trajectory of ever-increasing complexity. One can easily overlay this story onto an evolutionary narrative whereby the history of the cosmos includes the emergence of ever increasingly complex animals and systems, presently culminating in humans as the most systematically complex entities in the cosmos (so far as we know). On this view, everything is in God because God is in everything causally pushing (or, one might say, teleologically pulling) the fundamental mentality or proto-mentality of all objects toward greater complexity.

However, given the theism of the Ecumenical Councils, since God is the fundamental entity, and God Godself is a mental entity, it might seem as though it would be God's mentality that is at the core of every mental-physical object. How can a panpsychist panentheism avoid the entailment that there is only God's mentality in the cosmos and the presence of non-divine mentality is merely an illusion?<sup>22</sup> What blocks panpsychist panentheism from collapsing into pantheism? I propose that one way to block this entailment is to hold that in order for a system to be identified with an agent, that agent itself must

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22 For one response to this question, see, in this volume, Göcke 2020.

identify with the system and take ownership of the system as its own. Systems of higher complexity—say, humans—are capable of incorporating systems of lesser complexity into their system. This routinely happens when humans use tools and also occurs in such mundane instances as wearing clothes, eating breakfast, and brushing one's teeth. The incorporation of other objects into one's own human system occurs by means of a causal connection between the agent and the object. When the object is in use by the agent, the object becomes part of the agent's system and—even if for a time—is a constitutive component of a system more complex than itself.

A sycamore tree in my yard has, on the panpsychist proposal, mentality or proto-mentality. If, however, I were to take a branch from the tree, attach it to my body and utilize it as another leg, that branch would be incorporated into my body. As I had taken ownership of the branch, I could then identify it as part of me and it would indeed become part of my psycho-physical system. In my causal connection to the branch, taking ownership of and identifying with the branch, it would be proper to say of the branch that it is part of me, and that it is me. Conversely, with the cosmos and God, although God is continually acting on each and every object in the cosmos, supplying it with existence, mentality, and pushing it toward greater complexity, God does not identify with or take ownership of each and every object. But were God to do so, then that object would indeed become God. Since God is the source of each and every object in the cosmos, so I propose, God reserves the prerogative to intensify God's causal union with each and every object, and take the requisite kind of ownership needed for God to identify Godself—at least in part—with the newly owned object. On this hypothesis, God is continually acting on the created realm. God does this (a) in order to sustain it in existence, (b) to provide the mental component that is paired with the physical as is necessary in the panpsychic worldview, and (c) to push the creation »upwards« into greater complexities of macroexperience, culminating in human beings. When fusing this view with traditional Christology, we arrive at one particular human being on whom this activity reached a unique height, the height of Incarnation.

### 3.2 *Panpsychist Panentheistic Christology*

Traditional Christology has it that the phenomenal experience had by Christ was and is had by God Godself. In fact, this statement is a tautology for the one who accepts Conciliar Christology. A panpsychist panentheism opens up the conceptual space to show how God could take on the consciousness of any component of the cosmos. There is no requirement that God take on the experiences—micro or macro—as God's own of the cosmos. But there is no prohibition either. God is free to act as much or as little as God likes in any



given situation. Because of the radical dependence relation of the creation on the creator, God could simply cease acting on some segment or other of the cosmos and it would cease to exist. However, conversely, God is able to intensify God's actions as well. And this intensity could reach the point at which God even took on the phenomenal experiences of some complex segment of the cosmos as God's own. This, we might say, would be a divine incarnation. And if it were to occur by way of a complex segment of the cosmos that meets the necessary and sufficient conditions for being human, this would be an divine-human incarnation. When we say that a divine-human incarnation has in fact occurred in the person of Jesus Christ, then we have finally arrived at the Incarnation of Christian teaching.

Within the contemporary analytic literature on Christology, this would be an additionalist model of the Incarnation. God could add on any segment of the cosmos as God likes in this incarnational manner. God does not need to transform into some segment of the cosmos, but nor does it need to be said that God merely becomes related to some segment of the cosmos. Rather, the additionalist conception of Christology has it that God adds on the phenomenal perspective of the human nature of Christ. Moreover, the additionalist Christological motif might in some way even parallel how the panentheist tends to think of the relation between God and the cosmos. We might say that God adds on the cosmos to Godself, within Godself. Like the second person of the Trinity additionally becomes human, so too at creation does God additionally include the cosmos. Consequently, we have a harmonious conceptual framework for thinking of both the divine-cosmos relationship and the relationship between the divine and human natures in Christ.

Here, then, is a panpsychist-panentheistic just-so story of the Incarnation: God, from Godself, creates the cosmos and continually exercises causal power on each and every object in the cosmos. Each and every object in the cosmos is a mental/physical hybrid, which is ontologically dependent on the causal power supplied to it by God. The microexperiences of the most simple objects can join together to form macroexperiences when the simple objects are joined up into a system of greater complexity. Such is, then, the emergence of human consciousness as a complex system. As the ontologically highest entity in which the cosmos is, God has the fundamental right to take ownership of each and every object and identify its phenomenal experiences as God's own. God does this by intensifying God's causal power exercised at the location of an object. God is present by causal power, and hence God can be more present by causal power. If God were to intensify God's causal power at a location to the point of taking ownership of the object at that location, that object would become God. This could happen with as simple or as complex a system

as God likes. This has occurred in the person of Jesus Christ. God has added on the complex human system with its attendant macroexperiences that is the human nature born of the Virgin Mary. That object, the human nature born of the Virgin, remains a human nature despite its incorporation into the divine in a unique way. But the incorporation that is Incarnation also makes it such that it is proper to point to Jesus Christ and say, »This is God« in a manner inapt for other objects in the cosmos. Hence, it could be said, the panentheistic God has become incarnate in the panpsychist complex that is the human nature of Jesus Christ. God added on the human nature of Christ. God was always in us, as we are always in God, but in the Incarnation God became *with* us, as God became one of us, in Emmanuel.

### 3.3 *A Panpsychist Panentheistic Incarnational Model of the Eucharist*

With this brief account of the Incarnation within a panpsychist panentheism in place, we can finally apply all the preceding data points to the Eucharist. In the Eucharist, God is not just in us in a general causal sense; God is with us in a specific sense in the consecrated bread and wine. As indicated previously, I find the impanation view the most satisfying for a variety of reasons, not the least of which is the manner it comports with incarnational thinking. This is what will be expounded here. However, there are at least two routes by which one might apply the preceding to the issue of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Elsewhere I have called versions of these two routes »Hypostatic Impanation« or »Type-H Impanation« and »Sacramental Impanation« or »Type-S Impanation.«<sup>23</sup> The distinction between these two views turns on which aspect of the incarnate Christ the bread and wine are related. That is, Eucharistic views like impanation attempt to characterize a relation that brings about the aptness of the statement, »This is the body of Christ.« One side of the relation is clearly the consecrated elements. The other relatum is different for Type-H or Type-S Impanation. For Type-H, the second relatum is the divine second person of the Trinity; hence, here the relation between the elements and the second person of the Trinity circumvents the human nature of Christ. For Type-S, the second relatum is the human body of Christ; hence, here there is a chain—of sorts—from the divine second person of the Trinity through the human nature of Christ to the consecrated elements. I will next describe each view in kind and then offer a brief assessment.

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23 See Arcadi 2018a and 2015: 75-90.

### Type H Impanation

Above I sketched the notion that God has the ultimate prerogative to take ownership of any segment of the cosmos and identify it as God's own self. God does not do this, for this preserves the distinction of (most) of the cosmos (except Christ) from Godself and thus does not entail pantheism. Yet, this is just what the second person of the Trinity does in the Incarnation. God intensifies God's causal activity at the location of the human nature of Jesus Christ, takes ownership of it, and identifies with it such that it warrants the predication, »This is God« when spoken of Christ.

The same situation could apply to the consecrated bread and wine and this is just what Type-H avers occurs in the Eucharist. God intensifies God's causal activity at the location of the bread and wine, takes ownership of it, and identifies with these objects. God would then take ownership of the phenomenal perspective offered by these objects, and this perspective would become God's perspective. This might be termed another incarnation of God in another location in the cosmos. The structure and relative complexity (or relative simplicity) of the bread and wine would dictate what God could do as the bread and wine. A human body, like what God adds on in the Incarnation, is a complex system that would allow God to walk, talk, eat, sleep, and do all manner of human activities as a human being. Bread and wine have no such complexity, nor potential actions. Nevertheless, this model grounds the traditional Christian notion that God is specially present in the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist.

### Type-S Impanation

The Type-S theorist worries, however, that the Type-H view circumvents the human nature of Christ. On the Type-H view, God can intensify God's presence at any and every consecration. But this happens only on an analogy with the Incarnation, not because of or in relation to the Incarnation. Type-H seems to result in predications of the consecrated objects like, »This is bread« or »This is God« or even »This is the body of God.« But it depends on what one means by »Christ« whether Type-H is able to deliver on the Scriptural and liturgical utterance, »This is the body of Christ.« If one took »Christ« to refer to the specific instance of Incarnation that is the adding on of the human nature of Christ's phenomenal experiences to God, then Type-H would not supply the metaphysical story for the state of affairs expressed by »This is the body of Christ.« But, Type-S would.

Type-S wishes to draw a specific connection between the human nature of Christ and the consecrated bread and wine. How would this work? God would need to conjoin the micro-experiences had by the bread and the wine to the

system that is the human nature of Christ. Christ's human nature, then, would be extended beyond the bounds of its organic human body to include objects non-organically connected to his human body.<sup>24</sup> Despite these objects distance from the human body of Christ, they would nonetheless be joined by divine power to the human phenomenal experience of Christ. As the human body just is the locus of human phenomenal experience, then these objects would properly be considered parts of the human body of Christ. This would, of course, then sanction the liturgical utterance made of the consecrated bread, »This is the body of Christ.«

The symmetry of this model with my illustration of the sycamore tree branch above should be clear. The consecrated bread and the wine become instruments or tools of the human nature of Christ. In this manner, as in other instances of bodily extension or prosthesis use, the instruments become parts of the body of Christ and are aptly named as such. The distinction, however, between the Type-S explication of Eucharist and the sycamore branch illustration is the lack of physical contiguity between the consecrated elements and the human nature of Christ. However, I do not see the lack of physical contiguity as an obstacle for the view. Given a panpsychist and panentheistic framework, God merely needs to conjoin the phenomenality of the consecrated elements to the phenomenality of Christ's human nature. This fusion of mentality or proto-mentality of seemingly discontinuous objects, then, fuses the objects themselves. When this conjunction is instantiated and a causal connection between Christ and the consecrated elements occurs by means of this conjunction, the liturgical utterance is warranted: *this*—this bread—is the body of Christ.

#### Assessment of Both Views

Both of these impanation theories are able to deliver on a concentration of God's presence at the location of the consecrated bread and wine. Both, in different senses, would be able to deliver on the conception of the bread and wine being the body of God. Type-S is to be preferred, however, if one held »Christ« to be a specialized term denoting *only* the incarnate activity of the Second Person of the Trinity in the human nature of Christ. If one is attempting to draw a tight connection between the historical body of Christ (born of the Virgin, suffered under Pontius Pilate, raised on the third day, etc.), then, for my money, Type-S is the preferred route. However, Type-H is not without

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24 This might seem a stretch, but the literature on the Extended Mind Thesis (EMT) is now vast and has obvious points of contact with the narrative adduced here. For further application of the EMT to the Eucharist, see Arcadi 2015.

merit and is worthy of consideration. Here I simply raise two other brief considerations.

First, one might wonder whether having the phenomenal experiences of consecrated bread and wine would entail feeling great pain at being chewed and digested. However, there should be no worries about Christ feeling the pain of being manducated. The sensation of pain—so far as we understand it—requires a much more complex configuration of matter than we see in the combination of flour, water, yeast, oil, and salt.<sup>25</sup> The human body that the second person of the Trinity assumed at the Incarnation provided an appropriately complex configuration of matter such that in virtue of his human nature Christ did feel the pain of the Passion. But there is no requirement on the present Eucharistic model—or any model of impanation—that Christ feel pain by way of the faithful's teeth. Bread and wine just cannot supply the kind of phenomenal experience as a human body can.

Second, given the incorporation of the bread and wine into the body of Christ, does the bread and wine cease to be bread and wine? That is, do the impanation models I have sketched collapse into transubstantiation? From one angle, I see no reason the transubstantiation theorists could not help themselves to much of what I have described as impanation within a panpsychist panentheistic incarnational framework. They too could argue that the predication »this is the body of Christ« is apt due to the requisite concentration of divine activity that »elevates« the microexperiences of the elements to a sufficiently high level. However, at this point in the analysis it does not seem that the distinction between transubstantiation and impanation can be made on the basis of philosophical reasoning alone. Rather the transubstantiation theorist will assert the determinations of the Roman Catholic magisterium to say that we may no longer call the consecrated object »bread« post-consecration. On the contrary, the impanation theorist will aver that the theo-logic of the Incarnation that provides the metaphysical infrastructure for the aptness of the predication pushes the faithful to maintain the reality of the bread in the same way as Christ is both God and a human being. The dispute here, to me, seems intractable and one will simply have to decide whether they will choose the conception of their ancestors, or choose the view of those in whose land they dwell. But as for me and my house, we will choose a version of impanation.

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25 These are the traditional ingredients in Eucharistic bread. For a fascinating theological study of the materiality of the Eucharist, see Grumett 2016.

#### 4. Conclusion

Panentheism teaches that God is in us insofar as we and all things are in God. Christianity teaches Emmanuel, that God is with us in the person of Jesus Christ. The Eucharist has long been held to be a unique way that God is with humanity. Hence, as indicated from the outset, this progression from panentheism to Incarnation to Eucharist indicates an ever concretizing and ever localizing experience of God's presence with humans. Although in some sense any view of the divine that includes the attribute of omnipresence entails the possibility of encounters with God anywhere, Christian teaching has it that the Eucharist is a direct encounter with God; the Eucharist is literally an instance of Emmanuel, of God with us. This essay has sketched how this might be said to be so within a panpsychist panentheism. It should not be forgotten, however, that in addition to making it such that God is with us, the Eucharist is intended by Christ to be consumed by the faithful. Thus, the Eucharist becomes a unique way that—even as we are in God—God is in us.

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# Panentheistic Cosmopsychism: Swami Vivekananda's Sāṃkhya-Vedāntic Solution to the Hard Problem of Consciousness

*Ayon Maharaj*

This chapter provides the first detailed examination of the views on consciousness of Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), the famous nineteenth-century Indian monk who introduced Hinduism and Vedānta to the West. First, I present Vivekananda's metaphysical framework of panentheistic cosmopsychism, according to which the sole reality is Divine Consciousness, which manifests as everything in the universe. As we will see, his panentheistic cosmopsychism combines elements from the classical Indian philosophical traditions of Sāṃkhya and Advaita Vedānta as well as the teachings of his guru Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886). Then I reconstruct his sophisticated arguments in favor of panentheistic cosmopsychism. I argue that Vivekananda's panentheistic cosmopsychism, in light of its distinctive features and its potential philosophical advantages over rival theories of consciousness, deserves to be taken seriously by contemporary philosophers of mind and religion.

*We now see that all the various forms of cosmic energy, such as matter, thought, force, intelligence and so forth, are simply the manifestations of that cosmic intelligence, or, as we shall call it henceforth, the Supreme Lord. Everything that you see, feel, or hear; the whole universe, is His creation, or to be a little more accurate, is His projection; or to be still more accurate, is the Lord Himself. It is He who is shining as the sun and the stars, He is the mother earth.... He is the speech that is uttered, He is the man who is talking. He is the audience that is here.... It is all He.*

— Swami Vivekananda (1896)<sup>1</sup>

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\* This essay presents, in a highly condensed form, the core argument of two chapters of my current book project, tentatively titled *Swami Vivekananda's Vedāntic Cosmopolitanism*.

1 CW2:211. Throughout this chapter, citations to Vivekananda's *Complete Works* (CW) follow this format: »CW,« volume number, page number.

## 1. Introduction

Conscious experience is such a pervasive feature of our lives that we usually take it for granted. We experience, for instance, the delicious taste of tiramisu, the vivid colors of a rainbow, the sharp pain of a sprained ankle. What all these experiences have in common is an irreducibly subjective or qualitative character. As Thomas Nagel (1974) puts it, there is something *it is like* to be in any such experiential state. Recent philosophers have used technical terms like «qualia» and »phenomenal consciousness« to capture this subjective dimension of the experiential lives of human beings and (presumably) many other animals.

In spite of its familiarity, consciousness is notoriously difficult to explain. Philosophers throughout the world have puzzled over this ubiquitous feature of our everyday lives. What exactly *is* consciousness? What makes us conscious creatures rather than mere non-conscious automata? Does consciousness arise from physical states of the brain, and if so, how and why? The contemporary philosopher David Chalmers (1995, 1996) has made an influential distinction between »easy« and »hard« problems of consciousness. According to Chalmers, neuroscientists may very well be able to solve in the next century or two one of the »easy« problems of consciousness, such as the problem of pinpointing the neural correlates of particular conscious states. However, Chalmers argues that such a hypothetically complete and accurate science of physical correlations would still leave unanswered the one really *hard* problem of consciousness: namely, the problem of explaining *why* certain states of the brain are accompanied by, or give rise to, conscious experience. Similarly, Joseph Levine (1983) has argued that even if scientists are able to identify the physical correlates of conscious experiences, there still remains an »explanatory gap« between physical states and consciousness that needs to be bridged.

Philosophers have proposed a wide range of solutions to the hard problem of consciousness, including eliminativism, materialist reductionism, epiphenomenalist dualism, interactionist dualism, and mysterianism. For various reasons, many philosophers have not been satisfied with any of these theories of consciousness. As a result, a number of recent analytic philosophers of mind have begun to take seriously panpsychism, the apparently counter-intuitive view that consciousness is present everywhere.<sup>2</sup> There are two basic forms of panpsychism, depending on how one characterizes this fundamental form of consciousness. Micropsychism is the form of panpsychism according to which macro-level human and animal consciousness derives from the more

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<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Nagel 1979, Brüntrup and Jaskolla 2017, Seager 2020, and Goff 2017a.

fundamental consciousness of *micro-level* entities.<sup>3</sup> The most formidable problem facing micropsychist views is the »subject combination problem«—the problem of explaining how micro-subjects can combine to form macro-level conscious subjects (Chalmers 2017).

In light of the subject combination problem, some contemporary philosophers have rejected micropsychism in favor of cosmopsychism, the view that human and animal consciousness derives from »cosmic consciousness,« the more fundamental consciousness of the universe as a whole.<sup>4</sup> Clearly, cosmopsychism avoids the subject combination problem, since it explains human and animal consciousness in terms of cosmic consciousness rather than the consciousness of micro-level entities. However, cosmopsychist views still have to address the obverse problem—sometimes called the »derivation problem« (Nagasawa & Wager 2017) or the »decombination problem« (Albahari 2020)—of explaining how the conscious experiences of individual humans and animals derive from the singular consciousness of the cosmos as a whole.

While most contemporary philosophers have not considered non-western forms of panpsychism, some scholars have very recently begun to explore how ideas and arguments from Indian philosophical traditions—such as Vedānta,<sup>5</sup> Yogācāra Buddhism,<sup>6</sup> and Śaiva Nondualism<sup>7</sup>—might be able to enrich contemporary debates about panpsychism. This chapter discusses the views of Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), the famous nineteenth-century Indian monk who introduced Hinduism and Vedānta to the West. I argue that Vivekananda defends a distinctive form of cosmopsychism that has great contemporary relevance.

Section 2 presents Vivekananda's metaphysical framework of panentheistic cosmopsychism, according to which the sole reality is Divine Consciousness, which manifests as everything in the universe. As we will see, his panentheistic cosmopsychism combines elements from the classical Indian philosophical traditions of Sāṃkhya and Advaita Vedānta as well as the teachings of his guru Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886). Section 3 reconstructs Vivekananda's sophisticated arguments in favor of panentheistic cosmopsychism. I argue that his panentheistic cosmopsychism, in light of its distinctive features and its potential philosophical advantages over rival theories of consciousness, deserves to be taken seriously by contemporary philosophers.

3 For this definition of micropsychism, see Goff 2017b.

4 See, for instance, Shani 2015, Shani 2018, and Nagasawa and Wager 2017.

5 Gasparri 2019, Albahari 2020, and Vaidya 2020.

6 Duckworth 2017.

7 Biernacki 2016a,b.

## 2. Vivekananda's Sāṃkhya-Vedāntic Framework of Panentheistic Cosmopsychism

In his approach to consciousness, Vivekananda takes his initial bearings from the classical Indian philosophical tradition of Sāṃkhya. Sāṃkhya upholds a metaphysical dualism between two fundamental entities, the eternal conscious Puruṣa (Spirit or Self) and the insentient Prakṛti (Primordial Nature). According to Sāṃkhya, insentient Prakṛti is the material cause of all creation, which first becomes intellect or will (*mahat/buddhi*), which itself becomes the ego-sense (*ahaṃkāra*), which in turn evolves into mind (*manas*), the five sense-capacities (*buddhīndriyas*), the five action-capacities (*karmendriyas*), and the five subtle elements (*tanmātras*), and these *tanmātras* themselves evolve into the five gross elements (*mahābhūtas*). Sāṃkhyans claim that all these twenty-four cosmic principles (*tattvas*) exist for the sake of the conscious Puruṣa, which is entirely separate from nature.

The English word »mind« corresponds to what Sāṃkhya philosophers call the »internal organ« (*antaḥkaraṇa*), which comprises the intellect/will (*buddhi*), ego-sense (*ahaṃkāra*), and mind (*manas*) in the narrower sense of the thinking faculty. It is important to note that in Sāṃkhya philosophy, the internal organ is also the *liṅgaśarīra* or *sūkṣmaśarīra* (the fine or subtle body), the reincarnating entity which inhabits different physical bodies (*sthūlaśarīras*) from one life to the next. Vivekananda explains the Sāṃkhyan doctrine of reincarnation as follows:

Each one of the Purushas is omnipresent; each one of us is omnipresent, but we can act only through the Linga Sharira, the fine body. The mind, the self-consciousness, the organs, and the vital forces compose the fine body or sheath, what in Christian philosophy is called the spiritual body of man. It is this body that gets salvation, or punishment, or heaven, that incarnates and reincarnates, because we see from the very beginning that the going and the coming of the Purusha or soul are impossible. (CW2:455-56)

Sāṃkhya, then, upholds a three-tiered ontology of the self: the insentient grossly physical body (*sthūlaśarīra*), the insentient subtly physical body which reincarnates (*liṅgaśarīra*), and the conscious non-physical Spirit (Puruṣa). Moreover, Sāṃkhya philosophers accept the existence of multiple Puruṣas, each corresponding to a different *liṅgaśarīra*.

Vivekananda explains the Sāṃkhyan approach to consciousness as follows: »Mind, intelligence, will, and everything else is insentient. But they are all reflecting the sentiency, the ›Chit‹ [Consciousness] of some being who is beyond all this, whom the Sankhya philosophers call ›Purusha‹« (CW2:450). Crucially,

then, even the mind (*antaḥkāraṇa*) is actually a subtle form of insentient matter, but it *appears* to be conscious because of the »light« of the Puruṣa behind it. As Vivekananda puts it, »By itself the mind has no light; but we see it reasons. Therefore there must be some one behind it, whose light is percolating through Mahat [cosmic consciousness]... and subsequent modifications, and this is what Kapila [the founder of Sāṃkhya] calls the Puruṣa, the Self of the Vedantin ...« (CW2:455-56). Obviously, Vivekananda intends the »light« of the Puruṣa illuminating the mind to be understood in metaphorical terms. For a snapshot of the Sāṃkhyan dualist system, see Figure 1.

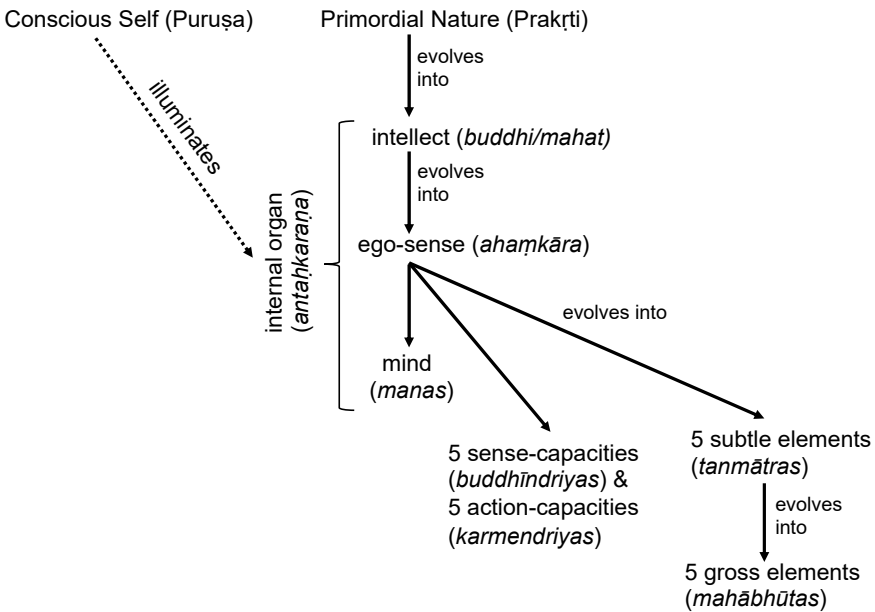


FIGURE 1 The Dualist System of Sāṃkhya

While Vivekananda accepts key elements from Sāṃkhyan philosophy, he also singles out for criticism three fundamental aspects of Sāṃkhyan metaphysics: the doctrine of multiple Puruṣas, the doctrine that insentient Prakṛti is the source of all creation, and the metaphysical dualism between Puruṣa and Prakṛti. Since I do not have the space to discuss his criticisms in detail, I will only summarize them here. Vivekananda’s internal critique of the Sāṃkhyan doctrine of multiple Puruṣas takes off from the Sāṃkhyan premise that the Puruṣa is both omnipresent and infinite (CW2:460-61). He argues that the notion of multiple infinities is incoherent, since the infinities would limit one another, thereby becoming finite. Hence, if the Puruṣa is truly infinite, it can

only be one rather than multiple. For Vivekananda, then, the Sāṃkhyan doctrine of the infinitude of Puruṣa, when pushed to its logical conclusion, entails that there is only one Puruṣa—namely, the impersonal (*nirguṇa*) nondual Brahman of Advaita Vedānta.

Vivekananda also criticizes Sāṃkhyan atheism by presenting two main arguments for positing God (*īśvara*) as the efficient and material cause of all creation (CW2:460). His first objection is based on the Sāṃkhyan view that the macrocosm is reflected in the microcosm, so that each of the cosmic principles has its individual counterpart.<sup>8</sup> For instance, according to Sāṃkhya, while *mahat* is the universal or cosmic intellect, *buddhi* is its counterpart at the individual level. Vivekananda now argues as follows. If Sāṃkhya holds that all the individual manifestations of Prakṛti exist for the sake of an individual Puruṣa, then it should also hold that all the *cosmic* manifestations of Prakṛti exist for the sake of a *universal* Puruṣa as their »ruler and governor.« This universal Puruṣa, he claims, is none other than God (*īśvara*).

Vivekananda's second argument in favor of adding *īśvara* to the Sāṃkhyan system targets its doctrine of insentient Prakṛti (CW3:6-7). According to Vivekananda, Sāṃkhya posits both Puruṣa and Prakṛti as absolutes, so if the absolute Puruṣa is omnipresent and beyond time, space, and causation, then the absolute Prakṛti must also be omnipresent and beyond time, space, and causation. In that case, however, there would be no »change or manifestation,« since Prakṛti would be beyond nature altogether and unable to interact with it. He also makes an independent argument that it is impossible to have »two absolutes.« He seems to have in mind here his argument—mentioned earlier—that the notion of multiple infinite Puruṣas is incoherent, since they would limit each other. Similarly, two absolutes would limit each other and thereby lose their absolute status. To avoid this difficulty, we must posit a universal Puruṣa—God or *īśvara*—at the basis of Prakṛti.

Finally, Vivekananda argues that we should reject the spirit-matter dualism of Sāṃkhya in favor of a Vedāntic panentheism:

Beyond this Prakṛti, and eternally separate from it, is the Puruṣa, the soul of the Sankhya which is without attributes and omnipresent. The Puruṣa is not the doer but the witness. The illustration of the crystal is used to explain the Puruṣa. The latter is said to be like a crystal without any colour, before which different colours are placed, and then it seems to be coloured by the colours before it, but in reality it is not. The Vedantists reject the Sankhya ideas of the soul and nature. They claim that between them there is a huge gulf to be bridged over.

<sup>8</sup> Hence, as Larson (1969: 176-200) notes, Sāṃkhyan cosmology doubles as a psychology of the individual soul.

On the one hand the Sankhya system comes to nature, and then at once it has to jump over to the other side and come to the soul, which is entirely separate from nature. How can these different colours, as the Sankhya calls them, be able to act on that soul which by its nature is colourless? So the Vedantists, from the very first affirm that this soul and this nature are one.... The idea of the Advaitists is to generalise the whole universe into one—that something which is really the whole of this universe. And they claim that this whole universe is one, that it is one Being manifesting itself in all these various forms. They admit that what the Sankhya calls nature exists, but say that nature is God. It is this Being, the Sat, which has become converted into all this—the universe, man, soul, and everything that exists. (CW1:361-62)

Vivekananda argues, rather swiftly, that the »huge gulf« Sāṃkhya posits between Puruṣa and Prakṛti makes it impossible for Prakṛti to interact in any way with Puruṣa. Hence, he claims that the Vedāntic view that Puruṣa and Prakṛti »are one« is more logically sound than Sāṃkhyan dualism. On this basis, he defends the panentheistic view that God, the sole Reality, has become everything in the universe.

According to Vivekananda, then, these three fundamental problems internal to Sāṃkhyan metaphysics necessitate a transition from soul-matter dualism to spiritual monism. In particular, he defends a Vedāntic panentheism which incorporates key aspects of Sāṃkhyan metaphysics while also correcting for the latter's deficiencies and lacunae. It is crucial to note that Vivekananda's Vedāntic panentheism is based not on Śaṅkara's world-denying philosophy of Advaita Vedānta but on the world-affirming Advaitic philosophy of his guru Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna's views on consciousness are grounded in his philosophy of Vijñāna Vedānta, which I explain in detail in the first chapter of my book *Infinite Paths to Infinite Reality* (Maharaj 2018). Sri Ramakrishna makes a key distinction between two fundamental stages of spiritual realization which he calls »*jñāna*« and »*vijñāna*.« *Jñāna*, he claims, is the Advaitic realization of one's true essence as the impersonal nondual Brahman, which is »immovable, immutable, inactive, and of the nature of Pure Consciousness [*bodha-svarūpa*]« (Gupta 1992: 430).<sup>9</sup> The *jñānī* feels that Brahman alone is real and that everything else is unreal. However, Sri Ramakrishna maintains that some rare souls, even after attaining *brahmajñāna*, can go on to attain the even greater state of *vijñāna*, a more intimate and expansive realization of God as the impersonal-personal Infinite Reality which has become everything in the universe. According to Sri Ramakrishna, »The *vijñānī* sees that the Reality which is impersonal [*nirguṇa*] is also personal [*saguṇa*]« (Gupta 1992: 104).

9 For the original Bengali, see Gupta 2010 (1897-1932).

Hence, while the Advaitic *jñānī* dismisses Śakti (the personal God) as unreal, the *vijñānī* realizes that »Brahman and Śakti are inseparable« (Gupta 1992: 550; translation modified). Moreover, while the *jñānī* dismisses the world as unreal, the *vijñānī* looks upon the world as a real manifestation of God. As Sri Ramakrishna puts it, »God, as Consciousness [*caitanya*], has become the entire universe of the living and non-living« (Gupta 1992: 300).

Sri Ramakrishna explicitly states that he himself attained this panentheistic realization of *vijñāna*:

Why should the universe be unreal? That is a speculation of the philosophers. After realizing God, one sees that it is God Herself who has become the universe and all living beings. The Divine Mother revealed to me in the Kālī temple that it was She who had become everything. She showed me that everything was Divine Consciousness [*sab cinmaya*]. The Image was Consciousness, the altar was Consciousness, the water vessels were Consciousness, the doorsill was Consciousness, the marble floor was Consciousness—all was Consciousness. I found everything inside the room soaked, as it were, in Bliss—the Bliss of Saccidānanda. I saw a wicked man in front of the Kālī temple; but in him also I saw the Śakti of the Divine Mother vibrating. That was why I fed a cat with the food that was to be offered to the Divine Mother. I clearly perceived that the Divine Mother Herself had become everything—even the cat... . After realizing God, one sees all this aright—that it is She who has become the universe, living beings, and the twenty-four cosmic principles. (Gupta 1992: 345)

In contemporary philosophical terms, we can say that Sri Ramakrishna's mystical experience of *vijñāna* led him to accept a panentheistic form of cosmopsychism, according to which everything in the universe is one and the same Divine Consciousness manifesting in various forms. He specifically emphasizes that this Divine Consciousness is present not only in sentient creatures like cats and human beings but also in insentient things like water vessels and marble floors. Sri Ramakrishna considered his panentheistic worldview to be a world-inclusive form of Advaita. As he puts it, »The *bhakta* also has a realization of oneness [*ekākār jñāna*]; he sees that there is nothing but God. Instead of saying that the world is unreal like a dream, he says that God has become everything« (Gupta 1992: 700). Crucially, Sri Ramakrishna explicitly contrasted his world-inclusive Advaitic philosophy with the world-negating Advaitic philosophy of Śāṅkara and his followers.

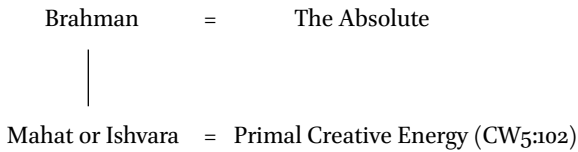
Vivekananda, I will argue, addressed the hard problem of consciousness largely by developing and defending the *vijñāna*-based panentheistic cosmopsychism taught to him by Sri Ramakrishna. As we will see, Vivekananda frequently appealed to Advaita Vedānta in his efforts to explain and justify his panentheistic cosmopsychism, but we should always keep in mind that



he followed Sri Ramakrishna in championing a *world-inclusive* Advaitic philosophy that conceives the world as a real manifestation of the impersonal-personal God.

Crucially, Vivekananda's preferred nondual Vedāntic framework integrates within it all the elements of Sāṃkhya philosophy which he takes to be valid. In particular, he fully accepts the Sāṃkhyan doctrines that mind is a subtle form of matter and that conscious experience has a spiritual basis. He also accepts most of Sāṃkhyan cosmology, except that he equates Mahat with *īśvara* (and perhaps tacitly assimilates Sāṃkhyan Prakṛti to Mahat/*īśvara* as well). He makes this explicit in an 1896 letter to his disciple E.T. Sturdy in which he sketches a diagram illustrating his Vedāntic cosmology:

I am working a good deal now upon the cosmology and eschatology of the Vedānta.... I intend to write a book later on in the form of questions and answers. The first chapter will be on cosmology, showing the harmony between Vedāntic theories and modern science.



Unfortunately, he never found the time to write the book he had planned, so we will have to reconstruct his Vedāntic cosmology by drawing together various relevant passages in his work. For Vivekananda, Brahman is the impersonal (*nirguṇa*) nondual Absolute, and the vertical line indicates that it is inseparable from Mahat/*īśvara*, the »Primal Creative Energy« which he also frequently refers to as »Shakti.« For instance, in his 1894 lecture »The Women of India,« he explains the inseparability of the impersonal Brahman and Śakti as follows:

[T]he central conception of Hindu philosophy is of the Absolute; that is the background of the universe. This Absolute Being, of whom we can predicate nothing, has Its powers spoken of as She—that is, the real personal God in India is She. This Shakti of the Brahman is always in the feminine gender. (CW9:195)

Vivekananda echoes here his guru Sri Ramakrishna's favorite teaching that »Brahman and Śakti are inseparable« (Gupta 1992: 550). Following Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda holds that while the impersonal nondual Brahman is utterly transcendent, Śakti—i.e. Mahat/*īśvara*—is the same Absolute in its dynamic form as the personal God who creates, preserves, and destroys the universe.

Vivekananda's equation of Īśvara with Mahat is highly significant, since it indicates how he integrates key aspects of the Sāṃkhyan system into his own broader Vedāntic cosmology. In Vivekananda's hands, the insentient Mahat of Sāṃkhya becomes the »cosmic consciousness«<sup>10</sup> or »cosmic mind«<sup>11</sup> from which everything in the universe derives:

What are you and I and all these souls? In our discussion of evolution and involution, we have seen that you and I must be part of the cosmic consciousness, cosmic life, cosmic mind, which got involved and we must complete the circle and go back to this cosmic intelligence which is God. This cosmic intelligence is what people call Lord, or God, or Christ, or Buddha, or Brahman, what the materialists perceive as force, and the agnostics as that infinite, inexpressible beyond; and we are all parts of that. (CW2:231)

In Vivekananda's Vedāntic cosmology, Mahat/Īśvara manifests both as individual conscious souls (*jīvas*) and as insentient minds (*antaḥkaraṇas*). As he puts it, »According to the Sankhya philosophy, the reactive state of the mind called Buddhi or intellect is the outcome, the change, or a certain manifestation of the Mahat or Cosmic Mind« (CW1:361).<sup>12</sup> Vivekananda accepts unchanged the rest of the Sāṃkhyan cosmology from *buddhi* down to the 5 *mahābhutas* (gross elements). He follows Sri Ramakrishna in championing a world-affirming Advaitic philosophy, according to which the sole reality is the impersonal-personal Infinite Divine Reality. We can now see that the personal aspect of the Infinite Reality is none other than Mahat/Īśvara/Śakti, the »cosmic consciousness« which not only *grounds*, but actually *is*, everything in the universe. Ultimately, then, Vivekananda solves the hard problem of consciousness by appealing to a Sāṃkhya-Vedāntic framework of panentheistic cosmopsychism. While he accepts the Sāṃkhyan view that the mind (*antaḥkaraṇa*) is insentient, he claims that all our conscious experiences are grounded not in the individual Puruṣa but in the all-pervasive Divine Consciousness. Figure 2 illustrates his panentheistic cosmopsychism in a nutshell.

10 Vivekananda equates Mahat with »cosmic consciousness« at least twice, in CW8:363 and CW2:231.

11 Vivekananda explicitly equates »Mahat« with the »Cosmic Mind« in several places, including CW1:360-1 and CW2:267.

12 CW1:361. I do not think Vivekananda means to imply that *buddhi* is a separate cosmic principle from Mahat. Rather, he follows Sāṃkhya in taking *buddhi* to be the »individual Mahat« (CW1:250-51), the microcosmic counterpart to the macrocosmic Mahat.

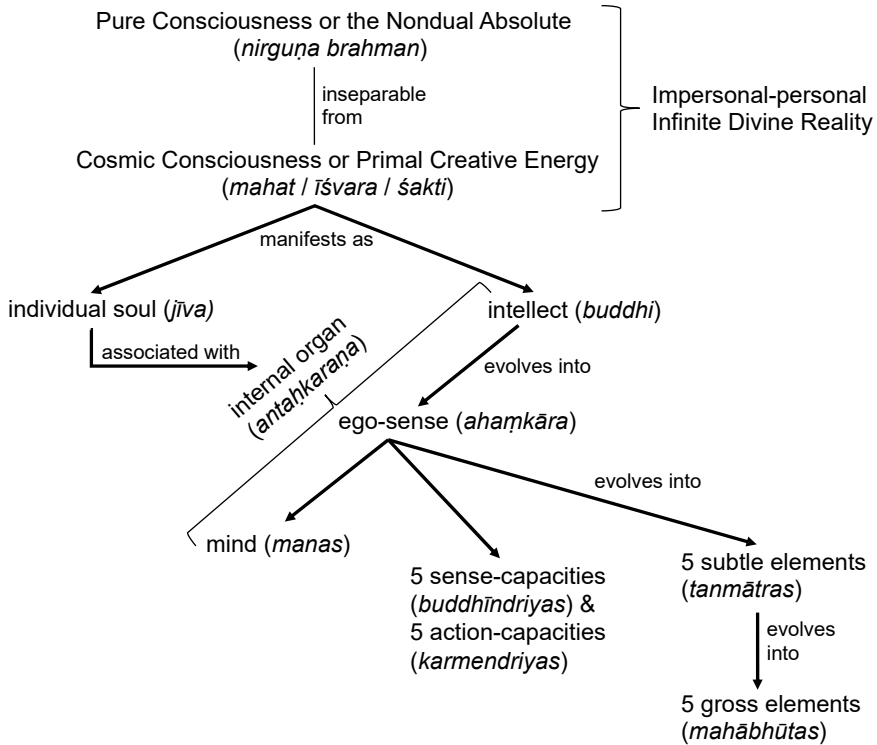


FIGURE 2 Vivekananda's Sāṃkhya-Vedāntic Framework of Panentheistic Cosmopsychism

As I discussed earlier, the most serious problem for contemporary cosmopsychists is the decombination problem: how does the single cosmic consciousness ground the conscious experiences of multiple individual subjects, each of whom has his or her own first-person perspective? In order to answer this question, most contemporary cosmopsychists have drawn upon Jonathan Schaffer's (2010) priority monism, the view that there exists only one basic entity, which grounds all other entities. Combining cosmopsychism with priority monism yields priority cosmopsychism, the view that cosmic consciousness is the only basic entity, which grounds all individual conscious experiences. Proponents of priority cosmopsychism offer differing accounts of *how* cosmic consciousness grounds the conscious experiences of individual subjects.<sup>13</sup>

I would argue that Vivekananda's panentheistic cosmopsychism is a distinctive form of priority cosmopsychism, which provides a unique account of the

13 See, for instance, Goff 2017a: 220-55, Shani 2015, Shani 2018, and Nagasawa & Wager 2017.

grounding relation. I would call Vivekananda's account of grounding »grounding by manifestation,« according to which X grounds by manifestation Y if and only if Y is a manifestation of X.<sup>14</sup> According to his panentheistic cosmopsychism, then, the Divine Cosmic Consciousness grounds the conscious experiences of individual subjects in the sense of *manifesting* as all of these individual subjects with their respective conscious experiences. According to Vivekananda, Mahat/Īśvara manifests as all the individuals souls (*jīvas*), each of which has its own unique conscious perspective. My conscious experiences, rooted in my own first-person perspective, result from the association of my particular *jīva* with my particular *antaḥkaraṇa*. Your conscious experiences, rooted in your different first-person perspective, result from the association of your *jīva* with your *antaḥkaraṇa*. Vivekananda's account of grounding by manifestation satisfies what Philip Goff calls the »free lunch constraint«—the constraint that any adequate theory of grounding must account for the apparent paradox that if X grounds Y, then (a) Y is nothing over and above X, and yet (b) Y is not identical to X (Goff 2020: 146). In Vivekananda's account of grounding by manifestation, ordinary conscious experience, as a manifestation of the Divine Cosmic Consciousness, is nothing over and above the Divine Cosmic Consciousness while not being identical to it.

How would Vivekananda respond to the decombination problem? Applied specifically to Vivekananda's panentheistic cosmopsychism, the decombination problem can be formulated as follows: how is it logically possible for God, with His own divine perspective, to manifest as various human beings, who enjoy their own different conscious perspectives? Since I provide a detailed reconstruction of Vivekananda's response to the decombination problem in the tenth chapter of my book in progress, I will only summarize his response here. According to Vivekananda's panentheistic cosmopsychism, Divine Consciousness is the sole reality. Through the individuating principle of *māyā*, this nondual Divine Consciousness manifests as everything in the universe through a process of playful self-limitation or self-veiling (CW2:125-26). In ignorant people, the Divine Consciousness manifests as *egoic* consciousness. As a result, ignorant people remain unaware of their own divine nature, and their conscious perspectives are grounded in their identification with the body-mind complex and their consequent preoccupation with worldly thoughts and desires (CW6:474-75). Those who engage in spiritual practice can ascend to higher planes of consciousness through the awakening of the Kuṇḍalinī (CW4:237). Vivekananda would often appeal to the analogy of »veils« to convey that our true nature is Divine Consciousness and that the aim of all spiritual practice is

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14 I borrow the structure of this formulation of grounding from Goff (2019).

nothing but to remove the »veils« covering our divine nature. As he puts it in his lecture »The Real Nature of Man,« »Every good thought that you think or act upon is simply tearing the veil, as it were; and the purity, the Infinity, the God behind, manifests Itself more and more« (CW2:82). As we ascend to higher planes of consciousness, veil after veil covering the Divine Consciousness is removed, and our conscious perspective itself changes at each higher plane, until the Kuṇḍalinī finally rises to the *sahasrāra*, and we realize our true nature as the Divine Consciousness without any veils.

Hence, from Vivekananda's perspective, the conscious perspectives of various people are one and the same Divine Consciousness limited or »veiled« to varying degrees and in different ways, depending on their current plane of consciousness. Since the various planes of consciousness are mutually exclusive (CW3:20-21), our ignorant conscious perspectives and God's divine perspective are also mutually exclusive. So long as we enjoy our ignorant conscious perspectives, we do not, and cannot, share the perspective of Divine Consciousness. Conversely, when we realize our true nature as Divine Consciousness, we no longer have our ego-centered conscious perspectives. Crucially, then, God's divine perspective *never coexists* with our own limited conscious perspectives as ignorant human beings. Hence, I would argue that Vivekananda's account of grounding by manifestation provides a novel and elegant solution to the decombination problem that deserves to be taken seriously by contemporary philosophers.

If Vivekananda is right that we are nothing but different manifestations of God, why don't we all *think* of ourselves as God? Why don't we share God's first-person *cosmic* perspective rather than having our own individual first-person perspectives? Vivekananda's Vedāntic answer is that we are deluded into thinking that we are autonomous individuals due to our preoccupation with our own ego and its selfish concerns and desires. As he puts it, »Man only remains hypnotised with the false idea of an ego. When this ghost is off from us, all dreams vanish, and then it is found that the one Self only exists from the highest Being to a blade of grass« (CW6:474-75). According to Vivekananda, by renouncing sense-pleasures and engaging in ethical and spiritual practices like meditation, unselfish service, and the worship of God, we can break our false identification with our ego and realize our true nature as God Himself:

There is only one Self in the universe, only One Existence, and that One Existence, when it passes through the forms of time, space, and causation, is called by different names, Buddhi, fine matter, gross matter, all mental and physical forms. Everything in the universe is that One, appearing in various forms.... You are the Infinite... . Therefore the idea that you are Mr. So-and-so can never be true; it is a day-dream. Know this and be free. This is the Advaita conclusion. (CW2:462)

It is important to note here that Vivekananda's »Advaita conclusion« is based on the world-affirming Advaita taught to him by Sri Ramakrishna rather than the world-negating Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara and his followers. According to Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, nondual Brahman alone is real and this entire universe is ultimately unreal. It may appear that Vivekananda endorses Śaṅkara's Advaitic position when he says that our individuality is a »day-dream.« However, it is clear from the context that what he means is that our delusion consists in thinking that we are *autonomous* individuals; in reality, we are different manifestations of God Himself. Crucially, Vivekananda follows Sri Ramakrishna rather than Śaṅkara in holding that God *actually* manifests as both deluded and enlightened people. Sri Ramakrishna makes this point explicitly in the following passage:

This world is the *līlā* [sportive play] of God... . God alone has become all this—*māyā*, the universe, living beings [*jīvas*], and the twenty-four cosmic principles.... It is God Himself who has become both *vidyā* [Knowledge] and *avidyā* [ignorance]. He remains deluded by the *māyā* of *avidyā*. Again, with the help of the guru, He is cured by the *māyā* of *vidyā*.... The *vijñānī* sees that it is God who has become all this. (Gupta 436; translation modified)

For Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, the omnipotent God playfully manifests as everything in the universe, including both deluded and enlightened people. Moreover, in contrast to Śaṅkara, they hold that God's world-*līlā* is impermanent but perfectly real. Hence, Vivekananda maintains that our ordinary conscious experiences are real manifestations of the Divine Cosmic Consciousness.

It is also important to note that Vivekananda's pantheistic cosmopsychism, in spite of its nondualism, preserves the Sāṃkhyan distinction between sentient and insentient entities. While Vivekananda maintains that everything in the universe—including both sentient creatures and insentient entities—is a manifestation of the same Divine Consciousness, he does *not* hold that everything is conscious in the sense of being mental or sentient. Rather, he holds the Sāṃkhyan view that only entities with a mind (*antaḥkaraṇa*) are sentient. Surendranath Dasgupta (1922: 241) succinctly explains why an *antaḥkaraṇa* is necessary for conscious experience:

A question naturally arises, that if the knowledge forms [i.e. the *antaḥkaraṇa*] are made up of [the same]<sup>15</sup> sort of stuff as the objective forms of matter are, why

15 Dasgupta's original phrasing is as follows: »... if the knowledge forms are made up of some sort of stuff as the objective forms of matter are....« Since this phrase is ungrammatical as it stands, I have supplied in brackets what I believe he meant.

then should the *puruṣa* illuminate it [i.e. the *antaḥkaraṇa*] and not external material objects. The answer that Sāṃkhya gives is that the knowledge-complexes are certainly different from external objects in this, that they are far subtler and have a preponderance of a special quality of plasticity and translucence (*sattva*), which resembles the light of *puruṣa*, and is thus fit for reflecting and absorbing the light of the *puruṣa*.

In other words, a physical structure must be sufficiently subtle and translucent to reflect the light of the *Puruṣa*. Gross physical entities like stones are insentient because they lack the subtlety and translucency (*sattva*) necessary to reflect the light of the *Puruṣa*. Human beings, dogs, and bats, by contrast, are sentient because their minds (*antaḥkaraṇas*) are sufficiently subtle and translucent to reflect the light of their respective *Puruṣas*. Vivekananda fully accepts this Sāṃkhyan view but replaces the individual *Puruṣas* of Sāṃkhya with the single Divine Cosmic Consciousness. According to Vivekananda, only entities endowed with an *antaḥkaraṇa* can be sentient because an *antaḥkaraṇa* is necessary to reflect the light of the all-pervasive Divine Consciousness.

### 3. Vivekananda's Arguments for Panentheistic Cosmopsychism

Even if Vivekananda's panentheistic cosmopsychism seems to be logically coherent and offers an arguably elegant account of ordinary conscious experience, why should we believe that it is a plausible metaphysical worldview? In numerous lectures, he presents arguments in support of the plausibility of panentheistic cosmopsychism. Unfortunately, since he never wrote the definitive book on Vedāntic philosophy that he had planned, there is no single place in his corpus where he works out these arguments systematically and in detail. Accordingly, in the remainder of this section, I will try to reconstruct his justification of panentheistic cosmopsychism by drawing upon his various lectures and writings. A good starting-point for this reconstruction is his lecture »The Cosmos: The Macrocosm,« delivered in New York on 19 January 1896, which contains his most detailed argument for panentheistic cosmopsychism. The relevant passage from the lecture is long but needs to be quoted in full, since it is a continuous piece of reasoning:

Next comes a very important question especially for modern times. We see that the finer forms develop slowly and slowly, and gradually become grosser and grosser. We have seen that the cause is the same as the effect, and the effect is only the cause in another form. Therefore this whole universe cannot be produced out of nothing. Nothing comes without a cause, and the cause is the effect in another form.

Out of what has this universe been produced then? From a preceding fine universe. Out of what has men been produced? The preceding fine form. Out of what has the tree been produced? Out of the seed; the whole of the tree was there in the seed. It comes out and becomes manifest. So, the whole of this universe has been created out of this very universe existing in a minute form.... This coming out of the fine and becoming gross, simply changing the arrangements of its parts, as it were, is what in modern times [is] called evolution. This is very true, perfectly true; we see it in our lives. No rational man can possibly quarrel with these evolutionists. But we have to learn one thing more. We have to go one step further, and what is that? That every evolution is preceded by an involution.... The whole of this universe was present in the cosmic fine universe. The little cell, which becomes afterwards the man, was simply the involved man and becomes evolved as a man. If this is clear, we have no quarrel with the evolutionists, for we see that if they admit this step, instead of their destroying religion, they will be the greatest supporters of it.

We see then, that nothing can be created out of nothing.... The whole series of evolution beginning with the lowest manifestation of life and reaching up to the highest, the most perfect man, must have been the involution of something else. The question is: The involution of what? What was involved? God. The evolutionist will tell you that your idea that it was God is wrong. Why? Because you see God is intelligent, but we find that intelligence develops much later on in the course of evolution. It is in man and the higher animals that we find intelligence, but millions of years have passed in this world before this intelligence came. This objection of the evolutionists does not hold water, as we shall see by applying our theory. The tree comes out of the seed, goes back to the seed; the beginning and the end are the same. The earth comes out of its cause and returns to it. We know that if we can find the beginning we can find the end. *E converso*, if we find the end we can find the beginning. If that is so, take this whole evolutionary series, from the protoplasm at one end to the perfect man at the other, and this whole series is one life. In the end we find the perfect man, so in the beginning it must have been the same. Therefore, the protoplasm was the involution of the highest intelligence. You may not see it but that involved intelligence is what is uncoiling itself until it becomes manifested in the most perfect man. That can be mathematically demonstrated. If the law of conservation of energy is true, you cannot get anything out of a machine unless you put it in there first.... There cannot be added in the economy of this universe one particle of matter or one foot-pound of force, nor can one particle of matter or one foot-pound of force be taken out. If that be the case, what is this intelligence? If it was not present in the protoplasm, it must have come all of a sudden, something coming out of nothing, which is absurd. It, therefore, follows absolutely that the perfect man, the free man, the God-man, who has gone beyond the laws of nature, and transcended everything, who has no more to go through this process of evolution, through birth and death, that man called the »Christ-man« by the Christians, and the »Buddha-man« by the Buddhists, and the »Free« by the Yogis—that perfect man who is at one end of the chain of evolution was involved in the cell of the protoplasm, which is at the other end of the same chain.

Applying the same reason to the whole of the universe, we see that intelligence must be the Lord of creation, the cause. What is the most evolved notion



that man has of this universe? It is intelligence, the adjustment of part to part, the display of intelligence, of which the ancient design theory was an attempt at expression. The beginning was, therefore, intelligence. At the beginning that intelligence becomes involved, and in the end that intelligence gets evolved. The sum total of the intelligence displayed in the universe must, therefore, be the involved universal intelligence unfolding itself. This universal intelligence is what we call God. Call it by any other name, it is absolutely certain that in the beginning there is that Infinite cosmic intelligence. This cosmic intelligence gets involved, and it manifests, evolves itself, until it becomes the perfect man, the »Christ-man,« the »Buddha-man.«... This cosmic intelligence is what the theologians call God....

We now see that all the various forms of cosmic energy, such as matter, thought, force, intelligence and so forth, are simply the manifestations of that cosmic intelligence, or, as we shall call it henceforth, the Supreme Lord. Everything that you see, feel, or hear, the whole universe, is His creation, or to be a little more accurate, is His projection; or to be still more accurate, is the Lord Himself. It is He who is shining as the sun and the stars, He is the mother earth. He is the ocean Himself. He comes as gentle showers, He is the gentle air that we breathe in, and He it is who is working as force in the body. He is the speech that is uttered, He is the man who is talking. He is the audience that is here. He is the platform on which I stand, He is the light that enables me to see your faces. It is all He. He Himself is both the material and the efficient cause of this universe, and He it is that gets involved in the minute cell, and evolves at the other end and becomes God again. He it is that comes down and becomes the lowest atom, and slowly unfolding His nature, rejoins Himself. This is the mystery of the universe. »Thou art the man, Thou art the woman, Thou art the strong man walking in the pride of youth, Thou art the old man tottering on crutches, Thou art in everything. Thou art everything, O Lord.« This is the only solution of the Cosmos that satisfies the human intellect. (CW2:207-11)<sup>16</sup>

This passage contains Vivekananda's core argument for panentheistic cosmopsychism, though I believe there are key points in the argument where certain premises are implied or presupposed rather than explicitly stated. I will supply these missing premises by drawing on his statements and arguments in other lectures and writings. On my reconstruction, Vivekananda actually makes two independent but mutually supportive arguments, the first in support of panpsychism in general, and the second in support of panentheistic cosmopsychism in particular. I will now present and discuss each argument in turn. I take both his arguments to be abductive arguments (inferences to the best explanation), rather than deductive or inductive arguments.

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16 Vivekananda makes a similar involution argument in numerous other places, including CW2:74, CW2:173, and CW8:362-63.

Argument 1: Vivekananda's Involution Argument for Panpsychism

1. *Doctrine of the Pre-existent Effect*: If *c* is the material cause of *e*, then *e* must already be present in some form in *c*.
2. *Denial of Materialist Reductionism*: Consciousness is not identical to anything material, such as a brain state.
3. *Denial of Emergentism*: Consciousness could not have emerged from non-conscious matter at a certain point in the evolutionary process. (*from 1 and 2*)
4. *Plausibility of Panpsychism*: Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that consciousness is involved—that is, present in some form—even in primordial matter. (*from 2 and 3*)

Premises 1 and 3, as well as the conclusion 4, are explicitly stated in the long passage cited above. I would argue that premise 2, though not explicitly stated in this passage, is presupposed here and explicitly stated elsewhere.

In the first paragraph of the long passage, Vivekananda states premise 1, the Sāṃkhyan doctrine of the pre-existent effect (*satkārya*): »the effect is only the cause in another form.« According to Sāṃkhya, nothing new can ever be produced; rather, all effects are already present in another form in their respective material causes. The Sāṃkhya scholar Gerald James Larson (1969: 165) summarizes two of the main arguments Sāṃkhyans provide in support of *satkāryavāda*: »First of all, non-being obviously can produce or do nothing. Second, the effect is made up of the same material as the cause, there being a difference only with respect to the appearance or modification of the material.« Vivekananda reaffirms both of these Sāṃkhyan arguments for *satkāryavāda*. He echoes the first Sāṃkhyan argument when he states that »nothing can be created out of nothing.« Later in the same paragraph, he makes this same point in a slightly different way when he says that the notion of »something coming out of nothing« is »absurd.« The intuition here is a powerful one: it just seems obvious that there must be a sufficient material cause for any existing entity. He provides three examples to make this intuition more plausible: this entire universe must have been produced from »a preceding fine universe«; human beings are produced from the »preceding fine form«; and a tree is produced from »the seed.« Vivekananda also echoes the second Sāṃkhyan argument for *satkāryavāda*: It is a matter of empirical fact that »the cause is the effect in another form.« If we examine the nature of any given effect, we will find that it is made of the same material as its material cause, only in a modified form.

In cosmopolitan fashion, Vivekananda then goes on to provide further support for the Sāṃkhyan doctrine of *satkārya* by appealing to two modern Western scientific theories: namely, the doctrine of evolution and the law of

the conservation of energy. As he puts it, »This coming out of the fine and becoming gross, simply changing the arrangements of its parts, as it were, is what in modern times [is] called evolution. This is very true, perfectly true... .« Significantly, Vivekananda defines the doctrine of evolution in very general terms as a continuous process that molds pre-existing properties into other forms. He argues that a logical consequence of this modern doctrine of evolution is that »every evolution is preceded by an involution.« That is, the modern scientific understanding of the evolutionary process implies *satkāryavāda*: since nothing truly novel can emerge through the evolutionary process, the evolved entity or property had to have been »involved«—that is, pre-existent in a latent form—in that from which it evolved. As Vivekananda puts it, »The little cell, which becomes afterwards the man, was simply the involved man and becomes evolved as a man.«

Vivekananda was familiar with the views of Charles Darwin, T.H. Huxley, and Herbert Spencer—all of whom defended various forms of the doctrine of evolution—and he often referred to »Darwin« and »Darwinism« in his lectures and writings.<sup>17</sup> However, it is crucial to note that Vivekananda says nothing here about the *mechanism* of evolution. Indeed, in other places, he explicitly criticizes Darwin's preferred evolutionary mechanism of natural selection, arguing that while natural selection certainly operates in the »animal kingdom,« it cannot account for the moral and spiritual qualities of human beings (CW7:154).<sup>18</sup> Hence, the modern doctrine of evolution which Vivekananda endorses as »perfectly true« is only the very general one which holds that presently existing entities did not emerge suddenly or out of nothing but evolved gradually from earlier entities in which the presently existing entities were already present in a latent form. For Vivekananda, then, modern scientific evidence for the truth of evolution lends further support to the ancient Sāṃkhyan doctrine of *satkārya*. Vivekananda also supports premise 1 by appealing to the law of the conservation of energy, which holds that the total amount of energy in the universe remains constant and that this energy only changes forms and manifests in a variety of ways. If this law is true, he argues, then nothing new can come into existence; rather, what exists now is only a »change« or »manifestation« of what existed previously.

Vivekananda explicitly defends premise 2 (the denial of materialist reductionism) in his lecture »The Science of Yoga« delivered in California in 1900:

17 See, for instance, CW7:152-5 and CW6:40.

18 For discussion of Vivekananda's criticisms of Darwinian evolution, see Killingley 1990 and Brown 2012: 131-54.

The mind cannot be analysed by any external machine. Supposing you could look into my brain while I am thinking, you would only see certain molecules interchanged. You could not see thought, consciousness, ideas, images. You would simply see the mass of vibrations—chemical and physical changes. From this example we see that this sort of analysis would not do....

External analysis will go to the brain and find physical and chemical changes. It would never succeed [in answering the questions]: What is the consciousness? What is your imagination? Where does this vast mass of ideas you have come from, and where do they go? We cannot deny them. They are facts. I never saw my own brain. I have to take for granted I have one. But man can never deny his own conscious imagination. (CW7:431-2)

Here, Vivekananda rejects two strategies for explaining consciousness that are still being actively discussed by contemporary philosophers of mind—namely, materialist reductionism and eliminativism. While materialist reductionism seeks to explain consciousness in terms of physical states of the brain, eliminativism goes to the extreme of claiming that first-person consciousness does not even exist. Against eliminativism, Vivekananda argues that first-person conscious experiences are »facts« that cannot be denied. Against materialist reductionism, Vivekananda claims that through the methods of physical science, we might be able to demonstrate, at best, that certain »physical and chemical changes« in the brain correspond to certain states of consciousness. However, he argues that »[t]he mind cannot be analysed by any external machine,« because any such *objective* scientific analysis of the brain would require abandoning the *subjective* point of view with which conscious experiences are essentially connected (CW7:431). Therefore, he concludes that consciousness cannot be identical to anything material, such as a particular brain state. He thereby anticipates Nagel's argument against reductionism in his influential article »What Is It Like to Be a Bat?« (1974). As Nagel (1974: 437) puts it, »every subjective phenomenon is essentially connected with a single point of view, and it seems inevitable that an objective, physical theory will abandon that point of view.« Vivekananda can also be seen as anticipating Chalmers's distinction between »easy« and »hard« problems of consciousness, since Vivekananda distinguishes the easy problem of identifying the neural correlates of consciousness from the hard problem of explaining the *nature* of consciousness and *how* and *why* it is correlated with certain brain states.

Now we can come back to Vivekananda's involution argument for panpsychism. The reason I include his denial of materialist reductionism as the second premise of his involution argument will be obvious once we go on to discuss premise 3. If materialist reductionism holds, then consciousness would be identical to a brain state, and there would be no difficulty in explaining how consciousness—taken to be wholly physical—could have evolved from

non-conscious matter at a certain point in the evolutionary process. Hence, although Vivekananda does not explicitly state premise 2 in the context of his evolution argument for panpsychism, he nonetheless presupposes this premise.

Vivekananda defends premise 3 (the denial of emergentism) on the basis of the first two premises. As Vivekananda himself notes, many of his contemporaries subscribed to emergentism, the view that consciousness emerged at a late stage in evolutionary history. He defines the emergentist position as follows: »It is in man and the higher animals that we find intelligence, but millions of years have passed in this world before this intelligence came.« Vivekananda refutes emergentism by appealing to the doctrine of the pre-existent effect (premise 1): »[W]hat is this intelligence? If it was not present in the protoplasm, it must have come all of a sudden, something coming out of nothing, which is absurd.« According to Vivekananda, the emergentist view that conscious intelligence arose from non-conscious matter at a certain point in our evolutionary history is »absurd« because it is tantamount to holding that something can come from nothing, a position that is ruled out by premise 1. Since consciousness is distinct from matter (premise 2) and something cannot come from nothing, consciousness could not possibly have emerged from non-conscious matter.

In the statement just cited in which Vivekananda refutes emergentism, he also introduces the conclusion 4: the only way to avoid the »absurd« doctrine of emergentism is to assume that conscious intelligence was already »present in the protoplasm.« In other words, he believes that premise 3 makes it reasonable to accept panpsychism, the view that consciousness is present in everything. Just as the entire tree was »involved«—that is, present in a latent form—in the seed from which it grew, consciousness was involved, in the distant past, even in the most primitive forms of matter and life. As he puts it, the »perfect man ... was involved in the cell of the protoplasm....«

Vivekananda was not alone among his contemporaries in defending panpsychism. In fact, both W.K. Clifford (1845-1879) and William James (1842-1910) presented similar arguments for panpsychism. Like Vivekananda, James argued in his *Principles of Psychology* (1950 [1890]: 149), »If evolution is to work smoothly, consciousness in some shape must have been present at the very origin of things.« Likewise, Clifford (1874: 60-1) argued that the »doctrine of evolution« rules out the possibility of emergentism—which would have amounted to an »enormous ... jump from one creature to another«—and claimed, therefore, that there is consciousness or protoconsciousness »even in the Amoeba.« Vivekananda may even have been aware of the pan(proto?)psychist views of Clifford or James. However, Vivekananda was unique among his contemporaries in arguing for panpsychism on the basis of the doctrine of the

pre-existent effect (premise 1). For Vivekananda, since evolution presupposes material causation, it is an instantiation of the more general Sāṃkhyan doctrine that every effect pre-exists in its material cause.

It is also worth noting that contemporary philosophers of mind like Thomas Nagel and Philip Goff have advanced so-called »genetic« arguments for panpsychism that are very similar to Vivekananda's involution argument. Recently, Nagel (2012: 14-15) has argued for panpsychism on the grounds that »evolutionary biology ... cannot account for the appearance of consciousness and of other phenomena that are not physically reducible.« Similarly, Goff (2013) defends a »sorites-style argument for panpsychism« based on the assumption of the truth of evolutionary theory. According to Goff (2017b), if we assume that emergentism is true and that consciousness does not admit of borderline cases, then »we will have to suppose that some utterly precise micro-level change—down to an exact arrangement of particles—marked the first appearance of consciousness..., and it is going to seem arbitrary that it was that utterly precise change that was responsible for this significant change in nature.«<sup>19</sup> Vivekananda's involution argument for panpsychism has great contemporary relevance in this respect, since his unique appeal to the doctrine of the pre-existent effect arguably provides additional support for such genetic arguments.

Now that Vivekananda takes himself to have established the plausibility of panpsychism in general, he goes on to inquire into the precise *nature* of the all-pervasive consciousness that is »involved« even in primitive matter: »The question is: The involution of what? What was involved? God.« In order to justify his move from panpsychism in general to the *specific* view that the all-pervasive consciousness is Divine Consciousness (»God«), he presents the following argument:

*Argument 2: Vivekananda's Argument for Panentheistic Cosmopsychism*

1. *Argument from Design*: The traditional argument that this universe presents evidence of design makes it reasonable to believe that there exists a divine intelligence.
2. *Existence of Mystical Claims*: There are credible mystics, such as Sri Ramakrishna, who claim to have directly perceived an all-pervasive Divine Consciousness.
3. *Argument for the Epistemic Value of Mystical Experience*: Given certain uncontroversial epistemic principles of perceptual justification and

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19 This is Goff's own summary of his argument in Goff 2013.

perceptual testimony and other relevant premises, it is reasonable for us to believe that the reported spiritual experiences of credible mystics are veridical.

4. *Plausibility of Panentheistic Cosmopsychism*: Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that there exists an all-pervasive Divine Consciousness. (*from 1-3*)

In the long passage cited above, Vivekananda explicitly states premise 1 and the conclusion 4, and he hints at premise 2. I will argue that he also implicitly presupposes premise 3, which he explicitly articulates and defends in detail elsewhere. The fact that he explicitly appeals only to the design argument in this particular passage should not lead us to think that he arrives at the conclusion of panentheistic cosmopsychism on the basis of that argument alone. I will argue that the argument for the epistemic value of mystical experience, which he took to be even stronger than the design argument, is crucial to his argument for panentheistic cosmopsychism.

Vivekananda's first step in establishing the nature of the all-pervasive consciousness is to appeal to the »ancient design« argument (premise 1): the universe displays »intelligence« in its »adjustment of part to part.« He does not present the design argument in all its details, since he assumed that his British audience was familiar with it. Vivekananda's language of »adjustment of part to part« suggests that he likely had in mind William Paley's famous 1802 argument from design. Paley's argument runs as follows. When we inspect a watch, we find that »its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose, e.g. that they are so formed and adjusted as to produce motion, and that motion so regulated as to point out the hour of the day« (Paley 1802: 2). This adjustment of part to part in the watch makes it reasonable to infer that »the watch must have had a maker« (Paley 1802: 3). The natural world as a whole resembles the watch in its adjustment of part to part, though on a much vaster scale and with much greater complexity. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that the natural world was designed by a great and powerful divine intelligence.

Vivekananda's apparently uncritical acceptance of the design argument here is somewhat misleading, since in numerous other lectures, his stance toward the design argument is much more ambivalent, if not critical. For instance, in his lecture on »Vedic Religious Ideals,« he asserts that the design argument »is not a very logical argument, as we all know; there is something childish about it, yet it is the only little bit of anything we can know about God from the external world, that this world required a builder« (CW1:353). Vivekananda's overall position, then, seems to be that while the design argument is not very strong, it does lend *some* support to the belief that this world

was designed by a divine intelligence. As I argued in chapter 4, his views on the design argument were likely influenced by John Stuart Mill's ambivalent treatment of the design argument in his *Three Essays on Religion* (1874). According to Mill (1874: 174), Darwin's theory of evolution through the mechanism of the »survival of the fittest,« if true, »would greatly attenuate the evidence for« a Divine Creator, since it would account for the adjustment of part to part in the natural world in wholly naturalistic terms. However, Mill believed that no one had yet been able to prove that natural selection could explain *all* instances of apparent design in the natural world. Therefore, he concluded that »in the present state of our knowledge, the adaptations in Nature afford a large balance of probability in favour of creation by intelligence« (Mill 1874: 174). As I already mentioned, Vivekananda, like Mill, partially accepted Darwin's theory of evolution through natural selection, arguing that natural selection can account for the traits of lower animals but *cannot* explain the moral and spiritual qualities of human beings (CW7:154). Hence, I believe that Vivekananda agreed with Mill in holding that the design argument, though significantly weakened by Darwin's evolutionary theory, still gives us some reason to believe that this world was designed by a divine intelligence.

The next step in Vivekananda's argument is to inquire into the precise *nature* of this divine intelligence, the existence of which has been made at least somewhat plausible by premise 1 (the argument from design). Premises 2 and 3 comprise Vivekananda's primary argument for believing that the divine intelligence is the *all-pervasive* Divine Consciousness. Premise 2 is the relatively uncontroversial one that credible mystics like his own guru Sri Ramakrishna claim to have directly experienced the all-pervasive Divine Consciousness. He hints at this premise in the long passage cited earlier when he refers to »the perfect man,« »the God-man« who has realized the Divine Consciousness. At the end of the passage, he also cites Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 4.3 as scriptural support for his panentheistic cosmopsychism: »Thou art the man, Thou art the woman ... Thou art everything, O Lord.« Vivekananda looked upon scriptures like the Upaniṣads as records of the statements of enlightened »Rishis« who directly »realised« certain »supersensuous« facts (CW2:60). For Vivekananda, it was the modern sage Sri Ramakrishna who reaffirmed the panentheistic spiritual vision of these Upaniṣadic sages. In particular, as we discussed earlier, Sri Ramakrishna claimed to have attained the mystical state of »*vijñāna*,« which disclosed to him that »everything was Divine Consciousness« (Gupta 1992: 345). Sri Ramakrishna specifically taught the young Vivekananda that »there is a state higher than« Advaitic *nirvikalpa samādhi*, and he described this higher state as the realization that the Lord is »all that exists« (Chetanananda 1997: 36).



Of course, even if people like Sri Ramakrishna *claim* to have experienced the all-pervasive Divine Consciousness, what reason do we have to believe them? Vivekananda answers this question in premise 3, the argument for the epistemic value of mystical experience, which he develops in detail in other lectures and writings. Since I discuss this argument in detail in the fifth chapter of my book manuscript in progress, I will only provide here the barest outline of his argument. Vivekananda's key move is to derive a principle of epistemic justification from the traditional Indian doctrine of *pratyakṣa-pramāṇa* (the perceptual means of knowledge): »What is the proof of God? Direct perception, Pratyaksha. The proof of this wall is that I perceive it« (CW1:415). Here and elsewhere, Vivekananda advances a Principle of Perception as Epistemic Justification (hereafter PEJ), which I would reconstruct as follows:

When a subject *S* has a perceptual experience which she takes to be of *x*, *S* is thereby rationally justified in concluding that she really does experience *x* unless there are good reasons to think her experience is delusive.

Moreover, Vivekananda defends PEJ by arguing that its denial would leave us »no place to stand on this side of nihilism,« since we presuppose this principle whenever we act on the basis of our sense-perceptual experiences in our day-to-day lives (CW1:199). On the basis of PEJ and other relevant premises, Vivekananda argues that just as we are rationally justified in accepting as real what we perceive through our senses, mystics are rationally justified in accepting as real the transcendental entities such as God or the Ātman which they perceive through supersensuous perception.

But what about those of us who do not enjoy mystical experiences? Is it reasonable for us non-mystics to believe the testimony of mystics? In response to this question, Vivekananda reconceives the traditional Indian doctrine of *śabda-pramāṇa* (the testimonial means of knowledge) as a principle of perceptual testimony rooted in PEJ. According to Vivekananda, a credible person's claims about her own »direct perception« count as »direct evidence« for the rest of us (CW1:204-5). I take him to be championing here a Principle of Perceptual Testimony as Epistemic Justification (hereafter PTEJ), which I would formulate as follows:

Others are rationally justified in believing that *S*'s perceptual experience is as *S* reports it to be, unless they have some reason to believe that *S* is deluded or deceiving them.

According to Vivekananda, if we are rationally justified in believing the sense-perceptual testimony of ordinary people, then we are also rationally justified

in believing the testimony of credible mystics like Sri Ramakrishna who claim to have perceived that everything is Divine Consciousness. He concludes, therefore, that the »words« of »Yogis« who »have seen the truth« count as »direct evidence« for the existence of the supersensuous realities they claim to have perceived (CW1:204).

Vivekananda's defense of PEJ and PTEJ resonates strongly with contemporary philosophical defenses of similar epistemic principles, including Richard Swinburne's (2004: 293-326) principles of credulity and testimony, James Pryor's (2000) perceptual dogmatism, and Michael Huemer's (2001) phenomenal conservatism. Moreover, on the basis of these twin epistemic principles, Vivekananda advances an argument for the epistemic value of mystical experience that has remarkable affinities with the »arguments from religious experience« developed by recent philosophers of religion like Swinburne (2004: 293-326), Jerome Gellman (1997), and Kai-Man Kwan (2006).

Premises 1-3, Vivekananda argues, make it reasonable for us to accept panentheistic cosmopsychism, the view that the sole reality is an all-pervasive Divine Consciousness. As he puts it, »Everything that you see, feel, or hear, the whole universe ... is the Lord Himself.... He it is that comes down and becomes the lowest atom, and slowly unfolding His nature, rejoins Himself.«

Notice, then, that the conclusion of Argument 2 specifies the precise nature of the all-pervasive consciousness already established by Argument 1 (the involution argument for panpsychism): namely, that the all-pervasive consciousness is Divine Consciousness. Arguments 1 and 2 are also mutually supportive, since they provide independent grounds for believing that some form of panpsychism is true. Taken together, Arguments 1 and 2, if successful, make it reasonable to believe not only that panpsychism is true but that the most plausible form of panpsychism is panentheistic cosmopsychism. However, from Vivekananda's perspective, in order to achieve *absolute certainty* of the truth of panentheistic cosmopsychism, we would have to follow in the footsteps of mystics like the Upaniṣadic sages and Sri Ramakrishna, who attained the direct supersensuous perception of the all-pervading Divine Consciousness through intensive spiritual practice.

Of course, much more would need to be said to clarify and defend fully Vivekananda's panentheistic cosmopsychism. However, I hope to have shown in this chapter that his cosmopsychist position is a sophisticated and original one that deserves to be taken seriously by contemporary philosophers. To conclude, I will summarize four significant advantages of Vivekananda's distinctive cosmopsychist position over rival theories of consciousness. First, by conceiving mind as a subtle form of matter, Vivekananda not only accounts for the causal efficacy of mental states but also welcomes naturalistic explanations

of a wide range of cognitive phenomena like learning, remembering, and information processing. Second, his cosmopsychist position avoids the subject combination problem, which is the major pitfall for micropsychist theories. Third, since his panentheistic cosmopsychism is based on grounding by manifestation, it is arguably better equipped than other cosmopsychist theories to address various forms of the decombination problem. Fourth, he makes the radical claim that his panentheistic cosmopsychism can be empirically verified through mystical experience. While a small handful of contemporary philosophers have begun to consider the relevance of meditative techniques and mystical experience to debates about consciousness, Vivekananda has gone much further than any of them in defending the epistemic value of mystical experience on the basis of general epistemic principles. For too long, the philosophy of mind has been almost entirely isolated from the philosophy of religion. By bringing these two fields into fruitful dialogue, Vivekananda remains very much our contemporary.

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