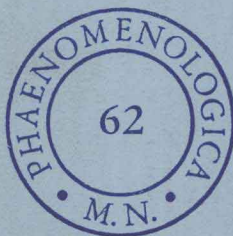


Phenomenological Perspectives

HISTORICAL AND SYSTEMATIC
ESSAYS IN HONOR OF

HERBERT SPIEGELBERG



MARTINUS NIJHOFF — THE HAGUE

PHENOMENOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

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ESSAYS IN HONOR OF
HERBERT SPIEGELBERG



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FOR HERBERT SPIEGELBERG

Philosophically: A Teacher
Phenomenologically: A Scholar
Professionally: A Colleague
Personally: A Friend

PREFACE

Professor H. L. Van Breda had hoped to write this preface, but his recent, unexpected and untimely death has left that task in my hands. Although my remarks will not be as eloquent and insightful as his surely would have been, some few words are clearly in order here; for the phenomenological community has not only lost the leadership of Fr. Van Breda these last years, but also the scholarship and leadership of Aron Gurwitsch and Alden Fisher – both contributors to this volume – as well as that of Dorion Cairns and John Wild. Our leaders are fewer now but Herbert Spiegelberg is still very obviously one of them.

This volume thus presents the work of some of the past and presently recognized leaders in phenomenology – e.g. Gurwitsch, Straus, and Fisher – but, more important perhaps, it also presents the work of some of those who are sure to be future leaders of our community of phenomenological philosophers, if in fact they have not already achieved this status. Most, if not all, of the contributors to this volume are in some way or another indebted to Herbert Spiegelberg and his work in phenomenology. The debt takes many forms and is owed by many more than just those represented here; and it is a debt that I believe one of the contributors, Waltraut Stein, has captured very well in her opening remarks:

“He who sings a true song joins in an antiphony and finds that his own voice does not simply die with his own last tones. To understand and to be understood, to love and to be loved, to create and to be the catalyst of creation – if these are the basic chords of life, then Herbert Spiegelberg is indeed singing a true song and this volume may be considered as part of his antiphony.”

The original editor of this volume encountered numerous problems which resulted in repeated delays and which make this volume some five years overdue. Since taking over this task myself about a year ago, my work has been considerably eased by the cooperation and encouragement of Fr. Van Breda, Prof. Taminiaux, and Heinz Leonardy of the Husserl-Archiv in Louvain. This volume is thus very much a joint effort of the contributors, several editors and readers, and a publisher – all of whom extend their best wishes to its recipient, Herbert Spiegelberg.

Philip J. Bossert
Kaneohe, Hawaii
January 10, 1975

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PART I

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

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COMPOSSIBILITY AND IMPOSSIBILITY IN LEIBNIZ

In a previous article we endeavored to deal with a paradox which seems to arise in Leibnizian philosophy.¹ Substances or monads are conceived by Leibniz to be totally self-contained and self-sufficient: they cannot act upon one another nor receive any influence from without. Every monad is confined to living in its own states which, all of them, arise only and exclusively from its own grounds. On the other hand, the Leibnizian philosophy contains a great many statements concerning the totality of monads. Every monad represents the entire universe from its particular "point of view." Hence the states and modifications of all monads or substances stand in the ideal relation of mutual correlation and correspondence. Between all substances and monads prevails the principle of the "universal harmony" which manifests itself in the just mentioned thoroughgoing correspondence.

The paradox in question arises from the fact that the monadological doctrine is established by a human mind, one monad among others, subject to the general monadic condition of self-containment and self-sufficiency and that, furthermore, the monadological philosophy is supposed to be understood and eventually accepted by other human minds, equally subject to the same general monadic condition. Under those circumstances, how can the philosopher come to know that there are other monads besides the one he is himself, that all of them represent the same universe, that his mental states, to which he is confined, are coordinated with, and correspond to the states of other monads

¹ A. Gurwitsch, "An Apparent Paradox in Leibnizianism," *Social Research* XXXIII, 1966.

and so on? If the monadological philosophy is correct, it is hard to see how it can be conceived; the truth of its doctrinal content seems to be at variance with the very fact of its formulation.

To be sure, Leibniz ascribes to the human mind a distinction and a privilege over all other monads, in the first place the souls of animals, namely the capacity of self-consciousness and reflection upon itself.² By this means the human mind may become explicitly aware of its windowless self-containment and of all its states as originating within itself. But self-consciousness and reflective analysis, however far carried out, do not lead beyond the confines of the reflecting monad. It seems that no avenue of access to other monads and their states can thus be opened up. Hence it seems to be impossible to account for the mere conception of a correlation between the reflecting monad's states and those of other monads.

To dissolve that paradox we proposed a working hypothesis according to which every monad and all of its states contain as inherent and essentially determining features references to all other monads of the same universe and to the respective states of those monads. While remaining within its own confines, the reflecting human mind may, by analyzing its own states, discover and disclose the mentioned references which, to stress it again, are part and parcel of the states under reflective scrutiny, since they are inscribed in them as immanent features and thus qualify them and make them to be what they are. Such disclosure, of course, is not tantamount to a detailed and accurate knowledge concerning the other monads and their states nor of the law of coordination obtaining between the states of the several monads. Rather the knowledge in question is indistinct, vague, and highly unspecified.³ No more is in question than a general and abstract knowledge that there are other monads and that the states of all monads correspond to one another, while the law of that corre-

² Cf., among other texts, *Considérations sur les Principes de Vie, et sur les Natures Plastiques* (*Die philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, ed. by C. I. Gerhardt (henceforth referred to as *P*) VII 542); *Essais de Théodicée* III 250 (*P*. VI 265 f); *Principes de la Nature et de la Grâce, fondés en Raison* 4 f. (*P*. VI 600 f); *Monadologie* 29 (*P*. VI 611).

³ The difference between those two kinds of knowledge is formulated by Leibniz as that between "rem comprehendere, hoc est quicquid in ea latet in potestate habere" and merely "scire aliquid de re," *Animadversiones in partem generalem Principiorum Cartesianorum* I 26 (*P* IV 360).

lation and correspondence remains unknown as to its specific content. Still, that knowledge seems to provide a sufficient basis for the conception of the monadological philosophy in its general outlines.

Our working hypothesis rests on the assumption that the particular monads cannot be accounted for in their own terms. It is not the case that every particular substance or monad has its being and its nature in its own right and possesses its properties and qualities independently of other monads, such that "ready made" substances, so to speak, are subsequently united into a system (the universe), which might require their equally subsequent adjustment to one another. On the contrary, the particular monad can be accounted for only within the context of the monadic system to which it belongs and as a member of that system. Its membership in that system makes the particular monad to be what it is. All substances pertaining to the system in question mutually determine and qualify one another, such that any given monad has its specific nature and properties on account of all members of the same system possessing theirs. In this sense, all monads can be said to be contained and to be present in one another, that is to say in any given monad. *We interpret the principle of the universal harmony to the effect that every particular monad is essentially oriented with regard to all other monads of the universe, that orientation being a constitutive element of its nature.* Our interpretation derives support and substantiation from Leibniz's insistence upon the unity of the universe, to which we shall presently return.

Methodologically speaking, our procedure purports departing from the traditional approach to Leibnizian philosophy, namely starting from the particular monad and then trying to find the transition to the monadic system.⁴ Rather we take our departure from the system of the substances and endeavor to understand the particular monad under the perspective of the systematic context within which it has its place. Since our methodological procedure seems to have proved fruitful in the case of the men-

⁴ L. Brunschvicg, *Les Étapes de la Philosophie Mathématique* (Paris 1942) ch. XI, who follows the traditional approach, has shown the almost insuperable difficulties by which it is beset.

tioned paradox, we propose to apply it also to the interpretation of the concepts of compossibility and impossibility.

Leibniz defines possibility by absence of contradiction. By compossibility is meant compatibility of some entity, notion or substance, with other entities while impossibility denotes incompatibility of entities with one another, each one of which is in itself possible, that is to say free from internal contradictions.⁵ Though the terms in question occur frequently in his writings, Leibniz has hardly ever presented an explicit conceptual discussion of the grounds of compossibility in impossibility. Occasionally he makes the pessimistic remark that impossibility has thus far remained unexplainable to man, because all primitive notions of which the complex ones are composed, seem perfectly compatible with one another.⁶ Still, the use which Leibniz makes of those concepts in the discussion of a few examples strongly motivates and suggests their interpretation with reference to the unity of the universe.

On the strength of the Principle of Continuity it is not only permitted but even required to conceive of species of living creatures between those that actually exist, such that a continuous transition be made possible from one actually existing species to another, which as far as our experience shows us, are separated from one another by discontinuous jumps. However, those intermediary creatures ("créatures mitoyennes entre celles qui sont éloignées") are not encountered in the real world, because not every form or species fits into every order ("toute forme ou espèce n'est pas de tout ordre").⁷ They are absent from the universe on account of their incompatibility, as Leibniz expresses it, with the sequence of creatures and things.⁸ We furthermore

⁵ We say "notion of substance" in view of Leibniz's doctrine that every individual substance has a complete notion (*Discours de Métaphysique* 8 Leibniz, *Discours de Métaphysique et Correspondance avec Arnauld*, ed. by George Le Roy (Paris 1957, henceforth referred to as *Le Roy*), p. 43 f). In this doctrine appears the Leibnizian panlogism, that is to say the conception of reality as an incarnation of logic. The individual substance proves the ontological equivalent of its complete notion, and concepts which have logical meaning and refer to notions may also be applied to the corresponding substances.

⁶ "Illud tamen adhuc hominibus ignotum est, unde oriatur impossibilitas diversorum, seu qui fieri possit ut diversae essentiae invicem pugnent, cum omnes termini pure positive videantur esse compatibles inter se," *P.* VII 195.

⁷ *Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement* III, VI & 12 (*P.* V 286).

⁸ *Ibid.* "... toutes les espèces possibles ne sont point com-possibles dans l'univers tout grand qu'il est, et cela non seulement par rapport aux choses, qui sont ensemble

refer to another text, complementary to the one just mentioned, insofar as the point at issue is not the absence but the presence of a certain creature, in this case a human individual. At the end of the *Essais de Théodicée*, Theodorus is shown in a dream a plurality of possible worlds which, all of them, contain a Sextus Tarquinius, more correctly a certain variety of Sextus Tarquinius.⁹ Each "Sextus Tarquinius" takes a certain course of action and has a fate consonant with his course of action. All the courses of action and all the fates differ from one another as well as from those of the Sextus Tarquinius of the real world, the last king of Rome, who because of his crime was deposed and expelled from the city. In other words, any possible world as well as the real world, which, of course, is also a possible world, admits of only one specific variety of Sextus Tarquinius, and of no other. To every variety of Sextus Tarquinius corresponds a specific world.

Compossibility and impossibility have meaning only with reference to the world or the universe to which the substance in question belongs. At this point the problem arises concerning the manner in which the structure of a world at large and especially its unity is to be conceived. If by world is meant the sum total of existing individual substances and if, accordingly, its unity has the sense of a mere agglomeration, no more is possible than simply to ascertain the presence or the absence of a certain being or substance. Denoting the presence as compossibility and the absence as impossibility amounts to no more than stating the problem of the reasons of the presence and absence. Not only does that problem seem insolvable, but it also appears impossible to indicate in a general way the grounds on which compossibility and impossibility obtain. Hence no definition of those concepts can be given.

As his discussion with Arnauld shows, Leibniz does not endorse

en même temps, mais même par rapport à toute la suite des choses . . . il y a nécessairement des espèces qui n'ont jamais été et ne seront jamais, n'étant pas compatibles avec cette suite des créatures que Dieu a choisie." Cf. also *Essais de Théodicée* II 201: "... comme tous les possibles ne sont point compatibles entr'eux dans une même suite d'univers, c'est pour cela même que tous les possibles ne sauraient être produits . . ." P. VI 236).

⁹ *Essais de Théodicée* III 414 ff (P. VI 362 ff). See also the discussion of a plurality of "possible Adams" in *Letter to Landgraf Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels*, April 12, 1686; *Remarques sur la lettre de M. Arnauld*; and *Letter to Arnauld*, July 4 (14) 1686 (*Le Roy* pp. 88, 108, 119 f).

the just sketched conception of the unity of the world. Arnauld takes exception to Leibniz's thesis that the complete notion of every person contains ("enferme") once for ever whatever will happen to that person as well as in the whole universe.¹⁰ According to Arnauld, Leibniz's thesis entails the consequence that God was free to create Adam or not to create him. Once, however, Adam was created, no room is left any longer for the freedom of God, since all events concerning both Adam and his posterity, i.e. the whole human race, derive with strict necessity ("par une nécessité plus que fatale") from the creation of Adam and the complete notion pertaining to him.¹¹ Leibniz rejects both alternatives which underlie Arnauld's reasoning, the other alternative being that in order to preserve the divine freedom, a plurality of free decrees or decisions which God takes on, the appropriate occasions must be admitted. From this admission it would follow that the divine decrees or volitions are disjoined and disconnected from one another. God, however, unlike man, does not make his decisions from one occasion to the next, according to circumstances ("selon les occurrences").¹² Strictly speaking, God does not have particular volitions nor issue particular decrees apart and detached from His general will and general decree.¹³ His will is all-comprehensive and concerns first of all the universe as a whole which He penetrates by a single glance ("d'une seule vue"),¹⁴ and only secondarily or, more correctly, in a derivative manner the particular substances and persons pertaining to the

¹⁰ *Discours de Métaphysique 8 and Sommaire 13* (Le Roy p. 43 f and 81). It was only the *Sommaire*, and not the integral text of the *Discours de Métaphysique* that Leibniz had sent to Arnauld through the intermediary of Landgraf Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels.

¹¹ Arnauld's *Letter to Landgraf Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels*, March 13, 1686 and his *Letter to Leibniz*, May 13, 1686 (Le Roy p. 83 and 95 f).

¹² Leibniz's *Letter to Landgraf Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels*, April 12, 1686 (Le Roy p. 87 f.).

¹³ "Si . . . voluntas particularis est, . . . quae in nullam generalem potest resolvi, puto nullam Dei voluntatem esse particularem, cum omnia a Deo secundum generales quasdam leges fiant," Bodemann, *Die Leibniz Handschriften der Kgl. Öffentlichen Bibliothek zu Hannover* (Hannover and Leipzig 1895) p. 106; *Essais de Théodicée* III 337: "Dieu ne saurait jamais avoir une volonté particulière primitive, c'est à dire indépendante des Lois ou des volontés générales . . ." (P. VI 315); cf. also *ibid.* II 196 (P. VI 233) and *Letter to Clarke* V 66 and 68 (P. VII 407). In this respect Leibniz's position is in agreement with, and has, perhaps, been stimulated by, the views of Malebranche, *Recherche de la Vérité*, XV. *Éclaircissement: Traité de la Nature et de la Grâce*, I. *Éclaircissement* XV; *Méditations Chrétiennes et Métaphysiques* XI, XIII ff (*Oeuvres de Malebranche* III 215 ff, V 165 f, X 120 ff (Paris 1958, 1959, 1964).

¹⁴ *Letter to Landgraf Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels*, April 12, 1686 (Le Roy p. 87).

universe. That is to say, *in creating Adam*, or, as Leibniz often prefers to express it, *in admitting Adam to existence*, God, so to speak, *did not have in view Adam in particular nor any member of his posterity in particular but rather the entire universe comprising both Adam and his whole posterity as well as all other beings*.¹⁵ Therefore, the question is not as to whether Adam is destined to sin, but rather as to whether Adam, who on account of his complete notion is going to sin, is to be admitted to existence.¹⁶ If, with respect to particular beings and substances of the universe, one wishes to speak of particular decrees, one may legitimately do so, provided the particular decrees are understood as being contained in the general decree and deriving from it as consequences.¹⁷ Leibniz goes as far as to maintain that the particular decrees differ from the general one much like the aspect under which a city appears when approached from a certain direction, differs from its “plan géométral.” All particular decrees express the entire universe as every aspect under which the city presents itself expresses the city.¹⁸ In this sense, the universe as a whole has priority over all its particular beings, substances, and monads. Its unity manifests itself in this priority.

The unity of the universe rests upon, and is founded by, a general decree. Leibniz also uses expressions like principal plans (“desseins principaux”), purposes or ends (“fins”), principal or primitive notion (“notion principale ou primitive”).¹⁹ These expressions apply not only to the real world which has been admitted

¹⁵ *Remarques sur la lettre de M. Arnauld*: “... ce n'est pas tant à cause que Dieu a résolu de créer cet Adam qu'il a résolu tout le reste, mais ... tant la résolution qu'il prend à l'égard d'Adam, que celle qu'il prend à l'égard d'autres choses particulières, est une suite de la résolution qu'il prend à l'égard de tout l'univers ...” (*Le Roy* p. 108); see also *Letter to Arnauld*, July 4 (14), 1686 (*Le Roy* p. 117).

¹⁶ *Specimen inventorum de admirandis naturae generalis arcanis*: “... intelligi ... potest Deum non decernere, utrum Adamus peccare debeat, sed utrum illa series rerum, cui inest Adamus, cujus perfecta notio individualis peccatum involvit, sit aliis nihilominus praeferenda” (*P.* VII 311 f). To speak exactly, one should not say “Deum ... decernere, ut Petrus peccat, aut Judas damnatur, sed decernere tantum ut prae aliis possibilibus Petrus ... peccaturus, et Judas damnationem passurus ad existentiam perveniant,” *Opusculs et Fragments inédits de Leibniz*, ed. by Couturat, (Paris 1803), p. 520.

¹⁷ *Essais de Théodicée* I 84: “... tous les decrets de Dieu ... sont simultanes, non seulement par rapport au temps, ... mais encore in signo rationis, ou dans l'ordre de la nature ... un seul decrets total, qui est celui de créer un tel monde, ... comprend également tous les decrets particuliers ...” (*P.* VI 147 f).

¹⁸ *Letter to Landgraf Ernst von Hessen-Rheinfels*, April 12, 1686 (*Le Roy* p. 87 f).

¹⁹ *Remarques sur la lettre de M. Arnauld* and *Letter to Arnauld*, July 4 (14), 1686 (*Le Roy* p. 107 f and 116).