

Hypnosis: Panpsychism in Action

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Hypnosis ranks amongst the most fundamental ideas that made the Victorian age. Together with progress, creativity, techno-science and industrialization, evolutionism and its by-product eugenism, and, last but not least, the emergent feminist movement, it gave a peculiar flavor to its main trait: the faith in the superiority (if not the superior rationality) of Western civilization and in its colonial duties.¹

Although for the *vulgus pecum*, it was (and to a great respect remained in popular media) at best a new form of entertainment and at worst a form of dangerous manipulation, it attracted the attention of major thinkers of that time, who got a clearer grasp of the stakes. For renowned scientists and philosophers such as J. Ward, W. James and H. Bergson, hypnosis and the so-called paranormal events were *facts* of the highest speculative interest. As such, the question of its nature and of its conditions of possibility deserve to be raised in this *Handbook*—especially since hypnotic phenomena bring to the fore conundrums that are unlikely to be settled without a panpsychism of sorts.

The argument proceeds in four main steps. First, we define the normal state of consciousness, that we choose to call “zero-state” in order to avoid the derogatoriness of the concept of “normality” and to suggest straight away the existence of a hierarchy of states. We furthermore underline, on the one hand, the presupposed non-dualism of common-sense and the consequent theoretical dualism of substantialism.

Second, we peruse again the same three steps, but this time from a *process* standpoint. Consciousness-zero is then relativized with the help of a genetic perspective that is anchored in the presupposed common-sense through what has been called the “biological theory of knowledge.” The consequent processism is sketched as a theoretical *non*-dualism.

Third, the main consequences of this processualization of the concept of consciousness are specified in three steps: the existence of a field of consciousness, that is structured by the concept of threshold, and that can be cautiously interpreted with the introduction of a scale of consciousness and of a spectrum of vigilance.

Fourth, the main consequences of this processualization of the concept of consciousness is implemented in three steps: Whitehead’s panexperientialism is differentiated from panpsychism, the nature of hypnosis is envisaged, and socio-political issues are discussed.

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1. Consciousness-zero and Substantialism

Our discussion must, inevitably, start with a heuristic definition of consciousness that will provisionally collapse all intensities of experiences and shades of meaning displayed by our everyday interactions with our human and non-human environment.

1.1. Definition of Consciousness-zero

Let consciousness-zero be defined by (solely instantiated in) public debate or conversation. It thus demands at least two interlocutors, present in person and sharing the same rationality, i.e., language. In other words, it is unsurprisingly characterized by two main dimensions: rational and physical. This is no doubt a very restrictive definition that is likely to be found *prima facie* unacceptable: is it not obvious indeed that our conscious experience is far more ambivalent and rich than the one put up here for interrogation? Far from neglecting this variegatedness, our argument actually exploits it systematically—but the need for a precise starting point nevertheless remains, especially in light of the definitional *sfumato* fostered by most psychologists, experimental or otherwise.

On the one hand, consciousness-zero *per se* demands the extensive use of a refined form of language; on the other, it requires intersubjectivity in a particular environment, the key-concept being the *Agora*. A perfect historical exemplification is indeed available: the Greek citizen debating political issues with his peers in the Market-place. The use of reason is as essential as the actual presence of the individuals. Neither the public use of irrationalities nor the private use of reason (for familial—biological?—or rumination purposes) qualify.

The physical requirement is rather straightforward, but the rational one is far more nebulous, hence the following propositions: what is congruent with a set of given rules of relevance is *rational*; what is not thus congruent is *irrational*, but could become congruent if properly revised; what is definitely incommensurable with reason is *non-rational*.² In other words, there is always a measure of contingency in all rational systems. The simplest way of exemplifying this in the case of consciousness-zero is to give a quick look at Aristotelian logic with the help of the three “principles” or “laws” defined by Boole³ (independently of Leibniz’ conceptual renovation in terms of principle of sufficient reason and identity of indiscernibles and of Schopenhauer’s synthesis). The principle of *identity* states that we come to know all things in so far as they have some unity and identity.⁴ It has naturally to be linked with the substance-attribute ontology granting permanence amid flux. The principle of *contradiction* is somehow the negative side of the principle of identity: it claims that the same attribute cannot, at the same time and in the same respect, belong and not belong to the same subject.⁵ According to the principle of *excluded middle* (or *tertium non datur*), there cannot be an intermediate between contradictories: of one subject we must either affirm or deny any one predicate.⁶ There is no third possibility: *either* it rains *or* it does not. Consequently, any proposition that does belong to the territory marked out by these three principles is, from an Aristotelian perspective, rational; if it does not, it is irrational. A contradiction is not irrational, since it possesses a clear status in the system: it is a statement that is always false and *everybody agrees* that it is so because some

mistake must have occurred in the chain of reasoning. A paradox, however, is irrational: as its etymology shows, it is a contradiction that has the appearance of truth, with the result that there are numerous *opinions* regarding the way of understanding them; no consensus prevails. The arational is for him *matter* (the complementary of *form* in his hylomorphism).

In sum, our prolegomenal argument is somewhat reminiscent of Aristotle's double definition of the human being ("anthropos" is gender-neutral like Latin "homo") *qua zoon logôn echon* and *zoon politikon*: objectifying rationality and political environment circumscribe together consciousness-zero and its practical dualism. To define consciousness with the help of the concept of *intentionality* (cf. Husserl after Brentano and the Scholastics) or with the concept of *contrast* between a fact and a possibility (cf. Whitehead in *Process and Reality*)⁷ lures us too quickly towards a sophisticated understanding of consciousness (or even towards an idealist if not solipsistic one—remember Husserl's *Cartesian Meditations* and Whitehead claiming a proximity with Bradley⁸). According to the basically common-sense interpretation developed here, it is primarily an *intersubjective* phenomenon. Without intersubjectivity, no consciousness-zero.

1.2. Common-sensical Non-Dualism

When the conscious interplay of embodied rational citizens is contextualized, we find, in one direction (uphill) a practical non-dualism and, in the other (downhill), a theoretical dualism.

The threefold meaning of *sensus communis* is helpful to name and specify the non-dualism that is presupposed in practice: according to Arendt's fresh reading of Aquinas, common sense is made of three threads: the concerted functioning of the five senses (more precisely, *cœnæsthesia*); the sharing with other humans of the world *qua* context; and the sharing with other living creatures of the world as environment.⁹

Let us also pin-point a similar attempt in Whiteheadian studies: Griffin speaks of *hard-core common-sense notions*¹⁰ to qualify the universal and primordial beliefs that human beings do not question *in practice*: humans share an "animal faith" of sorts in their fundamental freedom, in the causal efficacy of their actions, in the existence of values and of a temporal drift. All these occur in a realistic atmosphere: idealism is not to be found at this pre-rational level. *Soft-core common-sense notions* belong for their part to *doxa*: they are culturally contingent and philosophically (and scientifically) insignificant.

In conclusion: the dualism at work in consciousness-zero is buttressed on a "world-loyalty" that is commonly ignored and philosophically obliterated by substantialistic dualism. The goal of the process ontological renewal is to firmly anchor everyday consciousness in this deep experiential structure and, thereby, to re-enchant the world (cf. M. Berman and D. R. Griffin).

1.3. Substantialist Theoretical Dualism

Whereas, *volens nolens*, consciousness-zero springs from a *non-dualistic* social network (in the broad, experiential, sense of the word), it brings forth, by the sheer power of its abstractions, a fully-fledged *dualistic* theory otherwise known as substantialism. Here also a quick overview of Aristotle is relevant to specify its applicability.

Most of Aristotle's categories—starting with the category of substance itself—are based on (even wedged to) consciousness-zero. In other words, they are adequate to depict the type of rationality exploited in everyday life (*cf.* Piaget), *not* the Ultimate. If one follows Boole's definition again, we obtain an acute depiction of the raw understanding of consciousness presupposed in most literature. The principle of *identity* requires that there is only one such *thing* as “consciousness;” the principle of *contradiction* claims that one cannot, at the same time and in the same respect, be conscious and not-conscious; the principle of *excluded middle* adds that there is no third possibility: one has to be either conscious or unconscious. The overall intuition of consciousness substantialism is a two-states system of the “on/off” type: the subject is either totally conscious or totally unconscious. It pervades the well-known anecdote of Russell:

I began to develop a philosophy of my own during the year 1898 [...]. It was Whitehead who was the serpent in this paradise of Mediterranean beauty. He said to me once: "You think the world is what it looks in fine weather at noon day; I think it is what it seems like in the early morning when one first wakes from deep sleep." I thought this remark horrid, but could not see how to prove that my bias was any better than his. At last he showed me how to apply the technique of mathematical logic to his vague and higgledy-piggledy world, and dress it up in Sunday clothes that the mathematician could view without being shocked.¹¹

In conclusion, the virtue of Aristotle's system has to be reframed. On the one hand, his ontological pretensions have to be limited to the *mesocosmos*, that names the world of “middle dimensions” where humans dwell (i.e., neither the microcosm nor the macrocosm)—and process thought has thus to provide a way of recovering them; on the other, one can show that concepts such as *Poiesis/Praxis* and *Dynamis/Energeia* possess a broader applicability than their substantialist cradle, i.e., that they are crucial to all forms of philosophical systematization and, as such, constitute the true Aristotelian legacy.¹²

2. Consciousness in Process

The *process* understanding of consciousness not only aims at doing justice to all the facets evoked so far (to consciousness-zero as it is empirically available, to its presupposed non-dualism *and* to its consequential theoretical dualism): it enlarges the scope of the discussion with the help of a premise shared with radical empiricism (all experiences—including relations—have to be taken at face value). By doing so, it enables itself to systematically analyze all these facets. The focus on the Agora necessarily remains but at the same time it is relativized with the help of the concept of mesocosm.

In order to understand what is at stake, a short Jamesean digression is needed. James' insistence on the difference between two basic type of philosophical thinking is well-known: on the one hand, rationalism and its monistic trend; on the other empiricism and its pluralism. But the exact significance of his *radical* empiricism is often taken for granted. A close reading of rationalists' and empiricists' arguments reveals that both philosophical streams share the exact same presupposed substantialism. Accordingly, James' radical empiricism is designed to overcome *both* rationalism (with its innate general ideas formatted by *calculus*) and empiricism

(with its acquired particular ideas put together by *association*). It claims that *primitive* experience is not equivalent to *elementary* experience: empiricists have mixed up the source or origin and the element. Experience *qua* experience—“pure experience” as James calls it—does not have at all the simplicity, the atomicity, the individuality that is presupposed by rationalists and empiricists alike: it is vague, confused (neither clear nor distinct), above all relational (neither subjective nor objective).¹³ In the same way that Locke has improperly imported in psychology Boyle’s corpuscular paradigm, Spencer has wrongly used Laplace’s cosmogenetic model of the solar system to understand psychogenesis. We do notprehend parts but the Whole in its complex opacity. From that prehendend Whole, we discriminate parts that are eventually organized by a triple *genesis* (onto-, phylo- and koino-).¹⁴ In brief: fragmentary experience is not *amalgamated* by calculus or by association from simple to complex, but *emerges* from complex to simple. Parts are not given from the beginning because they do not exist independently of the relations which unite them.

2.1. Re-definition of Consciousness-zero: Relativization of Practical Dualism

Our heuristic definition of consciousness-zero underlined its intersubjectivity and its rationality: in a word, its public or political dimension (in the Greek sense). There are two direct correlates to this very limited view: first, the physical kinship, second the rational one. Consciousness-zero takes place among individuals for whom reason is a shared faculty. (Typically: the Greek citizen and *his* cosmos ruled by one single logos.)

The first move that is required by process radical empiricism is to acknowledge the relativity of our own conscious standpoint. This requires to substitute the Market-place by Hans Reichenbach’s (1891–1953) *mesocosm*. The evolutionary process of adjustment of the cognitive forms to the general structure of reality is only partial: it is (somewhat) adequate only to the *mesocosm*. By doing so, one opens the public sphere: consciousness-zero is a *function* of the interaction between *emergent* rational creatures whose practical dualism has to be recontextualized. Whitehead inherits from Bruno and Darwin the destruction of the cosmos (i.e., the opening of the world, first spatially and second temporally) and the geometrization of space (i.e., its homogenisation). Helio-cosmo-centrism institutes an infinite mechanical universe, free from the Aristotelian hierarchy (i.e., topology) of natural laws—Whiteheadian organicism seeks to re-animate it.

In sum, the process standpoint opens a new perspective that has two main modes. First, the perspective:

We must get rid of the notion of consciousness as a little box (*R* 16-17).

or, in the words of James:

To deny plumply that “consciousness” exists seems so absurd on the face of it—for undeniably “thoughts” do exist—that I fear some readers will follow me no farther. Let me then immediately explain that I mean only to deny that the word stands for an entity, but to insist most emphatically that it does stand for a function.¹⁵

Second, the functional modes constituting the basic sophistication of our intersubjective understanding of consciousness-zero: the neutral monism of the pure flux (*cf.* James’ *Principles of Psychology* or Whitehead’s London epoch) and the neutral pluralism of the bud-like

eventfulness (James' *Pluralistic Universe* and Whitehead's "epochal theory" during his Harvard years). In both cases the pure experience thesis holds: we have a direct, indiscriminate experience of the world (by acquaintance¹⁶), i.e., discriminations between perceiving "subject" and perceived "objects" and between "objects" themselves have yet to be made. The difference lies in the assessment of the question of novelty: if processes are continuous, no genuine novelty is possible and we remain in a neutral monism that nevertheless offers the solution to most epistemological puzzles (such as the mind-body problem).

2.2. Common-sensical Non-Dualism

The process standpoint provides the most adequate tools to understand the threefold meaning of *sensus communis*: the triple genesis (discussed *supra*) that was presupposed—but not thematized—by substantialism comes now to the fore.

First, the cognitive functions of the human mind are not static operators at all, they are the transient *phylogenetical* result of a long adaptive process (Spencer). Under the pressure of environmental adjustment (better knowledge allows a better chance for survival), the human intellect has become a master in the logic of solid bodies (linear causality, Euclidean geometry, etc.). But this is just an evolutionary adjustment to a limited—perceived—segment of a throbbing and coalescing world. In sum: the categories that are *a priori* for the individual are *a posteriori* for the species.

Second, these functions result from an *ontogenetical* process: individuals are not born fully equipped with the rational apparatus embodied in consciousness-zero. Four temporally and logically sequenced stages can be distinguished (Piaget): the sensorimotor stage (ages 0-2), the preoperational stage (ages 2-7), the concrete operational stage (ages 7-11), and the formal operational stage (ages 11-adult).

Third, the evolutionary success of humans also lies in the fortunate oversimplifications the species has achieved and perpetuates through cultural endeavours (Bateson). *Koinogenesis*¹⁷ is the process of convergence of individual consciousnesses through learning. It is a process of integrative synchronic tuning that can be contrasted with schismogenesis—or progressive (pathological) differentiation.¹⁸ Evolution in the biosphere and education in the ethosphere are intertwined in individual ontogenesis.

2.3. Process Theoretical Non-Dualism

The theoretical non-dualism enforced by process thought leads straight to the relativization, not the destruction, of Aristotelian substantialism. Whitehead's goal is not to revoke the category of substance, but to reconstruct its limited applicability from an eventful perspective. It basically amounts to explain mesocosmic substance with the help of societies (or trajectories) of "bud-like" events. Interestingly enough, the process standpoint can be characterized as the very one rejected point-blank as unscientific by Aristotle himself: the event or accident (*sumbebekos*) comes first, essences, substances and the like are secondary. We are looking for an *accidental* science.

This brings us to the contrast we have already introduced between neutral monism and neutral pluralism. Process is a very old concept that can take two main guises: weak (trans-formative) and strong (creative).

The weak concept—that already speaks in terms of event, flux, instability and the like—puts becoming *before* being; “being” is understood as the surface effect of ever-changing underlying relationships. This conceptualisation may occur solely at the phenomenological level, i.e., without involving ontological problematization. Whitehead's “London period” is a good example of such an attitude. It is a *continuist* concept that sees Nature’s unrest as a “perpetual transition into novelty.” Change is morphological: new patterns are made of old ones.

With the strong concept, not only is the question raised at the ontological level, but it is now bolder: there cannot be a continuous stream of events progressively disclosing new cosmic features. So *Process and Reality*'s (1929) “creative advance” claims that genuine novelty can only *enter* the World in a disruptive, bud-like manner. Its point is to secure true becoming, to make the emergence of the unexpected possible within the fabric of the universe. “Process and individuality require each other” (MT 97): change is creation.

Obiter scriptum, let us notice that this brings to the fore two main paths to rethink therapy. Psychotherapy is, no doubt, in need of new foundations: to start with, dualism and materialistic reductionism still cripple its efficacy. The question is whether one requires an open universe—and belief in the possibility of self-creation—in order to make sense of the cure, or not. According to Whiteheadian processism, there is simply no way to represent, and even less to actualize, the expected psychological change without epochality. Total consciousness is liberation. According to transformative processism such as the one advocated by François Roustang,¹⁹ the epochal theory is not needed to bypass the deterministic universe and creation is too remnant of outdated metaphysics—spontaneity is more than enough. Realizing Emptiness is liberation.

3. Processism and Spectral Consciousness

Unlike substance psychology, process psychology sees consciousness as a *function* that accepts a third option (*tertium datur*): we can be both conscious and unconscious at the same time, especially since there is a continuum of levels of awareness possible.

We now have all the elements to show how and why panpsychism appears to be the only viable (i.e., coherent and applicable) response to the question “what is consciousness”—whether one accepts the process worldview or not. It should not be forgotten indeed that panpsychism has, until the early twentieth century, always been one among the most respected mainstream philosophical positions. Its frequent present-day characterization as the fringe position of an idiosyncratic few is demonstrably false (unless one considers the Scholastics). The best recent study on that topic is David Skrbina's *Panpsychism in the West*,²⁰ which is an extremely scholarly survey of panpsychism from the pre-Socratic philosophers up to and including the present day discussion. The most compelling and relevant part of Skrbina's exposition is his treatment of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, where he documents panpsychist thinking,

especially among respected natural scientists, with a degree of prevalence so widespread that even its present supporters will be surprised. Let us resume our argument with three last points.

3.1. The Field of Consciousness

First, radical empiricism claims that *all* experiences—and *only* experiences—have to be taken at face value in philosophical speculation. Doing so brings to the fore a variegated cluster of experiences that constitutes the field of consciousness. To quote Whitehead:

In order to discover some of the major categories under which we can classify the infinitely various components of experience, we must appeal to evidence relating to every variety of occasion. Nothing can be omitted, experience drunk and experience sober, experience sleeping and experience waking, experience drowsy and experience wide-awake, experience self-conscious and experience self-forgetful, experience intellectual and experience physical [...].²¹

Accepting all these experiences is an essential step but by no means the most problematic. Here is a recent authoritative account of the stakes:

There is such overwhelming evidence of unconscious cognition inferred from its conscious products that to deny its occurrence is either an admission of ignorance concerning the origin of conscious thought, or taking the indefensible position that all thought arises in consciousness. In addition to dream, this includes hypnotic and mystical states, creativity, myth, non-intentional moods or objectless states, such as diffuse anxiety or unresolved conflict, drive and motivation, sleepwalking and other dissociative states, “slips of the tongue,” obsessions, compulsions, not to mention the whole “storehouse” of grammar, memory, beliefs and values that account for thought, acts, objects and language. There are also experimental probes of non-conscious processes, such as masking, tachistoscopic presentation (percept-genetic and related studies), priming, learning during anesthesia, split-brain cases, incidental and procedural learning, conditioning, habit and skill formation. To dismiss the unconscious as physiology avoids the obligation to go beyond negation to a more exact account of the transition to consciousness, its immediate precursors and evolutionary ancestry.²²

The speculative function of reason requires indeed that we order all these evidences somehow, i.e., that we *make sense* of their variety.

3.2. Subliminal Consciousness

The key that Whiteheadian process thought promotes in consciousness studies is straightforward: consciousness-zero has to be profiled against a scale that embodies the various degrees of awareness, value and complexity that human experience can reach. There is little doubt that the complete systematization of such a scale is a tricky business: there are serious theoretical problems involved, such as focus, typology and adequacy. Should we focus on the state itself, i.e., on intrinsic value (*cf.* James’ “immediate delight” and “enormous sense of inner authority and illumination”) or on its consequences, i.e., extrinsic value (*cf.* “good consequential fruits for life”: spiritual riches, bodily strength, actual dispositions)?²³ Typologically speaking, should we proceed *a posteriori* (this would require an experimental protocol) or *a priori* (only with speculative categories)? With regard to adequacy of the scale: should it have an individual or an universal scope? (In such a case, how to treat Laing’s *metanoia* or Plato’s *theoria*?). Moreover, the issue of measurement is, as usual in psychological matters, highly problematic.²⁴

Nevertheless, all this does not imply that the definition of the scale's general appearance is useless. In order to screen the issue, we need to sketch the concept of threshold that has been introduced to operationalize the nucleus/fringe contrast which James used as early as his 1890 *Principles*. Until the eighteenth century, Western philosophy and psychology have totally insulated the so-called normal state of consciousness from its roots, its lures, its complex variations and its pathologies. From that perspective, consciousness-zero constitutes yet another example of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Instead of understanding consciousness-zero as being part of a continuum, it has been severed from it and although a pure abstraction has been seen as the sole reality.

Things have changed gradually, but a double inflection point is noticeable: Leibniz (*Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain*, 1704) for theory and Mesmer (*Schreiben über die Magnetkur*, 1775) for practice. Leibniz introduced the contrast between sense-perception and apperception, which will have an important conceptual legacy in Kant, Herbart, Weber, Helmholtz, Fechner, Wundt, Lotze and Münsterberg. Its correlate—Herbart's threshold of consciousness (*Bewusstseinschwelle*)—is directly responsible for the theoretical discovery of the unconscious realm. For his part, Mesmer developed a new therapeutical practice inspired by a Newtonian speculation on animal "magnetism." The two conceptual legacies coalesce in Puysegur (*Du magnétisme animal*, 1807) and later in the Salpêtrière school, which saw the completion of its program in Janet's work.

The understanding of the unconscious realm(s), however, remained limited by the complementary premises of two streams: positivistic and nosological. On the one hand, the German scholars of the *Psychologie als Wissenschaft* type were basically concerned with Kant's injunction: since psychology does not work with any objective data (measurements), it is not a science (a status that Comte still refused to her in 1870). On the other hand, the French scholars of the *psychologie expérimentale sur les formes inférieures de l'activité humaine* type (Richet, Charcot, Binet, Janet) were basically focused on the pathological (hysterical) dimension of corrupted or abnormal forms of consciousness. According to Charcot, hypnotism is abnormal, fundamentally related to hysteria, and consequently useless for therapy. Although the three stages of lethargy, catalepsy and somnambulism were soon undermined by Bernheim's criticisms, consciousness is still understood as substantial.

The need for a holistic approach promoting a *hygiology* manifested itself in two waves. The first is represented by the Nancy school (Liébaux, Bernheim, Forel, Liégeois), which normalized hypnotic phenomena and allowed for the existence of a nebulae of states of consciousness centred on the zero-state, and actually in constructive interplay with it. The other is represented by the work of F. W. H. Myers (1841–1901), that recapitulates and supersedes all previous conceptual trajectories with the help of the vertiginous wealth of data disclosed by the works of London's Society for Psychical Research (founded in 1882).

Myers is, in other words, one of the main forgotten actors in the emergence of radical empiricism in psychology; as such, his influence on Bergson and on William James should not be underestimated. According to Taylor, James's attraction to Myers' work lay in his emphasis on growth-oriented aspects of the subconscious—not in psychic phenomena themselves.²⁵ Nor should one forget James Ward (1843–1925), who coined the term "subliminal" in 1886 in the

course of a discussion of Herbart²⁶ and who also had a tremendous influence on James. Not insignificant is perhaps the fact that Ward had one very important friend in common with Myers: Henry Sidgwick (1838–1900), the prominent Cambridge Apostle who co-founded the Society for Psychical Research.

3.3. Scale of Consciousness and Spectrum of Vigilance

The concept of threshold allows the representation of the levels of awareness and of their lability. Although the speculative definition of a meta-criteriology granting the systematization of an univocal spectrum of consciousness is no easy task, it remains reasonable to sketch a rough scale.²⁷ Whiteheadian processism is here in the good company of Plato, Plotinus, Proclus, Dionysius and their like. Needless to say that if its attempts do not have much in common with the various quantitative “scales” used by clinicians (such as the *Glasgow Coma Scale*, the *Rancho Los Amigos Scale*, the *Mini Mental State*), some complementarity must be secured.

To assess the position of a given experience on the scale of consciousness, the following criteria are worth considering: (i) the experience’s cash-value (a necessary but not sufficient criterion), be it practical (an improved mundane efficacy: a particular *behavioural*—in the broad sense of the word—change that is valuable) or semantic (retrospective clarification of a past experience); (ii) the level of intellectual and perceptual discernment (the intellectual and perceptual acuteness in terms of discrimination, sharpness and freshness); (iii) the feeling of interconnectedness and duration (the process awareness of actuality in the making and of its relativity); (iv) authenticity (general qualitative features such as emotional intensity or the sense of value and novelty).²⁸

The most important problem lies in the assessment of the grade of the experience *independently of* (but not necessarily *without*) measurement. The issue is to do justice to the qualitative dimension of experience—its pure existential tone—together with its quantitative dimension, that is no doubt accessed, but always at the cost of reductionistic working hypothesis, by science. Existence is concreting, hence sepulchral; being is transitional, hence public.

Whitehead works with the qualitative criteria of novelty, beauty, intensity, complexity and value to discriminate the level of the awareness of experience.²⁹ The hierarchy that he technically specifies in *Process and Reality* is the following: higher-grade actuality, living person (enduring object with conscious knowledge), enduring living object, enduring non-living object (society with personal order), corpuscular society, society (nexus with social order), (non-social) nexus (“electromagnetic” occasions in so-called “empty space”), low-grade actualities. To grasp Whitehead’s intention is more important here than to unfold the full technical apparatus: there is a continuous thread running through all forms of existence in our cosmos. To simplify: the basic—epochal or pulsative—structure of existence of an electron and of a human mind is the same; there is “only” a difference in intensity and in complexity. One can thus speak of a *monism* in order to make plain the ontological unity of all beings and becomings—but it is a *pluralistic* monism in the sense that all beings and becomings are *epochal* or *bud-like* (which does not amount to say that they are *atomic* in the Daltonian sense):

Consciousness flickers; and even at its brightest, there is a small focal region of

clear illumination, and a large penumbral region of experience which tells of intense experience in dim apprehension. The simplicity of clear consciousness is no measure of the complexity of complete experience. Also this character of our experience suggests that consciousness is the crown of experience, only occasionally attained, not its necessary base (*PR* 267).

Although Whitehead does not specify a spectrum of vigilance centred upon human's consciousness-zero, one can cautiously speculate that the following approximation might have been acceptable to him: mystical states ("oceanic" or "theistic"³⁰), paradoxical or generalized wakefulness (hypnotic state), consciousness-zero in the rationalized mesocosm, somnolence (drowsiness, daydreaming), paradoxical sleep, NREM sleep, coma.³¹

Whitehead nevertheless warned us: everything that is simple (or clear) is false but usable—while everything that is complex (or obscure) is so to speak adequate but unusable.³² Two questions will suffice to illustrate the limitation of our linear sketch: where exactly could near death experiences fit in such a spectrum; does this scale do justice to Advaita Vedanta's arguments? First, NDE phenomena display a problematic double dimension: on the one hand, they belong at the bottom of the scale to the extent that physical death is *further down* than coma; on the other, they are akin to the so-called mystical. Second, Advaita Vedanta proposes a complex set of arguments to show that the most important awareness takes actually place in the NREM state.³³ The immediate solution consists in ignoring the fringes of the spectrum, especially since they deal with the ineffable, i.e., the non-rational. The mediate solution is to turn to recent speculations in neuropsychology, such as the microgenetic theory developed by Jason W. Brown, since 1972, after *Gestalt* theory and the genetic theories of Jean Piaget and Heinz Werner.

Microgenesis is the basic pattern of the brain activity;³⁴ it is a wave-like arborisation of processes that unfolds from depth to surface, i.e., from the upper brain stem to the neocortex, from subconscious layers to consciousness-zero. The usual (cognitivist) substantialist paradigm is replaced by a process one: "things" are not "out there" waiting for us to be "discovered," they arise. Microgenesis basically argues for two main theses: the *reversal* of the current cognitivist-connectionist interpretation and its *rhythmization*.

It is a reversal because there is progressive lateralization. Four steps pacing the gradual transition from raw flux (where vagueness and complexity dwells) to constructed stasis (displaying clear and distinct objects) are to be distinguished: (i) upper brain stem: pure (unfocused) wakefulness, without self-awareness or even mental content (the corresponding pathology being coma); (ii) limbic structure: image awareness disclosing a plastic and shallow world (*cf.* dreams and hallucinations); (iii) parietal cortex: object awareness (exteriorized, i.e., spatialized world featured with stable entities) and self-awareness; (iv) neocortex: genuine analytic perception granted by a bifurcation between the perceiver and the perceived (fully independent external world); it is here that consciousness-zero spreads its wings.

At each step of this transition (from one mental state to another) that builds a progressive differentiation, sensations act as input and motor responses are generated. On the one hand, sensations *shape*, carve, limit, select, constrict the process: they are not its building blocks, they do not fill pre-existing categories but bend the process of creation of perceptions. On the other hand, motor outputs corresponding to the level of activity participate in the life of the

individual, in its actions. The fourfold basic pattern is the pristine pulsation of mental life, sensory input and motor output receive a somewhat contingent and symmetrical status: movement and sensation are analogous to action and perception, in both cases one contributes to the construction of the other. Better: “action and perception are *ab origine* a single form, a unitary act-object.”³⁵ The pattern repeats itself endlessly (within the boundaries given by the life of an individual, of course). Furthermore, it not only recapitulates previous (partially faded) phases, it retraces phylo-ontogenic growth planes. Cognition is evolution compressed: evolution delivers the structure of behaviour, ontogenesis refines it, and microgenesis operationalizes it.

Here we reach the second thesis: microgenesis advocates a rhythmization. The mind/brain state grows and decays; it is essentially pulsatile, flickering. Since the decay is slower than the growth, there is a brief overlapping of phases that accounts for the experienced continuity. From base to surface, the mind/brain state smoothly unfolds before folding back up while being replaced by a new unfoldment. In this context, freedom is being aware on all levels.

4. Panexperientialism and Hypnosis

The main consequences of this processualization—be it speculative or clinical—of the concept of consciousness can now be explored. First, at a theoretical level, Whitehead’s panexperientialism is differentiated from panpsychism; second, the nature of hypnosis is processed; and third, socio-political issues are discussed.

4.1. Panexperientialism

So far, we have seen that the (subjective, human-centred) spectrum of vigilance corresponds to an (objective) scale of consciousness or *scala naturæ*: the various types of experiences we enjoy on an everyday basis can be put on a scale and this scale provides evidence for a continuity of levels of (un)consciousness that goes all the way down and up. Thanks to panexperientialism, the two concepts engineer a unipolar reality, so to speak. But how exactly does panexperientialism differ from panpsychism? Let us examine two main sources of difficulties.

On the one hand, the prefix “pan” can either refer to the Whole (*cf.* the concept of World-Soul) or to all parts (*cf.* the concept of hylozoism). A complementary—Leibnizian—version of that basic contrast is the one between aggregates and individuals. On the other hand, the root word “psychism” works at various *stages* or *levels* that can be heuristically identified and hierarchized in the following way. First, it stands for *psyche* itself and, in conjunction with the prefix “pan” leads irresistibly in the direction of animism. Second, it stands for *subjectivity*, i.e., for consciousness-zero or at least for an awareness of some sort: self-experience is its key-word. Third, it stands for some *mental activity*, which means capacity of abstraction, of valuation, together with some freedom (or spontaneity, depending on how you define your variables). Fourth, it stands for *pure experience*, in the sense that everything that “is” either experiences or is experienced.

Hence a 2 x 4 matrix that allows a sharper understanding of the shades of meaning provided by panpsychism. From that perspective, Whiteheadian panexperientialism is a pluralism that

defines existence by non-conscious—pure—experience; it does not argue for the universality of some form of psychism or even of mentation.

This perspective discloses furthermore an abstractive progression: psychism/subjectivity/mentality/experience. As usual in philosophy, the use of abstractions is quite paradoxical: it means both the quest for the ultimate generalities—that are not (necessarily) obvious for common sense, i.e., there is a distantiation from immediate experience—and it claims that, by doing so, it reveals the very marrow of any experience whatsoever. A good example is Plato, whose arguments lead him to claim that solely the contemplation of *pure forms* is meaningful... because they are what is most *concrete*! This paradox, which stems from the disregard for sense-perception inherited from the Greeks, should lead us to be exceedingly careful in the handling of daring generalities. One could claim nevertheless that the above abstractive progression is indeed at work in James, who first (already in the *Principles*) embraced a rather non-technical (or intuitive) panpsychism—in 1909, he is still speaking of “mother-sea” or “common reservoir of consciousness”³⁶—and later (in the *Essays in Radical Empiricism*) spelled the (dry) basics of a panexperientialist framework.³⁷ The quest for higher generalities and the striping of immediate (sometimes naive) experience of its “obvious” and “subjective” features are the two faces of the same coin. At any rate, these various conceptual stops do make sense from the perspective of the “infinite number of degrees of consciousness, following the degrees of complication and aggregation of the primordial mind-dust.”³⁸

4.2. Understanding Hypnosis

Hypnosis ranks, with hysteria and dreams, among the main clues that put psychologists on the path of the extra-marginal. Whitehead takes for granted here the works of his Harvard peers. Whereas the *Principles of Psychology*, because of its topic, refers mostly to Alfred Binet and Pierre Janet,³⁹ the *Varieties of Religious Experience*, again because of its focus, mainly refers to Myers, while “the wonderful explorations” of Binet, Janet, but also of Étienne Azam, Hippolyte Bernheim, Josef Breuer, Jean Martin Charcot, Richard von Kraft-Ebbing, Auguste Liébeault, Rufus Osgood Mason, Morton Prince, Théodule Ribot, and of course Sigmund Freud are selectively mentioned.⁴⁰ In order to refresh James’ own endeavours in the field of hypnosis (see especially *PP* II, ch. XXVII), we propose to use François Roustang’s recent powerful speculations, inspired in part by Léon Chertok and Milton H. Erickson.⁴¹ The goal of this section is to display the correlation that exists between the ladder of states of consciousness and the hierarchy of beings.

Chertok proposes a few provisional definitions of the hypnotic state stemming from the old—but still actual—concept of *animal magnetism*⁴² and insisting on the affective core of the hypnotic trance; it is a natural potentiality that manifests itself already in the relation of attachment to the mother; it is the matrix, the crucible in which all subsequent relations will come within the scope; its essence is very archaic, pre-linguistic, pre-sexual.⁴³

Keeping this in mind, let us first sketch the induction of the hypnotic state (or “trance” as it is called by James). For the sake of the present argument, we can bypass the distinction between self-hypnosis and hypnosis *suggested* on a willing and co-operative subject by a clinician. The basic conditions for entering hypnosis are fairly simple: it is just a matter of fixation of one’s

own attention. As one concentrates on a single stimulus by gradually bracketing most of the other afferent stimuli, attention becomes more and more invasive and the waking state gets dramatically transformed: sense-perception is now nuclear, while action becomes cataleptic and reason drifts from its judgmental concern to get closer to affects. Discussing the related topic that is *attention*, a major mystic of the twentieth century—Simone Weil—puts it this way: “attention consists in the suspension of one’s thought, in letting it available, empty and penetrable by the object; it consists in keeping in oneself the proximity of thought and of the various acquired knowledge that one is usually forced to use, but at a lower level and without contact with it.”⁴⁴ Hypnosis offers thus an exemplification of the individuation/cosmization dialectic. Attention and distraction are two closely interacting perceptive (better: prehensive) phenomena. The hypnotic state is reached by focusing one’s attention on a given stimuli, thereby ignoring all others—but that bracketing somehow leads to an enhanced environmental awareness that amounts to what Whitehead calls a “negative prehension.”

What about the characteristics of this gradual relaxation or sleepiness? Hypnotic wakefulness features indeed, as its etymology suggests, “many affinities” (*PP* II 599) with ordinary sleep: muscular relaxation and redistributed brain activity (patterns that remind us of paradoxical sleep as disclosed in EEG and EMG), anæsthesia and/or hyperæsthesia (although not genuinely sensorial), amnesia (while hypermnesia is possible), perceptive distortions (including hallucinations), increased suggestibility (besides post-hypnotic—i.e., deferred—suggestions) and the possibility of role-enactment and of alteration of the personality.

But in addition it features remarkable differences (that James would claim are only of degree) with ordinary sleep; to outline them coherently, it is essential to go through the four (non-necessary) steps to full hypnotic actualisation. First, the *induction* of the hypnotic state occurs through perceptive fixedness; fascination starts where ordinary perception stops. Second, the hypnotic state installs *indetermination*: all customary differences can be abolished, paving the way for confusion, blindness, loss of reference point and possibly feeling of helplessness. Third, the positive side of the dispersed attitude of the attention (*PP* II 599) is the opening of the *possible*: resting on this indeterminate waiting, spring dissociations, withdrawal and hallucinations; and with them the possibility of transforming one’s appraisal of life. Everything can be reframed: percepts can be put in a wider context by reverie, absence, or imagination. Fourth, the hypnotic trance displays itself as enhanced vigilance, mobilised power, energy ready to implement action, i.e., to shape the world. All the acquired knowledge is gathered, actively taken in, and one has them at one’s disposal. This explains why the hypnotherapist suggests only what is possible for the patient, s/he reveals the power patients have over their own becoming.

Roustang concludes: “to understand something of paradoxical wakefulness, we have to do violence to ourselves and—at a great expense—invent in our culture a new cosmology and a new anthropology.”⁴⁵ All the consequences of the continuum of the states of consciousness and of the levels of beings, i.e., of bodies, have to be thought. This is exactly what panexperientialism provides: one single onto-psychical field that allows, so to speak, only unwillingly, the bifurcation of subject and object. Since there is one organising and differentiating power endowed by many centre of forces, the mesocosmic perception of an

object by a subject ceases to be mysterious: in pure experience, subject and object, subject and subject, grow together and reciprocally (com-)prehend themselves.⁴⁶ Each experience has both a physical and a mental dimension that can be separated only in abstraction. The concreteness of experience, in other words, goes beyond the limited perspectives of “physicality” and “mentality.” After many others, Deleuze has suggested the metaphor of the *fold* to intuit how such a bimodal ontology is possible; James provides us with a concept.

4.3. Socio-Political Consequences

It seems appropriate, by means of conclusion, to evoke the socio-political correlation of the discussion of the nature of consciousness and of its possible technical manipulation (in all senses). Aldous Huxley (1894–1963) is an important figure with that regard, both because of his representativeness of the late Victorian agenda—featuring eugenics *and* dysgenics (Darwin, Galton, Malthus)—and of the depth of his insights. His paternal grandfather was Thomas Henry Huxley (1825–1895), the great Victorian biologist; his brother Julian (1887–1975) was the well-known evolutionary biologist, humanist and internationalist; and prominent intellectual figures such as J. B. S. Haldane, Bertrand Russell and J. W. N. Sullivan were his friends. Not only has Huxley seen clearly the correlation between substantialistic consciousness, consumerism and totalitarianism, but hypnosis played a key-role in both his dystopic World State of *Brave New World* (1932) and his utopic Kingdom of Pala in *Island* (1962).⁴⁷

Brave New World puts on stage mass-production under three main guises sealing the totalitarian order: eugenics, eupaedia and soma. “A love of nature keeps no factory busy”⁴⁸: only artificial processes are deemed worthy (most being named with the suffix “-surrogate”). *Eugenics* is actualized through bio-engineering and contraception. *Eupaedia* amounts to emotional-engineering and (subliminal) conditioning through hypnopaedia.⁴⁹ *Soma* is the omnipotent drug: besides all sorts of surrogates, omnipresent music, tap-tv, feelies (or tactile talkies: films with physiological effects) and other overwhelming presences, the state drug provides peace *ad libidum*—from a punctual stress-relief to a longer “soma-holiday” from reality. Even religious experiences are conditioned to suppress unwelcome emotions. In sum: human beings are simple instruments for engineers who have been themselves duly programmed; fully-fledged consciousness is to be avoided.

The motto of the World State is *Community, Identity, Stability*. Community means social utility: when we are told that “Everyone belongs to everyone else,”⁵⁰ it means that the basic rule is purely utilitarian. Identity is the main keyword: thanks to the bio- and emotional-engineering, each citizen is confined within a very precise circle; there is (almost—depending on the grade) no elbow-room given to individual action. Stability is the *sine qua non* of civilization; total order is guaranteed by water-tight structures. Even science has to be carefully monitored. Stability is the highest social virtue because it leads to lasting happiness.

In *Island*, Huxley insists in a radical empiricist manner that “nothing short of everything will really do.”⁵¹ The total consumerism has been substituted for a scientific culture of awareness secured by a synergy between Western science and Buddhist culture that especially emphasizes the presence (attention) to the present moment: “here and now boys.”⁵² Its three main tools are birth control, holistic education and moshka. *Birth control* is indispensable to avoid the

Malthusian explosion of misery on the island: it is achieved through the yoga of love, contraception and, more curiously, given the context, artificial insemination.⁵³ *Holistic education*⁵⁴ works on all fronts, verbal and non-verbal, prevention and cure,⁵⁵ consciousness and subliminal awareness. It is in this context that use is made of hypnosis,⁵⁶ described as “psychological facts of applied metaphysics”⁵⁷ and of spiritual exercises. Philosophy *qua* symbol-manipulation is of no use to attain paradoxical wakefulness.⁵⁸ Moksha⁵⁹ is the community drug that is used on special, ritualized occasions to open the way of liberation from the prison of oneself and to encounter reality, which is described as luminous bliss, timelessly present Event, perpetual creation.⁶⁰ In sum, human beings are treated as unique individuals; total consciousness is the key to individual and social harmony.

The specular motto can be spelled with the same categories. Community means now that everyone and everything belongs to everyone and everything else. “Elementary ecology leads straight to elementary Buddhism”—and vice-versa. No means but only ends—the ultimate one being the fundamental global harmony. Identity refers to true individuals; maximum elbow room is provided for each person to find peace; no complete adjustment is expected: even to a sane society, it would not be sound. Stability names peacefulness harmony, perfectly indifferent transience.

Expect the best, prepare for the worst could be Huxley’s own conclusion. His two major works make clear, at least from the perspective of the present argument, that the question of the nature and conditions of possibility of consciousness, far from being a puzzle for idle philosophers, engage our entire existence and especially our socio-political status. To do justice to the wealth of our experience, we need to adopt a systemic understanding of knowledge and action that boils down to two correlates: the empirical origin of cognitive functions and the fact that cognition serves to engage with the world, not to represent it. As Whitehead says: “we cannot think first and act afterwards. From the moment of birth we are immersed in action, and can only fitfully guide it by taking thought” (*SMW* 187). If experience is broader than cognition, it becomes urgent to adopt a critical panpsychist onto-epistemology. Such seems the price to pay to make sure that no worldview endangers the Ur-doxastic vital—carnal—link we maintain with the world at large.

Notes

- ¹ A first draft of this article was read at *Action theories: Social action, Theory of Mind, Philosophy of Action, Religious Action*, International and Interdisciplinary Conference, Pontifical Salesian University, Rome, 6-8 October 2006.
- ² See *A Pluralistic Universe's* concept of “non-rational.”
- ³ George Boole, *An Investigation of the Laws of Thought on Which are Founded The Mathematical Theories of Logic and Probabilities* (1854), New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1958, cf. Chapter XV, “On the Aristotelian Logic,” pp. 174 sq.
- ⁴ *Metaphysics* Beta, 4.
- ⁵ *Metaphysics* Gamma, 3; *Posterior Analytics* I, 77a10-22.
- ⁶ *Metaphysics* Gamma, 7; *Posterior Analytics* I, 77a22-25.
- ⁷ *Process and Reality. An Essay in Cosmology*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, and New York, Macmillan, 1929. Reprint: New York, Macmillan Free Press, 1969. *Corrected edition*: Edited by David Ray Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne, New York and London, The Free Press. A division of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. and Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1978.
- ⁸ A careful analysis would be needed in both cases. On the one hand, the development of Husserl's concept of intentionality is complex and it progressively leaves the scene for the concepts of temporality and intersubjectivity (cf. J. English, *Sur l'intentionnalité et ses modes*, PUF, 2006, pp. 155 sq. and Jean-Marie Breuvert, “Husserl et Whitehead, sur l'Intentionnalité,” in Michel Weber et Pierfrancesco Basile (sous la direction de), *Chromatikon III. Annuaire de la philosophie en procès—Yearbook of Philosophy in Process*, Louvain-la-Neuve, Presses universitaires de Louvain, 2007, pp. 45-56. On the other hand, Whitehead's appeal to Bradley in the Gifford context seems quite rhetorical.
- ⁹ Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* [1971]. One-volume edition, San Diego, New York, London, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1978.
- ¹⁰ David Ray Griffin and Huston Smith, *Primordial Truth and Postmodern Theology*, Albany, New York, State University of New York Press, 1989, esp. pp. 90-91.
- ¹¹ B. Russell, *Portraits from Memory and Other Essays*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1956, p. 39.
- ¹² It is worth highlighting that some Aristotelo-Thomists claim that the concept of substance has to be interpreted in a processual manner: cf. James W. Felt S.J., “Whitehead's Misconception of “Substance” in Aristotle,” *Process Studies*, Vol. 14, N°4, 1985, pp. 224-236; Reto Luzius Fetz, *Whitehead. Prozeßdenken und Substanzmetaphysik*, Freiburg und München, Verlag Karl Alber, 1981; William Norris Clarke, S.J., *The One and the Many. A Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics*, Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 2001.
- ¹³ “Our original sensible totals are, on the one hand, subdivided by discriminative attention, and, on the other, united with other totals,—either through the agency of our own movements, carrying our senses from one part of space to another, or because new objects come successively and replace those by which we were at first impressed. The 'simple impression' of Hume, the 'simple idea' of Locke are both abstractions, never realized in experience. Experience, from the very first, presents us with concreted objects, vaguely continuous with the rest of the world which envelops them in space and time, and potentially divisible into inward elements and parts. These objects we break asunder and reunite. We must treat them in both ways for our knowledge of them to grow; and it is hard to say, on the whole, which way preponderates. But since the elements with which the traditional associationism performs its constructions—'simple sensations,' namely—are all products of discrimination carried to a high pitch, it seems as if we ought to discuss the subject of analytic attention and discrimination first. The noticing of any part whatever of our object is an act of discrimination” (*The Principles of Psychology* [1890]. Authorized Edition in two volumes, New York, Dover Publications, 1950, I, p. 487-).

- ¹⁴ Cf. James' *Essays in Radical Empiricism* [Posthumously published by Ralph Barton Perry], New York, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912, p. 145 and our next section.
- ¹⁵ William James, *Essays in Radical Empiricism* [Posthumously published by Ralph Barton Perry], New York, London, Bombay, and Calcutta, Longmans, Green, and Co., 1912, p. 3. Ernst Mach is an important precursor of the concept of pure experience. His *Die Mechanik in ihrer Entwicklung Historisch-Kritisch Dargestellt* (1883) and especially his *Beiträge zur Analyse der Empfindungen* (1886). (James visited Mach and Stumpf in the summer of 1882.)
- ¹⁶ "Through feelings we become acquainted with things, but only by our thoughts do we know about them. Feelings are the germ and starting point of cognition, thoughts the developed tree. The minimum of grammatical subject, of objective presence, of reality known about, the mere beginning of knowledge, must be named by the word that says the least. Such a word is the interjection, as lo! there! ecce! voilà! or the article or demonstrative pronoun introducing the sentence, as the, it, that" (*The Principles of Psychology*, op. cit., I, p. 222).
- ¹⁷ From *koinos*, meaning "common," "public."
- ¹⁸ We borrow of course Bateson's term: cf., e.g., "Culture Contact and Schismogenesis," *Man* XXXV, 1935, pp. 178-183, reprinted in *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, op. cit., pp. 61-72. See also Cornélius Castoriadis, *L'institution imaginaire de la société*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1975 (*The Imaginary Institution of Society*, Translated by Kathleen Blamey, Cambridge, Massachusetts, MIT Press).
- ¹⁹ See *infra* our discussion of the status of hypnosis.
- ²⁰ David Skrbina, *Panpsychism in the West*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2005. The depth of Skrbina's scholarship in this area is astonishing: the cumulative weight of his documentations makes it impossible to deny the seriousness of panpsychism as a philosophical position, and his erudition makes it impossible not to take his own book seriously. His treatment of Whiteheadian panpsychism is, however, somewhat weaker.
- ²¹ Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, New York, Macmillan Company and Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1933. Reprint: New York, The Free Press, 1967, p. 226; cf. p. 222 and of course James' *Principles of Psychology*, op. cit., I, 232
- ²² Jason W. Brown, forthcoming, Ch 8.
- ²³ This criteriology is inspired by William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience. A Study in Human Nature*. Being the Gifford Lectures on Natural Religion Delivered at Edinburgh in 1901-1902, New York, London, Bombay, and Calcutta, Longman, Green, and Co., 1902, pp. 15-19.
- ²⁴ Cf., e.g., the Glasgow Coma Scale, that is based on motor responsiveness, verbal performance, and eye opening to appropriate stimuli: G. Teasdale and B. Jennet, "Assessment of coma and impaired consciousness: a practical scale," *Lancet* 2, 1974, pp. 81-84.
- ²⁵ Eugene I. Taylor [Reconstructed by], *William James on Exceptional Mental States. The 1896 Lowell Lectures*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons (Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 1982.
- ²⁶ James Ward, "Psychology," in Thomas Spencer Baynes (ed.), *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed., 1886, vol. XX, pp. 37-85. & Johann Friedrich Herbart, *Psychologie als Wissenschaft, neugegründet auf Erfahrung, Metaphysik und Mathematik* [1824].
- ²⁷ Cf. our "La conscience spectrale chez James et Whitehead," in Guillaume Garreta et Mathias Girel (dir.), *William James et l'empirisme radical. 1904-2004*, Éditions du CNRS, forthcoming.
- ²⁸ "The subjective aim ... is at intensity of feeling (a) in the immediate subject, and (b) in the relevant future" (PR 27). "Each occasion exhibits its measure of creative emphasis in proportion to its measure of subjective intensity" (PR 47).
- ²⁹ Cf., e.g., PR 177.
- ³⁰ The rational discrimination, apart from the hierarchization, of impersonal and personal mystical experiences is a problem that would send us straight back to Aquinas and Eckhardt.
- ³¹ A more detailed argument can be found in M. Weber, "James's Mystical Body in the Light of the Transmarginal Field of Consciousness," in Sergio Franzese & Felicitas Krämer (eds.),

- Fringes of Religious Experience. Cross-perspectives on William James's Varieties of Religious Experience*, Frankfurt / Lancaster, Ontos Verlag, 2007, pp. 7-37.
- ³² “Seek simplicity and distrust it” (*The Concept of Nature* [1920], Cambridge University Press, 1964, p. 163). “Exactness is a fake” (“Immortality,” in *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, 1947, p. 96).
- ³³ Arvind Sharma, *The Experiential Dimension of Advaita Vedanta*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1993.
- ³⁴ The term “microgenesis” was originally coined to render Heinz Werner’s 1956 *Aktualgenese*, referring to the process by which a mental state is formed in the present moment. Cf. Michel Weber, “Alfred North Whitehead’s onto-epistemology of perception,” *New Ideas in Psychology*, 24, 2006, pp. 117-132.
- ³⁵ Jason W. Brown, *The Self-Embodying Mind. Process, Brain Dynamics, and the Conscious Present* [Revised and expanded version of *Self and Process, Brain States and the Conscious Present*, New York, Springer-Verlag, 1991], Barrytown, Station Hill, 2002, p. 9; cf. p. 123.
- ³⁶ William James, “Confidences of a ‘Psychical Researcher’” [1909], in *Essays in Psychical Research*. Fred. H. Burkhardt, gen. ed.; Fredson Bowers, text. ed.; Ignas K. Skrupskelis, ass. ed., Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard University Press, 1986, pp. 361-375.
- ³⁷ Griffin proposed the concept of “panexperientialism” in 1977 to name Whitehead’s attitude: cf. David Ray Griffin, “Whitehead’s Philosophy and Some General Notions of Physics and Biology,” in John B. Cobb, Jr. & David Ray Griffin (eds.), *Mind in Nature. Essays on the Interface of Science and Philosophy*, Washington D. C., University Press of America, 1977. For a more recent discussion, see David Ray Griffin (ed.), *Founders of Constructive Postmodern Philosophy*, *op. cit.*
- ³⁸ James, William, *The Principles of Psychology*, *op. cit.*, Volume One, p. 149.
- ³⁹ Cf. Alfred Binet, *La psychologie du raisonnement. Recherches expérimentales par l’hypnotisme*, Paris, Éditions Alcan, Bibliothèque de philosophie contemporaine, 1886; Pierre Janet, *L’automatisme psychologique*, Paris, Éditions Alcan, 1889.
- ⁴⁰ Cf. VRE 115, 125, 233-5, 240-241, 269-270, 401, 413, 484, 501, 516.
- ⁴¹ See especially François Roustang’s *Qu’est-ce que l’hypnose?* (Paris, Éditions de Minuit, 1994).
- ⁴² The concept, of course present in *PP*, has been recently re-invigorated by Boris Cyrulnik (cf., e.g., his *L’ensorcellement du monde*, Paris, Éditions Odile Jacob, 1997).
- ⁴³ “On peut seulement affirmer que c’est au niveau de l’affect, c’est-à-dire de la réalité la plus évidente, puisqu’elle est de l’ordre du vécu, et la plus difficile à comprendre. [...] C’est un quatrième état de l’organisme, actuellement non objectivable (à l’inverse des trois autres: veille, sommeil, rêve: une sorte de potentialité naturelle, de dispositif inné prenant ses racines jusque dans l’hypnose animale, caractérisé par des traits qui renvoient apparemment aux relations pré-langagières d’attachement de l’enfant et se produisant dans des situations où l’individu est perturbé dans ses rapports avec l’environnement. L’hypnose garde sa spécificité par rapport à la suggestion, bien que celle-ci, sous quelque forme qu’elle se manifeste, soit nécessaire à la production de celle-là. La suggestion nous apparaît ainsi comme la relation primaire, fondamentale entre deux êtres, la matrice, le creuset dans lequel viendront s’inscrire toutes les relations ultérieures. Nous dirons encore qu’elle est une entité psycho-socio-biologique indissociable, agissant à un niveau inconscient très archaïque, pré-langagier, pré-sexuel, et médiatisant l’influence affective que tout individu exerce sur un autre” (Léon Chertock, *L’Hypnose. Théorie, pratique et technique*. Préface de Henry Ey. Édition remaniée et augmentée [1959], Paris, Éditions Payot, 1989, pp. 260-261). Cf. Isabelle Stengers et Léon Chertok, *Le Cœur et la Raison. L’hypnose en question, de Lavoisier à Lacan*, Paris, Éditions Payot, Sciences de l’homme, 1989 (Translated as *A Critique of Psychoanalytic Reason: Hypnosis as a Scientific Problem from Lavoisier to Lacan* by Martha Noel Evans). Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1992) and Léon Chertok et Isabelle Stengers, “Therapy and the Ideal of Chemistry,” *Nature*, Vol. 329, 1987, 768 sq.
- ⁴⁴ “L’attention consiste à suspendre sa pensée, à la laisser disponible, vide et pénétrable à l’objet, à maintenir en soi-même la proximité de la pensée, mais à un niveau inférieur et sans contact

avec elle, les diverses connaissances acquisés qu'on est forcé d'utiliser" (Simone Weil, *Attente de Dieu*, Paris, La Colombe, Éditions du vieux colombier, 1957, pp. 76-77).

⁴⁵ "Pour comprendre quelque chose de la veille paradoxale, il faut nous faire violence et inventer dans notre culture, à grands frais, une nouvelle cosmologie et une nouvelle anthropologie" (*Qu'est-ce que l'hypnose? op. cit.*, pp. 98-99).

⁴⁶ "Grâce à cette puissance qui organise et différencie, représentée par l'anticipation, toute une série de faux problèmes tombent d'eux-mêmes. Il n'y a plus à se demander comment un sujet peut percevoir un objet, puisque l'un et l'autre grandissent ensemble et s'appréhendent dans une action réciproque, ni comment un humain peut en comprendre un autre, puisqu'ils n'existent dès l'origine que par cette compréhension, ni comment peuvent se tisser entre eux des interrelations: l'identification et le lien affectif n'ont dû être inventés que par la supposition erronée que les individus d'abord confondus, ont été ensuite séparés" (*Qu'est-ce que l'hypnose? op. cit.*, p. 87).

⁴⁷ Aldous Leonard Huxley, *Brave New World*, 1932; With an introduction by David Bradshaw, Hammersmith, HarperCollins, 1994; *Island. A Novel*, London, Chatto & Windus, 1962.

⁴⁸ *BNW* 19.

⁴⁹ "Sleep-teaching" (*BNW* 21, 24, 38, 91, 101, 234) or emotional-engineering (*BNW* 58); "engineer into feeling" (*BNW* 163): (subliminal) conditioning (*BNW* 214) and scientific propaganda. Non-rationality of the "words without reason" (*BNW* 24; cf. 23).

⁵⁰ *BNW* 38.

⁵¹ *Isl.*, 141.

⁵² *Isl.* 21 & *passim*.

⁵³ *Isl.* 187.

⁵⁴ *Isl.* 203.

⁵⁵ *Isl.* 68-9, 132, 141, 150, 208-9, 220.

⁵⁶ *Isl.* 2, 32, 59, 93, 95, 123, 180, 203.

⁵⁷ *Isl.* 76, 221.

⁵⁸ *Isl.* 185.

⁵⁹ Meaning "liberation, release," moksha is a toadstool, mescaline-type substance that works holistically, unlike any pharmaceutical drug (*Isl.* 135 sq., 168, 261, 263-286).

⁶⁰ Cf., respectively, *Isl.* 263 and *Isl.* 269.