

HISTORY OF DYADIC ONTOLOGY

JAMES K. FEIBLEMAN

INTRODUCTION

The history of Western philosophy, from pre-Homeric to modern times, can be read from the perspective of a single problem. Such a reading, though narrow, offers the advantage of unity of structure. Chronological succession in at least one of its aspects can mean the unfolding of logical sequence: from what was held to be true to what was worked out in practice. It also features the drama of the struggle with a master pattern, efforts which, as we shall see, meet with varying degrees of failure before final success.

The problem is that of how to relate reality to the categories of dyadic ontology. We shall understand by "reality" the immediate object of that which is true. We shall understand by "dyadic ontology" one which assumes a pair of ontological categories as the real (or, in some special sense which we shall discuss, a selection of them). The categories chosen will be those of a class of constants characterized by persistence and a class of variables characterized by change. As one philosophical tradition succeeds another in history, the names will be altered. Again, sometimes the class will be specified and sometimes its elements. The relation between reality and the categories can take any one of the following forms. Persistence is alone real (or more real than change), change is alone real (or more real than persistence), they are equally real, neither is real. The first will be called *idealism*, the second *nominalism* and the third *realism*. The fourth has no historic tradition in the West.

The development of dyadic ontology in Western philosophy has not exhausted these possibilities but has ranged over them. The process is continuing. It is not the intention here to claim that the Western tradition can be understood solely in terms of this analysis, or that it is exhausted by such consideration. The point is rather that the problem has remained a central one even when it was explicitly ignored or

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when philosophers were oblivious of its existence. The purpose of this paper is merely to point a line of inquiry.

After a statement of the Orphic Theogony we shall have the task of recounting some of its adventures. The narrative can be broken up for convenience more or less arbitrarily into the following subdivisions: The Pre-Socratic Dichotomy, The Platonic Synthesis, The Speusippian Excess, The Aristotelian Correction, The Idealistic Misunderstanding, The Nominalistic Reaction, The Realistic Equilibrium, The Realistic Exploration.

THE ORPHIC THEOGONY

The beginnings of philosophical speculation in the West are probably unknown. We can look back toward Asia through the religion of Dionysus. Orpheus overlaps with the Dionysiac cult in Greece. There are reasons for believing that the Orphic view was not that of the Greeks, yet it exercised a profound influence on Greek thought. Some thinkers profess to discern in the Orphic collection the work of a Greek philosopher who attributed to Orpheus a theogony patterned after the model established by Hesiod. Be that as it may, we take off arbitrarily from an early place in the known, from the Orphic theogony, the collection of writings, theological and mythological, which is assigned to pre-Homeric times but which still existed in Plato's day, in the form in which it was set down about the sixth century, B.C. If theology is mythologized metaphysics, then a fully developed system already existed before the pre-Socratics, well established enough to have been parodied much later by Aristophanes in *The Birds*.

The doctrine contained in the Orphic theogony provided the religious basis for a dyadic ontology. The first principle was *Chronos* or Time, and with him was *Adrasteia* or Necessity. Here we have, almost in abstract form, our two categories of change and persistence. Change is a primordial monster, inseparable, however, from the law of necessity. Chronos in some versions is time, in others a sort of timeless ground of time, Ageless Time. Adrasteia is without body and is spread over the whole universe, holding it together. From the body of Chronos these two produced the rest of the gods.

To make time the first principle is to hand the award for reality to change. The nominalism of this position can be asserted irrespective of whether the reality hangs upon time or upon things in time; for in neither case is the separation of persistent elements from time supported. Necessity is clearly adjunctive even though it is asserted to be general. The reality of the perishing has a slight edge of reality over the legal aspects.

This nominalistically colored ontology is tempered by an idealistic conception of man and his nature. For man is composed of soul and body, a changing and perishing body imprisoning a persistent and even immortal soul, the soul condemned to its confinement as a punishment for past sins in a doctrine of metempsychosis. The reward was release of the soul from its body, happiness everlasting in another and presumably better life, crypto-materialistically conceived, devoted to feasting and drinking after a journey thither through the underworld.

The implications to idealism of such a picture seem clear. The superior reality of the soul, an immaterial affair, over the physical body is carried by the survival of the former. Moreover, the notion of the body as a prison and of this life as a torment and a trial certainly suggests the derogation of change in favor of persistence. The reward for enduring existence was contained in the blissful survival of essence.

Orpheus did more, then, than charm us with his lute. His religion was a mystery religion; not so secret was the source of the conflict he left to his successors: a natural theology with nominalistic coloring and a humanistic philosophy of idealism. These proved to be irreconcilable. But the fact that whenever there were both elements there was the possibility of realism was not so plain.

Obviously, the philosophies of nature and of man do not fit. The former is restricted; the latter, unrestricted. Orpheus' doctrine represented the attempt to combine the finite with the infinite; but the Apollonian elements tugged one way, the Dionysiac another. There were difficulties inherent in the attempt to crowd transcendental elements into the limited Greek frame. Extreme examples are available: Dionysus failed where Apollo succeeded, and the criterion was

that of reason. To the extent to which the Greek gods reflected Greek culture, the frenzy of Dionysus could never discover a congenial home, and Apollonian measure and proportionality were found to be more suitable. Orpheus falls somewhere in classification between these two. The Orphic transcendentalism was displaced by the philosophy of man in the effort to adopt it to Greek needs, while the philosophy of nature remained a small affair.

The philosophy contained in the religion of Orpheus was of course buried in the mythology. Yet two problems were presented by it for philosophers. The first was to abstract the set of ontologies implicit in the religious beliefs. The early selection was made too spare; and a single category was chosen, now one and now another. The second was to reconcile the disparate elements. -A great synthesis was required to restore the relations. But more than one proved to lie within the Orphic range, and a conflict of philosophies was the result.

THE PRE-SOCRATIC DICHOTOMY

From this complex of dyadic ontologies, composed of a nominalistic natural world and containing an idealistic humanity, the pre-Socratics were free to abstract and to choose. Of course we have only fragments which may be utterly misleading. The simplicity of the pre-Socratic philosophies may be a function of what we have left of them rather than of what they were. There are reasons for suspecting that this is the case. There is no way to tell. If, however, neglecting this contingency, we draw conclusions from what we have, then it appears that the attempt to abstract an ontology from the Orphic theogony led the Eleatics in one direction and the Ionians in another.

The philosophy of both schools involved an effort at simplicity; this is the meaning of abstraction, but it can be read in different ways. The pre-Socratics were caged by the silent postulate of monadic ontology. They were sure that there must be a single category for being if only they could determine its nature. And they proceeded to look among the objective elements of the empirical world. The Ionians

sought an element of change; they endeavored to identify the Orphic Chronos with water, with the infinite, with air, or with change itself. The Eleatics on the other hand looked among the persistent elements for one which they could identify with Adrasteia, and professed to find it in a God of nature, in number, or in being.

The pre-Socratic philosophers succeeded in one way and failed in another. They succeeded in establishing the prospects of a lay ontology by taking the questions raised in the Orphic theogony right away from religion. Also they suggested the path toward a natural scientific approach to a physical philosophy and in this fashion, perhaps, opened up a path that led eventually to the rise of empiricism. But they failed through oversimplification in making their lay ontology acceptable. They failed, too, in that they raised another problem; for now not only was there a rift between the philosophy of nature and that of man but there were two conflicting philosophies of nature. In each account too much is omitted. The Ionians refused to recognize the reality of persistence, while the Eleatics would not grant reality to change. Together they pointed to a solution which neither foresaw.

THE PLATONIC SYNTHESIS

The solution was seen by Plato. He made a system of the two traditions of pre-Socratic philosophy by interpreting one in terms of the other. He sought a dyadic ontology to resolve the failure of pre-Socratic monadic ontology. Change was change in terms of permanence; time, the moving image of eternity. The Ideas were the persistent elements, and sensible things were there to suffer change. The realism of this conception was warped into idealism by the necessity of getting into the synthesis the philosophy of man as well as of nature, a demand left over from the Orphic writing. Although The Good became the source of the other Ideas, the soul too was almost an Idea and the body doomed to perish, and to be derogated meanwhile with hair, mud and dirt.

It is fair to say that Plato's ontology is a repetition of the enlightenment as well as the limitations contained in the

Orphic theogony. After the effort to gain the level of abstraction engaged in by the pre-Socratics, a struggle in which the elements of the ontology became fragmented, Plato had perforce to put them back together. What he achieved was more than a job of restoration, however. He saw in the diverse positions of persistence and of change not a confusion but a complementarity, not a conflict but an armed truce; in his philosophy, Chronos and Adrasteia have pulled apart and maintained at a discreet distance the balance of opposite poles. Plato even made an effort to bring the philosophy of nature and of man together, another kind of synthesis. The result was a new abstract synthesis, a philosophy minus the theological overtones, a system to be thought about and tested for truth rather than worshipped.

Like most existing things, the Platonic synthesis bore the scars of its origins. What might have been a realistic ontology and one which most certainly contains realistic elements, was warped in the direction of idealism. The ontology is realistic: the fragments are put together without prejudice; undoubtedly, the intent is to assign equal value to the persistent and the changing. The reality of the Ideas is asserted against the Ionians: changeless forms as well as change itself are real. But then the reality of non-being is put forward against the Eleatics; indeed there is no non-being which is nothing: non-being is positive otherness.

So much is evidence for realism. There are even elements of a realistic epistemology, in the derivation of ideas from sense experience, although this was not Plato's prevailing view on the topic. But the necessity for bringing into the new philosophy of nature a philosophy of man was too much. Here the Orphic theogony was adopted without amendment. The struggle against natural religion was warped by the force of a theological humanism. It is only with ontological idealism that a synthesis containing such ingredients can be made. Hence the realism was overwhelmed, stifled so to speak in its cradle. Idealism was given full sway. The mind was licensed to turn away from sensible things to the contemplation of remembered Ideas, and there was no other purpose to life. Later, an intermediate between ontology and the individual was introduced: the real society. The realism of

the political entity was overwhelmed by idealistic elements just as the ontology had been. Rigid authoritarianism came to introduce the idealistic note: the state was not only as real as the individual, it was more real; its word was final, its structure unalterable, its meaning irrefrangible. Once again idealism triumphed over realistic elements in the Platonic Synthesis.

THE SPEUSIPPIAN EXCESS

The later Plato emphasized number in his ontology. He began to talk about the One instead of about The Good at the apex of his triangle of Ideas. His viewpoint had not shifted, he had always noted a correlation between quantities and qualities, and now he was emphasizing a neglected aspect. But when he died he left the Academy to Speusippus who, with Xenocrates and their followers, thought that Plato had intended a return to the position of one of the pre-Socratics: to Pythagoras who had identified the real with number. Aristotle remarked sarcastically that for the followers of Plato's system philosophy became entirely a matter of mathematics.

Speusippus is not an important figure in the history of philosophy. We do not have his writings, we have the comments on them. He seems not to have been an original nor a forceful thinker. His importance consists in the fact of his having occurred when he did. He reintroduced the Eleatic preference for persistence, and the Pythagorean emphasis upon number. This marks the furthest reach of idealism. It was bound to provoke a reaction. For it is a serious enough predicament just to believe that the Ideas are more real than the sensible things. But to select among the Ideas only those which are the most abstract is to retreat into the uppermost corner of the realm of Ideas. Plato had regarded numbers highly, but he had placed them in no such niche. For him they had been the lowest of the Ideas: below the Ideas of qualities and way below The Good. But now for Speusippus and Xenocrates they were to dominate or reign alone. Such a view could hardly hope to be replaced by anything as moderate or as compromising as realism. It clearly must expect to provoke a violent nominalistic reaction. Thus it was

that these men set the rhythm of alternation flowing in another direction. The result has had important consequences for the subsequent history of philosophy.

THE ARISTOTELIAN CORRECTION

Aristotle had occasion to resent the successor to Plato. He thought he would inherit the Academy, whereas it fell to a nephew, Speusippus. The family tradition went further in the direction of idealism than even Plato had intended. Speusippus and Xenocrates were followers of Pythagoras and the Eleatics, at least in feeling. The Ideas for them became identified with changeless numbers. There was little for Aristotle to do other than what he did. He had to interpret Plato in terms of the Ionian school. He had to emphasize change. But being a greater philosopher than his opponents, he could not accept full opposition. He could not embrace nominalism merely because he was fighting idealism; he could not bring himself to abandon the Platonic synthesis.

He had to find another way. So he combined realism with nominalism, much as Plato had combined realism with idealism. He did not abandon the Ideas as a nominalist would have done. He did not keep them in idealistic form either. He took a more artful dodge: he folded the persistent elements inside the world of flux; he established the unchanging Ideas among the elements of change in a world of change. *Adrasteia* was dismembered and sprinkled over *Chronos* in shredded form. Ideas existed only in things, and had no being apart from them; but among them they were real.

Aristotle was never able to explain how the unchanging forms or Ideas persisted in a world characterized by change. He failed to account for their disappearance and recurrence. The nominalism was uppermost in his metaphysics, but realism dominated the logic. It also appears in the ethics where toward the end of his account the *nous* as a separate substance is not allowed to perish with the body; and there are other bits of evidence in other works. The philosophy of man restores a separation which the metaphysics allows to be doubtful. The nominalistic revision of idealism produced an uneasy realism.

The mixture was obviously unsatisfactory. Aristotle's immediate successors recoiled from it. But they were influenced by it. They took the full nominalistic implications of a revolt against idealism but only in the department of philosophy of man. Stoic and Epicurean ethics were nominalistic. But it was only a reasserted position, an echo of the Cynic and Cyrenaic protest made in ethical terms by Antisthenes and Aristippus, the contemporaries of Plato. There is little doubt that the influence of Aristotle's Correction has been in the direction of nominalism.

THE IDEALISTIC RESTORATION

We have seen that in the Platonic Synthesis the first appearance of realism is to be noted: there are many passages in which the Ideas and the sensible things are held to be of equal reality. But the majority impression is not of this sort. Plato was primarily an idealist and the effect of his philosophy has been that of idealism. The Aristotelian Correction has had an intermittent influence. It was immediately superseded by the invention of neo-Platonism. Heaven as a class of constants was more permanent, and more real, than the changing values of the variables of this world. But now the dyadic ontology did not remain pure. Plotinus was a big figure. He took the Platonic idealism in tow but restored to it religious elements from the Orphic theogony.

The freedom from Greek limits in religion was now pretty well complete. The Greek conception of mortal thoughts for mortals had been left behind, and with it the finite conception of theology with which the Greeks were so much at ease. Instead of retaining the wholly realistic conception of a barrier between mortal man and immortal gods which it was fatal for man to cross, there was substituted the idealistic emphasis on the similarity between man and god and the immortality of man's soul, an emphasis which accords well with the philosophy of man as avowed by the Orphic theogony.

We have again the spectacle of a mythologized metaphysics. This is the form in which the dyadic ontology was handed on to the west through Christianity. Philo furnished a standard model for scholastic speculation in idealistic form,

and Plotinus ensured that neo-Platonism should be idealistic and theological. There is at least one way in which it is always possible to distinguish idealism from realism, in addition, that is, to the usual distinction between degrees of reality. Idealism is characterized by unrestricted universals. The universals are open in two directions. They are proliferated quite freely, and include angels and hobgoblins as well as circles and beauty. They are also infinite. No limits are placed upon them. Once again ontology was in the hands of theologians, and it was official. For a thousand years idealism was not seriously disputed. With the reinforcement of St. Augustine the cause was won, and religious idealistic Platonism became the official philosophy of Christian Europe.

The triumph of a particular philosophy in any culture always proves the death of speculative philosophy, which is more interested in exploring alternatives than in demonstrating the superiority of any one. Issues that are settled are never discussed. The breakdown comes when evidence is discovered which the philosophy cannot explain. There are realistic elements in Greek science which the Arabs preserved from the Hellenistic civilization and passed on to the western culture through the defeated Crusaders. There were realistic elements in the naturalistic arts. There were realistic elements in the revival of philosophical speculation in the thirteenth century. All three served to bring the Idealistic Restoration to an end.

THE NOMINALISTIC REACTION

In the battle between the nominalistic theogony and the idealistic humanism of the Orphic writings, there takes place a curious displacement, almost as though it had been a matter of strategy. The humanism is nominalistically interpreted and deployed to give opposition to the idealistic theology which prevailed throughout Christianity for so many centuries. The occasion for the nominalistic humanism was the need to find some philosophy of man which would fill in the gap left by the rise of empirical science. Nature according to science was entirely an affair of whirling atoms, in which human values could find no home. The human province in order to

conform to this onslaught became a severely restricted affair. It tempered its infinity and its immortality, and sharply subdivided itself so that no social organization could claim a reality equal to that of the individual. More and more, too, the frontier of the human surrendered to the career of science. There were sciences which dealt with the human.

The remainder of our story will be concerned with the influence of science on ontology. Whitehead was fond of pointing out that science requires realism but proclaims its official philosophy to be that of nominalism. Science relies equally upon high abstractions and concrete facts, but it was in revolt against the scholastic method of deriving the facts from the abstractions. So it took the derivation of abstractions from facts to be its own method, and assumed that the method meant that the facts were real whereas the abstractions were not. Its nominalism was a revolt against scholastic idealism, understandable enough under the circumstances.

Of course if science needed only facts, the nominalism might be sustained. The sole reality of physical particulars could be defended did we need only physical particulars. But there is mathematics, and the role of mathematics in empirical science. Now mathematics, as recent mathematical logic has demonstrated, cannot be reduced to empirical elements. The constants are not so reducible, the statement connectives, such as *and*, *not*, *or*, and the requirements of consistency, the paramount criterion in mathematics, cannot be so demonstrated. Mathematics issues from another realm where its autonomy is supreme. Science skillfully weaves together the empirical and the mathematical, continually checking generalizations against data, and studying the data with the imagination brought to them in the shape of hypothetical generalizations.

Science, then, requires realism. It seeks the permanent in the changing, and tries to construct systems of permanence by means of the study of the values of variables. It samples the values in order to arrive at permanent structures. But the centuries of its influence knew nothing of this. They were familiar with science as Bacon had described it: the painstaking accumulation of the facts. They assumed that such facts were alone real, and so defended nominalism as dyadic

ontology would understand it: there were no constants to persist, and there was no class of such constants. There were only the values of the variables. Everything else was swept away as either unreal or of secondary reality. The mythological and theological elements were cleaned out.

To take their place came certain freedoms and the respect for liberty. It is a curious paradox that the proper attitude for philosophical speculation seems to be one in which philosophy is derogated. Philosophy cannot breathe in the restricted atmosphere permitted by an official philosophy. The Catholic school abdicated in the eighteenth century when Thomas Aquinas was canonized. His philosophy became official, and so speculation had to seek other and more congenial surroundings, such as it had inside the Church in the thirteenth century when every sort of ontology was permitted to those who would accept the sacraments.

The free world of capitalism and Protestantism came to replace the cramped world of feudalism and absolutism. Intellectual attainments were not highly regarded in the era that nominalism built, but at least they were tolerated as harmless. Freedom included freedom of thought. You could conduct your speculations about philosophy because philosophy did not matter. This attitude permeated the philosophers, and they gave birth to philosophies in which philosophy did not matter. From the scepticism of Hume to the subjectivism of the existentialists is not a great logical distance. Then again, neither of these positions is separated from materialism by too different a doctrine. One of the amusing spectacles of the reign of nominalism is the way in which its subjective and objective wings have gone at each other. There is great enmity, and neither seems ever to have heard of any third alternative.

THE REALISTIC EQUILIBRIUM

Where idealism struggles with nominalism, the discovery of realism is always present as a possibility. The first clear statement of realism on record is contained in the later dialogues of Plato where it alternates with but plays a role subordinate to that of idealism. The two philosophies have

not been sorted out: yet they are quite distinct. Plato often speaks of sensible things as though they are reflections of the Ideas, thus implying their inferior reality. Less frequently he talks about the participation of the sensible things, from which it is possible to infer their equal reality. The Ideas are always spoken of as apart from the sensible things, the difference hanging upon the degree of reality of the sensible things. In the later dialogues, existence and its contents, the causation of events and change are assigned an equal degree of reality with the Ideas. Among the Platonists the realism was lost and the idealism assumed to be paramount.

Realism appears fitfully until modern times. The appearance of science marks the first occasion on which realism was practiced, and scientific method furnished the support necessary for the philosophers who have now presented the position in formal abstract form. A host of realists has arisen, starting from many points: from Reid's objections to Hume, which were so different from those of Kant; from Greek studies; from the analysis of empirical science. In addition to the big names of Peirce, Whitehead, Santayana and Hartmann, there are many others, such as Laird, Hicks, the American neo-realists, and E. Jordan.

There is little doubt that realism is a difficult position to support. It requires an equilibrium, a delicate balance between idealism on the one hand and nominalism on the other. Any stumbling means falling into another camp. Any reference to either the permanent elements or the changing ones must be referred to the other set. The class of constants points to the values of variables, and *vice versa*. Laws are referable to instances, instances are instances of general laws. Chronos is meaningless without Adrasteia, Adrasteia would have nothing to govern without the realm of Chronos. The metaphor for ontological realism is the acrobat, or the juggler, or, better still, the tightrope walker.

The conscious holding of realism requires an abstract understanding of it. Unconsciously, it arises in fields other than explicit philosophy. There it is even more tenuously held. The legal theorist who proffers an interpretation of property as a function instead of a substance, the symbolic logician who insists upon some form of modal or intentional

logic, the scientist who defends the presuppositions of his method, all are assuming some variety of realism. Yet realism itself remains a dark continent, the dim outlines of whose shores have been recognized from a distance and that is all. Its reefs have been charted but its interior never penetrated.

THE REALISTIC EXPLORATION

Realism is difficult to grasp, as the historical development from the Orphic theogony to the modern philosophers amply illustrates. It is also difficult to maintain; it has never been firmly established or explicitly adopted and practiced. Yet it offers the only hope of escape from the endless oscillation between the various forms of idealism and nominalism. We live in the half-light of reason that has managed to exist in the short span between absolutes. We must use our freedom for the purposes of exploration. We have seen the long account of the struggle to discover realism. It is known now, but not in detail. It has yet to be investigated. Realism awaits exploration and application. Vast problems exist in these two areas, both for the theoretician and the man of action.

First as to the theoretical problems. According to realism, universals are real but neither their number nor their nature is necessarily infinite. The question of which universals are real remains for mathematics and empirical science to decide. Those who search among abstract structures with consistency as their guide, and those who look among facts for laws aided by correspondence, are equally endeavoring to discover some of the dimensions of the number and type of real universals.

The reality of universals has hitherto been tied to their infinity. But Aristotle did not say that universals were necessarily infinite; he said that they were what could be predicated of many. "Many" of course does not exclude "all," and the extreme case of persistence, absolute persistence, means permanence. Systems of universals may be infinite systems, but all of them need not be. Among the infinite systems are to be found some which are finite. For the limits of fact also must be reflected in the world of logic. In other

words, if there are limits in the world of change, then the universe of persistence must contain systems which correspond to those limits.

The problem of universals so far as it concerns the question of discrimination among them has been around for a long time. But the task of defending their reality has absorbed most of the energy of the men who were devoted to the problem. Plato not only asserted the reality of the Ideas, he took some steps toward analyzing their realm. He constructed a hierarchy with The Good at its apex, and the other Ideas ranged below it, with the mathematical objects the lowest in order. Whitehead explored a little further. He constructed a "vertex abstractive hierarchy" of "eternal objects" with qualities at the base. The larger aspects still remain to be worked over. Universals are the elements of a field. So are ontological systems. What is needed is to investigate the possibility of an ontological system which would consist in a geometric structure with theorems which are true in truth tables.

The realist has three theoretical tasks: to discover the nature of abstractions (the persistent elements), to penetrate the nature of concrete objects (the values of variables), and finally to determine the nature of the relation or interaction between them. We have already touched on the first of these problems. The second and third are in the hands of those who concern themselves with realistic epistemology, with theories of meaning and with the more constructive aspects of methodology generally, especially as begun by the logical positivists. At present the emphasis is on the last two; but without the first, there is some danger that the realism may fail. In working out ontological problems, we must not forget that it is ontological problems that we are working out, for nominalistic theories and idealistic aspirations are always just around the corner. We have not gotten away from them long enough to feel safely away; our security must be closely guarded yet awhile.

We must say a word now about the practical problems. The chief of these is the working out of a natural society, the application of realism to the theory of culture and its subdivisions: economics, politics, jurisprudence, *etc.* Nobody

can say as yet what a realistic society would be. We have witnessed only idealistic and nominalistic societies. A society which valued the individual and the social structure equally, which held the balance between the whole and the part, remains to be established. A society which believed in the power of speculative philosophy but held its own position tentatively, on the assumption that the absolutely true philosophy was as yet undiscovered, remains the dream of the realist.

CONCLUSIONS

We have noted the drama of the historical struggle between the two interpretations of dyadic ontology, ending in the current bid for approval and acceptance by the third. We do not find the origins of ideas in historical writings. When we pick them up at the earliest recorded point, they are already fully developed. This point for us has been the Orphic theogony. What went on before then we are powerless to say. The history of dyadic ontology in the West was determined to some extent long before the best years of Greek culture. It was implicit in the body of writings attributed to Orpheus. The deities representing change and necessity furnished the dyad of ontological categories. But there were nominalistic overtones in the priority of change. And there were strong idealistic elements in the philosophy of man which the Orphic system proclaimed. These two existed side by side yet were inconsistent. It was an inconsistency which the West inherited, and which has occasioned much controversy and opposition at theoretical levels. In the world of action it has been the occasion of great social and political upheavals and even of slaughter.

A broad revival of realism, for the first time since realism was first evident in the later Platonic dialogues, quietly made its way in the first half of the twentieth century. It has not proved the only nor yet even the most powerful of influences; yet it is there resolutely, and we do not know how it may be exercised. The drama has in a sense issued from the struggle with the master pattern in a conception of realism which has made its appearance explicitly in philosophy and implicitly

in science, and in less disciplined manifestations of the western culture. The outcome of realism is uncertain and a great deal remains to be worked out. We are ignorant, however, of the effects of its various alternatives.

Of course dyadic ontologies of the three types discussed have no exclusive hold on human cultures. There are other types of ontologies, monadic, triadic. But we have been studying certain central traditions in the philosophy of Western culture, and these have been due largely to the group of philosophies which lie within the limits of the range of dyadic ontology. The set of practical deductions from them must be fully worked out before anything else is likely to be tried. As we have just seen, even the theoretical implications of the last of these, namely realism, have not been sufficiently explored. So it is too early yet to look beyond the completion of the task which the Orphic theogony has bequeathed us.

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