

interpretation

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page

1	stewart umphrey	on the theme of plato's <i>laches</i>
11	mary pollingue	an interpretation of fortescue's <i>de laudibus legum angliae</i>
48	joseph carpino	three cosmologies
65	glenn n. schram	reinhold niebuhr and contemporary political thought: a review article



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THREE COSMOLOGIES

JOSEPH CARPINO

The word "cosmology," generally speaking, signifies a representation of the Whole. A cosmology is concerned especially with the order, or lack of it, in the universe; it tries to depict the intelligibility of the totality of being, whatever meanings it may give to the terms.

Although usually spelled out in a linear or temporal way, in words and sentences, cosmologies are essentially two- or three-dimensional visions, more or less extensive verbal elaborations of some primordial spatial image. This fundamental image, by comparison rather simple, provides the hard intuitive core, the basic skeleton on which the flesh of a full cosmology is subsequently hung. Complex and drawn-out explanations need a constant underlying frame of reference or their point is soon lost; simple visual metaphors answer such a need.

Spatial-visual analogues are particularly apt in the field of cosmology. In no other way can both a manifold and its unity be represented by the same symbol. Temporal and audial symbolizations require the cooperation of memory to manifest their unities, where visual metaphors do not. A sentence or a paragraph must be read *through* before its point is clear, but a map or a graph, if it be crude enough, conveys its message all at once, in a single "word," so to speak.¹

A cosmology could also be described as a more or less extended response to what we shall call, because by means of it "cosmoi" are born, the cosmogenic question: "Is there meaning to the Totality?" Fundamental to such a question, or perhaps merely a more precise formulation of it, is a question about its terms: "What does the word 'Totality' mean, if it has any meaning at all?" And this latter formulation—or more fundamental concern—is in its turn ultimately a request for an image or graphic representation that we may then call "The Totality." For since we are not likely to have an *experience* of the Whole, to which we may refer when we use the name, we need some sort of image in our minds or picture on the page to put the word to or to paste the title under. My purpose, in what follows, shall be to investigate the basic cosmological possibilities by means of an exposition of ultimate representational options so far as "totality" is concerned. To that end I shall take "representation" quite literally,

¹ It is not impossible that the visual is *the* philosophical or scientific mode. Only spatial representations allow for internal criticism, without which there can be only dogmatic affirmation or an extrinsic and accidental rejection. But the connection between space and eyesight is not so easily demonstrated, although it does have a certain intuitive plausibility.

offering diagrams to illustrate the possibilities. I shall also mention in passing and very briefly, but not without feeling, some social and political implications of these possibilities. At no point, however, shall I inquiry into the "truth" of any given cosmology.

Historically, of course, there have been many cosmologies, religious philosophical, and scientific, and they have varied considerably in articulation and self-consciousness. But given the small number of elements to the problem (i.e., meaning, the manifold, and some relationship between them), we might suspect that there are only a few really basic cosmological possibilities—as there can be but few mutually exclusive responses to the "cosmogenic question." To ask "Is there meaning to the Totality?" is to be prepared for a "Yes" or a "No" in reply; beyond that, one does not expect many unforeseen subtleties . . . one or two, perhaps, but not *many*.

To be sure, the very existence of Skepticism, with its devotion to the monstrous, would seem to give the lie to what has just been suggested; there can be, it implies, no limit to novel combinations. But Skepticism does not "answer" the cosmogenic question; it does not even permit it to be asked. The position of the skeptic, quite apart from his joy in it or his anguish at it, is not to be confused with a cosmological statement. (Agnosticism, for example, is a condition of the individual mind and not a description of reality; for all its religious fervor, it becomes a statement about God only through a lack of sophistication or by the most shameful sleight-of-hand.) At best, Skepticism attempts to keep being and intelligibility in perfect equilibrium, allowing to neither a veto which the other does not have as well. There is, no doubt, some satisfaction in and justification for such a theoretical posture, but as a "statement about the Whole" Skepticism does not reach the threshold of even a negative response to the cosmogenic question. Skepticism must therefore be set aside.²

Curiously enough, there is at the opposite extreme another classical response to the cosmogenic question which sins by excess and which must be excluded for its very enthusiasm. The "one seamless Sphere" of Parmenides, to which Plato refers in the *Sophist*, is indeed a positive image, but it allows for no such thing as "representation" within it. There is no place, in such a Unity, for questions, no way for them to *be*, and, *a fortiori*, no manner in which their answers might be given. As a description of the Whole it too must therefore be ruled out, for all the emotional appeal of the vision it bespeaks.³

² I have been speaking about classical Skepticism, but its cosmological muteness is related to a weakness all thorough-going dualisms may be heir to: an ultimate non-viability. Two is the number of analysis, but analysis is always "of" and "into"; it could never simply *be*, on its own.

³ There are, of course, very few doctrinaire Parmenideans around today, and the mystical visions we do have are generally much more accommodating. But to the extent that analysis and criticism are denied a proper way of being,

We begin then with what would seem to be the bare minimum of an answer to the cosmogenic question: an honest "No! There is no meaning to the Totality." An apparent historical example of such a negative response offers itself immediately. We have, in Atomism or classical materialism, a notion of the Whole which *can*, for all its negativity, be represented. The "booming buzzing confusion" of the Atomist's universe can be imagined as a throbbing, twitching, slithering, indefinite gaseous *blob*, with bubbles of nothingness and pieces of meaning floating about at random in it. And a cross-section of such a universe might look something like our first illustration.

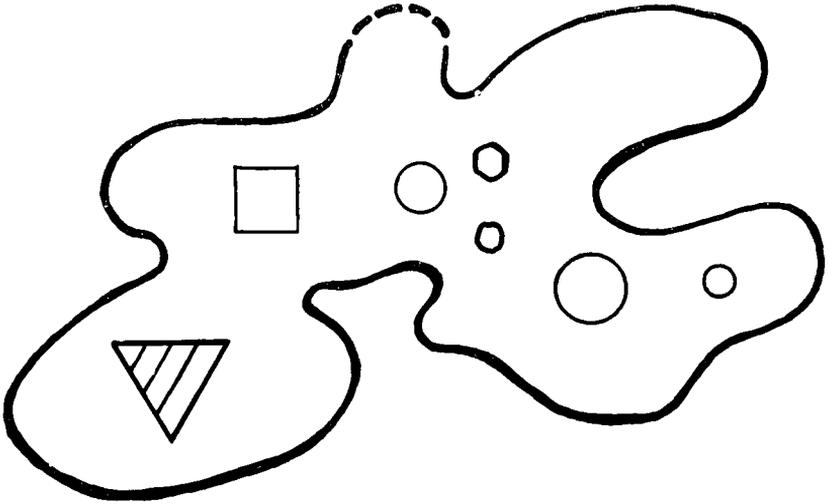


Fig. I

As a representation of Atomism's universe, this diagram is admittedly crude and unsophisticated. A mere "blob" does no justice at all to the great and subtle systems which have been worked out so painstakingly by real materialists. But for our purposes, 't will serve." Our cosmological cartoon says at once that there *is no* structure to the universe, and thus no real meaning to "The Totality." It admits to local and temporary intelligibilities, represented by the triangle and the square, but it cannot locate them in any fixed pattern. And although our static diagram cannot show the movement of the atoms, it does attempt to indicate, with its dotted line, the indefiniteness of the

within a given system of thought, to that extent we approach monism . . . and silence. Traditional propaganda operations have always been based upon this premise, and much of current fascination with consciousness-flooding communications media seems to disregard the political dangers of "informed" dumbness. (I shall not even mention chemically induced one-nesses with the universe.)

whole picture, the absence of even a quantitative limit to the universe.⁴ The image of cascading, sometimes swerving, agglutinating atoms—our blob—is an image of Heraclitus' fiery flux *without* his dark and brooding Law to govern it. There is no Measure, in such a world.

Atomism's cosmology is fundamentally and in the long run a representation of chaos, more or less benign. Its political implications—for there are always political implications in cosmologies—are pretty much what we might expect. With no overriding Measure there can be no point to revolution or even to strenuous political activity of any kind: where would one lead a mob, and why should anyone try? Power and the pleasures it brings become the only things worth striving for, and at the end the Garden is the goal. The essential anarchism of the atoms is counterbalanced in practice by their tendency to huddle together for warmth and protection. On the whole, it must be said, there is a definite democratic bias to the position, albeit with an occasional outcropping of tyranny here and there.

Classical Atomism *is* a cosmology and it *can* be lived with—though we could hardly expect it to be died for! It is to some real extent, therefore, and in many respects, a step beyond the autistic non-response of Skepticism or the beatific smile of mystical monism. But contrary to what its initial position in our exposition might suggest, the negative response of Atomism is not the simplest cosmological "molecule": historically and psychologically it is not the most primitive, and logically it is quite derivative.

A negative response to an inquiry about the meaningfulness of the world is a comparatively late cultural event. To say that "it all means nothing" presupposes considerable reflection, especially insofar as the cosmogenic question itself usually arises precisely from a shock, a jolt, a crack in the smooth flow of pre-reflective experience. To generalize from the disruption and to extend it universally would require an inversion of the quantities involved—not impossible, but certainly not primitive. Rather, the "positive" cosmologies, for all their fulsome variety and particular elegance, are the more rudimentary, so far as their essential core is concerned. The basic structure, to be outlined below, of a "Yes" response to our cosmogenic question is in fact the primordial unit, the hydrogen atom, as it were, of cosmologies; and what we may call "real" cosmologies, the historical systems, can be viewed as elaborations and compounds of that fundamental image.

Let me put it another way. A negative response to the cosmogenic question would logically presuppose some survey, however brief, of possible cosmologies, plus a certain amount of psychological disen-

⁴ This ultimate level of unstructuredness, quantitative indefiniteness, is perhaps not absolutely required by Atomism, but it is at least implied by the precarious status, within it, of Number.

chantment with them all. A “No, there is *no* total meaning!” has presumably exhausted the field, while a “Yes, there *is* such-and-such a meaning to it all!” need but state that meaning. Proofs are in principle secondary in either case, but rejection of other cosmologies is quite accidental to the presentation of a “positive” cosmology, while it is essential to the bare “No!” of a negative response to the cosmogenic question.⁵

This common characteristic of negative cosmologies—that they all imply an exhaustive rejection of any and every total structure—made it easier for us to begin with, and to represent with a single image, the essence or “genus” of negative cosmologies. After all, one blob looks much the same as another! But now we must proceed to the affirmative reply to the cosmogenic question and must attempt to extract or “generate” a basic visual metaphor which could be common to all *positive* cosmologies.

What is entailed merely by answering “Yes” to the cosmogenic question? Most positive cosmologies have concerned themselves more with the follow-up questions than with the basic implications of that initial commitment. The historical systems, for the most part, have been attempts to spell out *what* the meaning of the Totality is and *how* meaningfulness can reside in it, and the results of their efforts have been so various and complex that very little promise is offered for any attempt on our part to extract some single structure common to them all. At best they fall into convenient but not completely reliable typical groupings, like “Platonic” or “Newtonian,” but a proper survey even of these would only make our task here more complicated. We shall proceed instead in a less inductive manner, and shall attempt at this point to construct or “generate” a bare-minimum positive cosmology by means simply of attending to the immediate implications of a “Yes” response to the cosmogenic question. What are the elements, we must now ask, and what is the essential structure—i.e., the unavoidable arrangement of those elements—of a positive cosmology?

First and throughout, there must be a manifold, a plurality, to be structured or made intelligible. Second, and essential to the response itself, there must be in the whole picture some source, basis, or “principle” of intelligibility, meaning, or unity. And finally, to avoid the pitfalls of dualism or Skepticism, there must be, between these two aspects of the whole, some relationship which is not one of perfect equilibrium: the manifold is to be structured, and thereby constituted a totality, *by* the “principle of intelligibility” or in terms of it, and not the other way around.

Immediately we realize that if there is any character which pervades

⁵ I speak here merely of what is implied by the form of the proposition and not of the general practice of philosophers. Most of them have done some reading beforehand.

a structured whole—and which therefore must be universal to all descriptions of “The Totality”—it is this relationship of dependence, derivativeness, subordination. All things but one *receive* their significance, though some receive enough to pass a little of it on to others. The arrangement, in a word, is hierarchial, with a primary meaning-giver at the top and increasingly subordinate receivers of meaning at the bottom. (A vertical organization is not absolutely essential to the metaphor, but it is very useful at this point, since some sort of directional device is needed.) And insofar as “to receive meaning” is more compatible with plurality than “to give meaning,” the manifold will find its “proper place” at the bottom rather than at the top of the system. The image, in short, is of a pyramid, and the cross-sectional representation of a bare-minimum positive cosmology becomes an isosceles triangle with secondary internal substructures, as we see here.

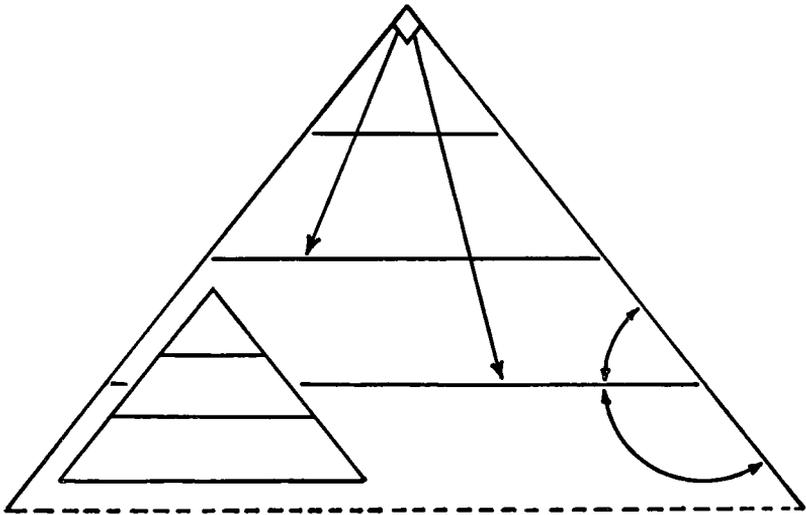


Fig. II

Thus our second cosmology—or first, in terms of primitiveness. Needless to say, the depth and complexity of the great classical systems are absent—or, even worse, are present in caricature. But again, for our purpose, “it is enough.” Our second diagram shows all at once, though somewhat crudely, how there can be structure to the Whole and with it meaning for each part. It shows how local and passing structures, the lesser triangles, are given their real and ultimate significance by virtue of their direct or indirect relationships to the primal source and stationary “pivot,” so to speak, of meaning—the pinnacle of the pyramid. And finally it shows, by means of the arrows and the horizontal lines, how “location” must be *constitutive* of the

intelligibility and worth of each member of the universe. This last could bear some spelling out.

Our second diagram suggests that there is an inverse proportion between distance from the pinnacle of the pyramid and significance or importance. Beyond the boundaries of the pyramid there is, to be sure, nothing; it is, after all, a geometrical figure purporting to represent "The Totality." But within the confines of this structured whole there is an all-pervading struggle between meaning and multiplicity, or from another aspect, between unity and being. From the point of view of the "cosmological endeavor," our attempt here to speak about the whole, it is of necessity an uneven match. Implicit in a positive cosmology is the assurance that the Measure does exist and that meaning rules being. But its authority is not absolute, its power is not infinite. Not only must the Measure exist *as* a member of the manifold (albeit a highly privileged one), but even more limiting, it can do its measuring only in terms of, or, as it were, "with the concurrence of," a pre-given, otherwise independent—because indeterminate—mere being, the manifold. Ranking and qualification, within the whole, is always hemmed in by "more" and "less"; too much and too little become subdivisions of wrong or bad. The arrangement, in other words, is characterized by the lieutenantcy of quantity under quality's command. And "higher" and "lower," the vertical-quantitative translations of "better" and "worse," become essential to the representation of such a universe and not merely a convenient traditional usage.

A positive cosmology, therefore, is ultimately a system of limited dominion. Its social and political implications are again pretty much what we might expect, and they are about as "primitive" as the cosmology itself. Indeed, in this case, cultural realities pre-dating philosophical speculations as they do by some years, it might be difficult to convince an untrained observer that structured cosmologies are anything *but* rationalizations of a received social order. The psychological experience of having to look up to the repositories of power and significance—parents, the sun, bullies, and thrones, to mention just a few—doubtless lent support to the political facts of life; and at no time have rulers despised the propaganda value of a veritably *cosmic* rationale for their efforts; nor is it accidental or irrelevant that Atomists must *construct* an ordered society (being unable to derive one from their "cosmos") just to get through the day without fear. But such considerations are all quite secondary to our concern here. We are investigating, at this point, only the logical and necessary implications of a "Yes" response to the cosmogenic question; the uses men make of their representations of reality are another matter entirely.

With Measure in the universe to help discriminate between what merely is and all that ought to be, there is now considerable point to political activity, though perhaps not to "revolution" in the modern sense. One *can* distinguish now between an ordered society and a

peaceful crowd; and among men there *are* the more and less noble. There are now higher and lower pleasures, and human life can have a meaning and purpose beyond itself. The static character of the Measure does *not* require social and personal rigidity, and the tendencies toward patricianism within the system are often counterbalanced in practice by a sense of noblesse oblige which can make life quite bearable for those on the bottom. On the whole, the cosmos itself lends support to the rule of law and even hints at a preference for the status quo. But if the "natural aristocrats" among men and the gods themselves within the universe fall prey at times to arrogance and unconcern, they can also be counted upon to provide our strongest bulwark against tyranny and chaos.

It is not impossible, therefore, to speak of a "basic" positive cosmology, to represent it, and to find in that representation enough detail to justify suggesting a positive correlation with historical systems. One can live within such a universe—indeed, only here is the term "universe" strictly meaningful—and one can strive for something within it beyond pleasure. In fact, one can even *die* in terms of values it contains and which survive the individual event. This is cosmology in the full and proper sense (Atomism, we remember, barely borrowed the name), and its several "species" are the perennial systems, the traditional world views, whose real variety in other respects could easily obscure the fundamental sameness of their primary affirmative response to the cosmogenic question.

What is left? "Yes" and "No" have been dealt with. Can there be any logical possibility still remaining? What of the not-so-logical possibilities? Let us return to the elements of the problem.

Up to now our two "solutions" have accepted (and quite correctly, be it said) the ineluctability of being and the logical pre-giveness of the manifold as part of the problem itself. Our positive and negative cosmologies, both, have also assumed, again quite rightly, that the "principle of intelligibility" would have to be a *member of* the manifold which it would thereby constitute a "totality." Suppose now, that with one stroke we disregard both of these rational requirements and try to answer the cosmogenic question in language whose logical parentage is less secure but whose claim must still be heard.

"Yes," we might say, "there *is* meaning to the Totality, but its ground is *not* a member of the manifold." Suppose, in other words, we offer now the solution known historically as creation *ex nihilo*?⁶

The first thing that strikes us, even before we try to represent it, is the logical improbability, at best, of such a position. To say that "The

⁶ In what follows we shall avoid completely and without apology the important question of the historical sources of such a "solution," and shall try to deal only with its logical implications and representational necessities.

Totality" is structured by something outside of, totally other than, its own membership is, on the face of it, merely to have forgotten to extend the boundaries of the universe to their proper limits: one discovers the planet Pluto, one enlarges the solar system—it's that simple. Besides, if there is anything that gives substance to classical positive cosmologies, it is their insistence that we can and must extrapolate from observed but partial regularities to an unobservable but real Whole by means of a "total" law, an all-pervading "ratio" which makes the manifold an ordered series and not a mere agglomeration. But creation *ex nihilo* implies that the "ratio" of the "series" is in no way a demonstrable constituent of it, and that we could never reconstruct, by reasoning upon the parts we see, a "Whole" we do not see; there is no *adding*, even reason says, of such a God and such a world. Given a few angles and a baseline, one might extrapolate to a pinnacle and thus conceivably construct a whole pyramid or represent a pyramidal Whole. But if, by hypothesis, such procedures are denied ultimate relevancy from the very start . . . the mind boggles, rebels, and turns to other things. The obstacles to thought appear to be quite insurmountable.

But theoretical stumbling-blocks notwithstanding, the position does have some inner consistency and logical autonomy. It has in fact been maintained by rational men who were neither skeptics nor classical materialists. The reasons they gave and the "evidence" they offered in support of their case are not precisely our concern here; our task is not to justify but only to represent. We must produce somehow a basic image of creation *ex nihilo* and merely indicate to some extent what its essential features could imply, politically and otherwise.

Curiously enough, there is no *one* creational cosmology, no single "generic" representation to which the several "species" can be reduced as to a lowest common denominator. Instead—and here the actual history of the position parallels the inner logic of the representation itself—we have a *series* of possibilities which have in common only these very negative features: that the Measure is not "in" the world, and that nothing is completely meaningless. In an attempt, therefore, to follow out that inner logic, our presentation of this third cosmology will itself unfold, through diagrams depicting stages in an evolution or progressive refinement of representational understanding in the case of creation *ex nihilo*.

Initially the affirmative aspect of the response—"Yes, there *is* meaning to the world . . .!"—was taken quite literally and somewhat naively. This is still very much the traditional view. Without much reflection it was assumed that the representational problems could be solved by merely separating the top chunk of the old pyramidal universe from the rest of it and proceeding, politically and so forth, very much as before. Thus the first stage in our representation of a created world would look something like the diagram on page 57.

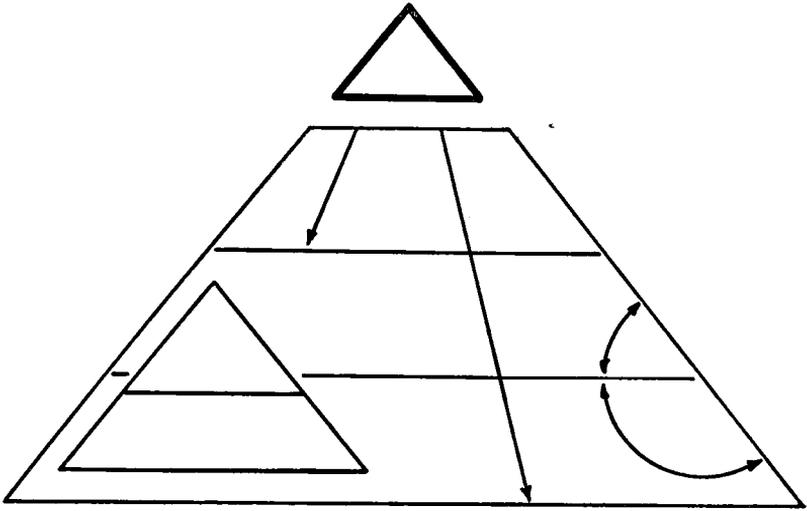


Fig. IIIa

The interval of nothingness between the peak and the base of the pyramid is inserted to portray the absolute otherness of the Living God, and the base line is made solid to indicate the finitude of this world. But little else is changed. Plato's Forms become the "ideas" of God or the intentions of the Creator. Monarchical structures in the world become microcosmic images of the macrocosmic Empire. Nature is governed by Law, and obedience to authority becomes a transcendent obligation. Everything is as it was . . . perhaps even a little better, from an organizational point of view. Hierarchical dominion is still very much the way of the world.

A little thought, however, made some observers aware of what should have been apparent all along: that it was not quite precise, and even a little disrespectful, to represent the Creator in this way, as a convenient capstone structure. Of course some figure was still necessary to indicate the intrinsic intelligibility and wisdom of the Unnameable One. A mad or improvident God is worse than none at all! An easy solution was at hand, and the result may well have been imagined somewhat like the second stage of our creational representation, shown on page 58.

A circle or sphere of infinite dimensions has replaced the little triangle above the truncated pyramid, and the gap between these two is now bridged by a brief arrow to indicate their real but unilateral relationship. Infinity, a scandal to the Greeks because of its affinity to indeterminacy and chaos, has become respectable, and even if it is not yet a completely tractable concept it is at least no longer a term of opprobrium. The little arrow gives efficient causality a new dignity by seeming to relate Creator and creature through a common structure,

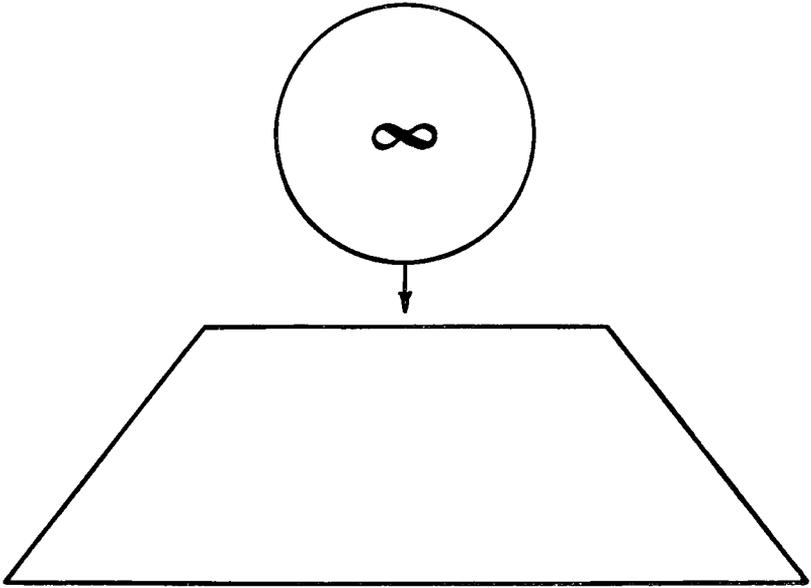


Fig. IIIb

familiar enough in this world and apparently implied by God's own activity.

The image is not without sophistication. For some time this second stage or a variant of it provided a working solution to the representational problems inherent in a creational response to the cosmogenic question. Our latest diagram is clearly reminiscent of what might be called the "standard" medieval formulations. It is also surprisingly similar to later Deistic conceptions, although these had a certain billiard-ball dynamism to them and might have preferred to place their First Cause over at the side. But otherwise and in most respects the situation is substantially what it always was. Law still rules Nature, and if there is in society a little more "vertical mobility" than before, it is counterbalanced politically by a certain faint support for absolute sovereignty. Classical rulers, we remember, were always limited by law; now, when the prototype of rulership is formally infinite, the burden and power of the monarch becomes literally "immense."

But reflection will not rest, and very soon the opalescent Pearl suspended above the world of experience is dissolved in the vinegar of analysis. Critical inquiry reveals what should have been suspected all along, that even an infinite sphere is a projection, "beyond" the world, of a "worldly" structure. Causality (the little arrow) is found to be not even a reliable *worldly* structure, and our second stage is suddenly collapsed. It has, for a number of reasons, become representationally invalid.

A traditional and for many years quite serviceable symbol of perfection having been discredited, the "shape" of the Measure can now be represented only as a Blob—albeit perhaps still infinite—and its "location" must be left quite indeterminate. As for the world itself, we are assured that it is still meaningful, if only on its own terms. The result of these changes, to the extent that it can be represented at all, is a structured world in the midst of an ubiquitous, infinite Blob, and the image is of an equilateral triangle surrounded by a deflated balloon—our third stage.

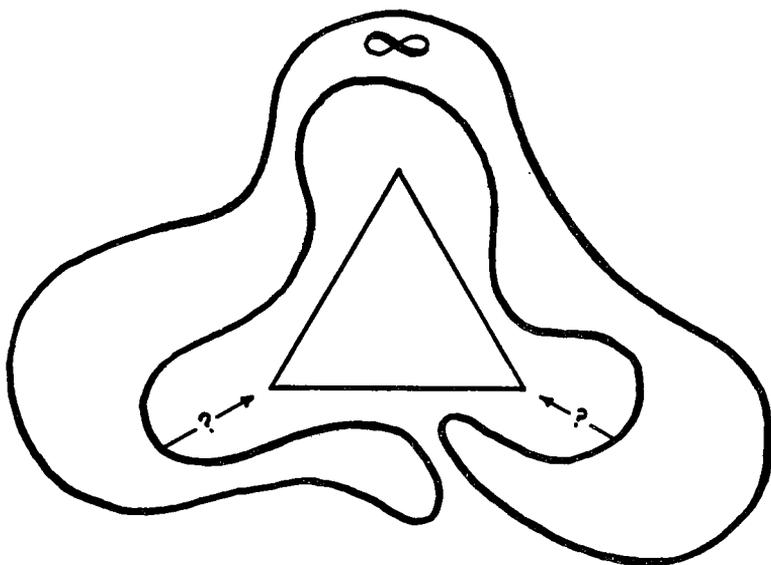


Fig. IIIc

Things have finally begun to change. But unfortunately the arrangement is now essentially unstable, even "critical." The diagram is at best transitional. Location and shape have lost their representational usefulness, so far as the Measure is concerned. The source of meaning cannot be definitely or demonstrably placed either in the world or outside it, and in any case is unrepresentable in terms of it. But how is a structured whole, the world of common experience and scientific experiment, to be affirmed if there is no way firmly to relate its local and partial regularities to an overriding context of some sort? Something must be done; we cannot rest for long at this unhappy stage. But neither is there any turning back. The "cosmological endeavor" must face the problems squarely and must make at least one more effort to represent creation *ex nihilo* by a visual image. Taking account, therefore, of the essential terms of the creational response itself, and eliminating those structures which have been shown to be gratuitous, I offer

now a fourth and in some respects “terminal” stage in the attempt to represent creation *ex nihilo*.

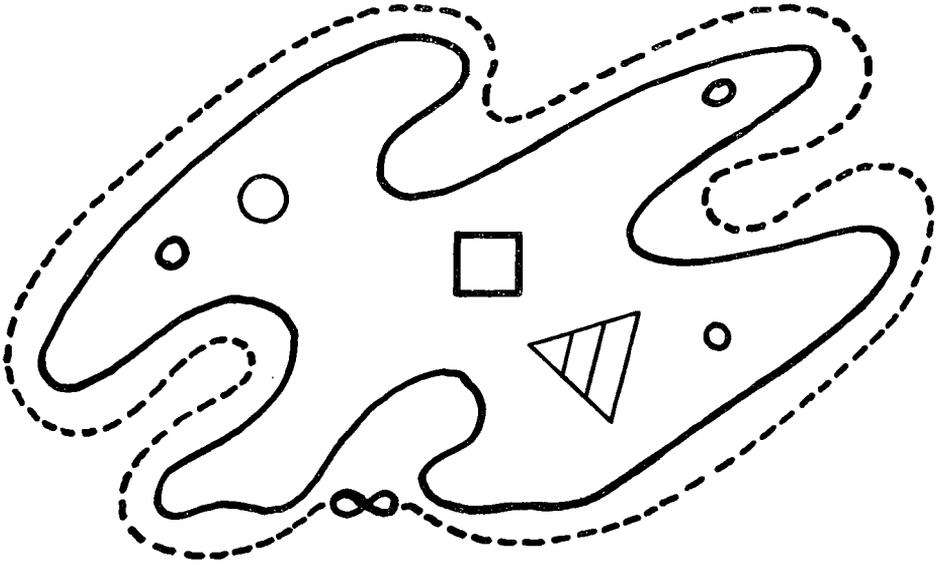


Fig. IIIId

Thus, in fine, our Third Cosmology and its history. What began as an easily imagined compromise has ended as an awkward and refractory visual dilemma, and our representation shows it: an infinite outer Blob surrounding and somehow grounding an indefinite inner blob cannot be called a happy metaphor. But it is at least frank, an honest paradox at last.

The world is not alone, our final diagram implies; but neither is it on a string. There are still, within the world, some regularities to be observed, some structures that remain. But there is now no way of ranking them with any surety; “higher” and “lower” are simply no longer representationally functional. What is measured by infinity is somehow unlimited in nature and may not be looked down upon. Indefiniteness becomes “openness” in proportion as “unfinished” becomes the backdrop of achieved order rather than Chaos. There is room and some cause, in such a world, for hope.

The immediate impact of the creational vision upon empirical inquiry has often been remarked upon. In a world in which all things are in principle “theophanic” and every event potentially important, factual precision, in history and in science, takes on the overtones of religious obligation. The political implications of such a cosmology, though still partially obscured by the administrative habits of centuries, are quite revolutionary and have not been missed by those with eyes to see. When even being is derived and every atom of us all is a

gift, no man may boast of what he is or has become; and on the other hand, each man takes on a dignity that's absolute: to be measured by infinity is to have no "relative" value. Hierarchy is by no means gone from the world, but it has lost its cosmic scepter and its universal sway. The old securities are gone, but so too are the chains; and on the whole—if disaster can be avoided—there seems to be a definite upward thrust built into such a world.

Of course it's the other way around as well. An infinite Measure is in a sense no measure at all, and men who answer only to God can destroy cities and snuff out species without a qualm of conscience. Since the Measure is "not of this world," we must expect from time to time, almost periodically, waves of something not unlike classical Cynicism, as each generation discovers, in its way, the possibility of an immediate relationship with the Absolute. Romanticisms will flourish as reason must either masquerade as just another passion in the kingdom it once ruled with an Olympian reserve or tyrannize in some petty principality of human thought. There will be, in such a world, many false starts, much wasted effort, and considerable plain foolishness—not to speak of suffering of an extent and quality unimaginable to pre-Buchenwaldian cosmologists. (All pre-given measure, it must be remembered, is gone, and with it the "unnatural" as well!) But there is more.

Our fourth stage was perhaps more candid even than it seemed at first. Built into this final diagram by means of the graphic device of dotted lines, and latent in the cosmos it purports to be an image of, is the cognitional and representational superfluity of the "infinite Blob." Its essential function in the representation was to distinguish this fourth stage of a creational cosmology from the *simply* negative cosmology of classical Atomism, and in the context that was not a minor role. But if, by an act of will or on the basis of an unarticulated faith, one chooses to regard this world as meaningful while at the same time rejecting all the frustrating metaphysical encumbrances and noble but outmoded political paraphernalia of classical positive cosmologies, one can do so, in terms of this fourth stage of our third cosmology, and one can represent one's choice with an absolute minimum of effort. One simply erases or ignores the dotted line called "Infinity" and leaves the "Yes" alone.

For just as there are "creationalists" alive today who try to live their lives in terms of an ultimately non-viable cosmological intention (e.g., Figs. III a, b, and c) so too may there be others around who could be called "crypto-creationalists," insofar as they accept some of the worldly implications and at least the thrust of our third cosmological tableau while at the same time rejecting implicitly or explicitly both positive and negative "classical" cosmologies and the earlier stages of a creational cosmology (on the usual assumption that these are the only forms it can take). It must be said that some belief is entailed in

the creational response to the cosmogenic question, though neither God nor the world is of much *use* to the believer, since "using" either to define the other could be blasphemous or idolatry. But it must also be said that there is nothing to prevent a non-believer, a scientist or a statesman or even a philosopher, from accepting the "worldly" implications mentioned above as the social and political "fruits" of creation *ex nihilo*—nothing, that is, except a concern for logic and consistency which is neither common nor operationally necessary. If one can believe in a Creator God, one can just as easily *believe* in the intelligibility of the individual fact or in the intrinsic dignity of every man—or even in Progress. Of course one may not, in such a case, ascribe rational necessity to one's belief or represent a cosmological context for it, but such considerations have never troubled empirical scientists or modern revolutionaries for very long—no more than creationists have universally shrunk back in horror from the practice of placing themselves somehow "nearer" to God. Logical fastidiousness is a meager virtue and poorly paid.

In any case, our third cosmology exists directly through the wills and beliefs of men and perhaps indirectly through practices and attitudes which are not strictly justified by the "natural" cosmological contexts. A creational cosmology is not imposed by representational necessities or logically implied in the very effort to "speak about the Whole"—although it does have practical ramifications once it is affirmed. It is itself a yea-saying and not a mere "reply"—which is, of course, what Creation *ex nihilo* must have been, if ever it took place, and still must be, if still it's going on.

A brief review and epilogue might be in order now. Philosophers and other men who have thought and spoken about the Whole have never been so simple-minded as to confine their thinking and speaking to the little cosmological cartoons which we have been examining (with perhaps more attention than is their due). There has always been "more to it than that"—as there is always more to a man than "rational animal" or "symbol-making primate." But if the cosmogenic question is to be asked, how else could it be answered? What else is left to say, in response to an "Is there . . . ?" question but "Yes," and "No," and the "Yes, but . . ." that we have considered? (We shall set aside a vulgar "Shut up!" and the rather precious "No, but . . ." as rude or evasive.) And if the question is about the manner of being of all that is, there can be no thought of fleshing out or backing up the "Yes" or "No" by calling up objects or experiences, as one might with talk of love and unicorns or crocodiles and fear: there is no stepping outside the Whole. All that one can do is draw pictures to stand for and in place of what one says is so. But the limits of graphic representation in this matter are finite, and I submit that the membership of the class "Basic Cosmologies" must be something like the group I've shown above.

There is one other point to be made. The final form of our third cosmology, which purports to be the inevitable result of a consistent attempt to represent creation *ex nihilo* visually, is something of a limit case. The notion of a Blob defining a blob is inherently unsatisfactory, and the difficulties involved in trying to depict it could well presage a complete breakdown of the spatial mode as such, with all that that entails.

If, as in our second, "positive" cosmology, the Whole is taken as a composite of the manifold and its measure, a proper spatial representation of the relationship would call for the use of all three imaginable dimensions. The manifold would then be drawn two-dimensionally upon the page, and its measure would be located somewhere *off* the page, suspended "above" the diagram or somehow passing through it, a graphic impossibility but not beyond imagining and almost required by the terms of the problem. But if the "principle of intelligibility" is to be characterized as *absolutely other* to the being it makes meaningful, then the representational usefulness of even three dimensions is reduced to a minimum, and the attempt to "locate" this measure "*of* the world but not *in* it" must shift to another mode altogether. Experienceable spatial dimensions having been exhausted, the only other possibility left is, of course, the "dimension" of Time. And modern cosmologies have not been backward in their use of absolute (i.e., directional, "rectilinear") Time as matrix and measure when they speak of development and "process" and even of Truth. Classical thought, perhaps because it was less cerebral in its approach to human problems, had an understandable tendency to avoid such a "solution"; classical cosmologies and histories tried instead to represent Time spatially, by reducing its apparent undulatory motion to a timeless cyclical pattern which could much more easily be integrated into a visual image. In such a context William James' "in the long run" would have been quite meaningless; only the "as such" is worth taking seriously when *anything* static is a member of the Whole. But in our world even Marxists look to Time for a final separation of the sheep from the goats.

One last word. So far as God is concerned, His presence was functional only in the earlier, essentially transitional stages of the creational representation. (The classical cosmologies were *filled* with gods, of every size and shape, but they are not at issue now.) In the final stages, however, His absence (i.e., structural otherness) seemed to serve the same purposes, and it is not surprising that unsophisticated observers have interpreted this representational refinement as an existential negation. Of course, so far as idolatry is concerned, the effect is much the same, and religious consciousness might well profit from a loss of this ultimate crutch. But there is no logical necessity to regard a crisis in instrumentation—our inability to represent the future spatially—as a failure of design. Hope has always had to go beyond the given.

For philosophy, insofar as it must work with visual schemata, the problem is crucial—but not necessarily lethal. For the rest of us, the goal is still the same: an end of tutelage, and full majority for man.⁷

⁷ Cf. 1 Cor. 13: 11–12.