

TECHNE ARISING

Although we only have glimpses of the wonders to be discovered in the proto-technical realm, it is possible to discern a clear pattern in the series of steps that has taken us to this threshold. It is this pattern that is important to understand because it reveals a deep patterning of who we really are beyond who we think we are. It is the primary purpose of this book to elucidate that deep patterning. The patterning becomes clear in the dynamics of the emergent event. It is to these dynamics that we must address ourselves, not to speculation concerning what may or may not emerge next. Generally, we are fascinated by the novel things emerging and miss the really important thing which is that “emergence is occurring.” That emergence does occur within the Western cultural system is very significant -- even deeply meaningful. It allows us to have some insight into who we are; whereas the actual emergent phenomena themselves, no matter how wondrous, merely lead us away from knowledge of ourselves into an immersion into the ever-changing gestalts that continually repattern

us.

The premise presented here is that emergent events all occur in a particular pattern. That pattern is not an empirical pattern. It is an a priori patterning. Thus, no appeal will be made to evidence from particular emergent events to prove this point. Emergent events are, in fact, strangely inaccessible. Either you are the discoverer yourself, in which case you are too caught up in the event to notice whether the patterning occurred, or you are someone else who, by the time you arrive on the scene, all the evidence has vanished. The only way the actual study of emergent events can occur is if the people know about the a priori patterning and can recognize it as it occurs when they are in the midst of experiencing the emergent event themselves. For all normal scientific endeavors emergent events are extreme anomalies, and as such, fall outside their realm of study almost by definition. In fact, we get the strange effect that all science is in some way founded on a kind of pseudo-science from which it cannot escape. The study of emergent events must always remain a pseudo-science because of their inaccessibility to scientific observation. Emergent events are by definition not repeatable. They cannot be separated from the observer. Like a so-called mystical experience, they are private to the experiencer and are transformed into something else as they are

transmitted to others within the cultural matrix. This is because they are not a normal phenomenon, but a kind of meta-phenomenon. They occur in an arena where subject and object are not separated; where the scientific world itself is being constituted. To the extent that emergent events reveal with more intensity a “novelty,” they also are more intense in their concealment of the nature of the event itself. Yet without these events, science would rapidly decay into its nemesis: magic. The claim of science to access to a measure of reality stands on the possibility of disproving experiments. No more disproving experiments; then no more discovery. No more discovery, then reality escapes scientific endeavors, and it is impossible to tell scientific practice from ritualized magical practices. Isn’t it a strange affair when it is the object of a pseudo-science that is the thing that prevents science from turning to magic?

And why is magic the nemesis of science? Because magic is the one thing science fears collapsing back into. Science is magic. It is a kind of meta-magic which by some strange quirk of fate “works” for us. It is precisely the component of emergence that raises science from the status of magic and prevents its return as long as it continues to occur. Magic is a kind of proto-science which does not take hold and loses its grip on existence as soon as the mind refuses to designate it as real.

Chemistry grew out of the will to power of a certain part of alchemy. Alchemy claimed the ability to transform base substances into gold. But the actual performance was a rare and unpredictable event which lost credibility. That rare and unpredictable event is transformed in meta-magic into the emergent event. As chemists looked at all kinds of transforms of matter attempting to understand their nature, new phenomena, came into view. As patterns were seen in these new and old phenomena slowly the table of Mendeleev was pieced together. Eventually atomic and molecular theory came to explain the workings of this pattern. However, even today new phenomena such as high temperature superconductivity are being observed as novel combinations of materials are made. It is the emergent event which becomes analogous to the philosopher's stone within the new science of chemistry. Whatever comes into contact with the emergent event is transformed. For instance the world will be transformed by high temperature superconductivity, especially if the temperatures become very high. Now many years ago super-conductivity itself was an incredible phenomenon which astounded the scientific community. However, the phenomenon was thought to have little impact because of the low temperatures at which it occurred. Not that those barriers are being pushed back it appears that super-conductivity may be much more important to us than would have been

predicted. Yet if one took away the appearance of new events like these, then science would have a very different character. Although the phenomenon itself may be repeated over and over, the arising or recognition of the new phenomenon only occurs once, and usually through events which are difficult to access.

We have already discussed the four stages of emergence. What was not clarified is that each stage of emergence corresponds to a stage of the unfolding of techne only in reverse order. This means that all emergent events are first proto-technical, then meta-technical, then structural, and finally formal. Unless the emergent event goes through each of these distinct phases in its arising, then we are dealing not with a genuine emergence, but instead with an excrescence of artificial emergence. This phasing is the discriminator between genuine emergences and excrescences. And what is strange is that it indicates that all emergences are originally from the proto-technical realm. Thus, proto-technology was implicit in the unfolding of the technological project from the very beginning even though we ONLY NOW see that realm clearly distinguished from the technological and the meta-technological. It means that the meta-technical and proto-technical are implicit in the formal-structural system. They appear clearly in emergent events, but are strata that are continuously active. Because of their

implicitness it is possible to recognize the a priori patterning of the emergent event. Emergent events are a moment in the dynamic of the formal-structural system in which all of its layers, both explicit and implicit, become visible momentarily. Emergence is an action of the formal-structural system itself, not something from the outside. Emergence is a necessary action by which the formal-structural system maintains its visibility like the production of erratic minimal change in the form of excrescences. This strange self-manifesting and self-maintaining action of the formal-structural system is rarely seen, and so appears to come from outside rather than from inside. However, careful study of the formal-structural system itself shows the necessity of these implicit layers to its continued functioning.

We know about the substructure of the dynamical formal-structural system because of that system's unfolding in the Western philosophical tradition. In effect, the Western tradition has been piercing deeper and deeper levels of the foundations of the formal-structural system for the last two hundred years. It is the philosophy of Kant that set the stage for this development by giving a rigorous formulation to the formal system and basing that on the structure of Newton's Calculus. Since the rigorous definition by Kant, there has been successive dialectically related philosophies that have explored various counter

positions and inversions. This dialectical unfolding has, so to speak, peeled back the layers of the onion of the formal system, successively exposing the structural layer, the meta-technical layer, and the proto-technical layer.

Specific philosophies are related to each of these layers. Within each layer particular philosophies form position -- counter-position constellations. We can read these philosophies in their mutual interrelation as various opinions that are mutually contradictory. Or we can read the dialectical development of Western philosophy as if they were all talking about the same thing from slightly different viewpoints. If you want to understand emergence, it is necessary to see the dialectical dance of philosophical positioning as all pointing toward the same thing -- that one thing is the implicit position around which all other positions are taken. It is a position never taken within the Western philosophical tradition, and without which the inner unity of that tradition cannot be seen. It is the inner strand that acts as the golden thread that leads back out of the labyrinth. In this essay that thread is called the path beyond the void. It will be elucidated step by step as the argument of the essay unfolds. By taking the path beyond the void, the inner meaning of the Western tradition becomes manifest.

It must be kept in mind that the Western tradition really

centers around a very narrow domain of discourse, and the differences within that domain are less significant than the similarities. Because most philosophers only know Western philosophy, they think that tempest in a tea cup is the whole world. The narrowness of focus of the teacup of Western philosophy comes from the almost exclusive program of explaining visible existence and the ideational processes that are used to construct the world. Other philosophical traditions such as the Hindu, Chinese, Islamic and Buddhist range much further than this and usually focus instead on explaining intersubjectively verifiable mystical experiences. The explanation of everyday experience is, in fact, only a minor by-product of the attempts to explain cosmic depths that Western philosophers only barely dream about. It is sad to think that so much effort has been expended on such paltry ground. However, within its own extremely narrow confines there are interesting aspects to Western philosophy. However, it is most interesting to see its uniformity and points of agreement within a matrix of family resemblances. Each different philosopher since Kant has basically added to the Kantian project and stuck to the agenda set forth by him. That agenda is taken forward by a series of steps that reinforce it as changes are made. It is like a sculpture to which different artists have contributed, sometimes reworking or replacing the constructions of their predecessors, but

all the time maintaining the same overall framework. Philosophy, more exactly, is a formal-structural system undergoing teleonomic development whose goal becomes clearer all the time that it did not know itself from the beginning.

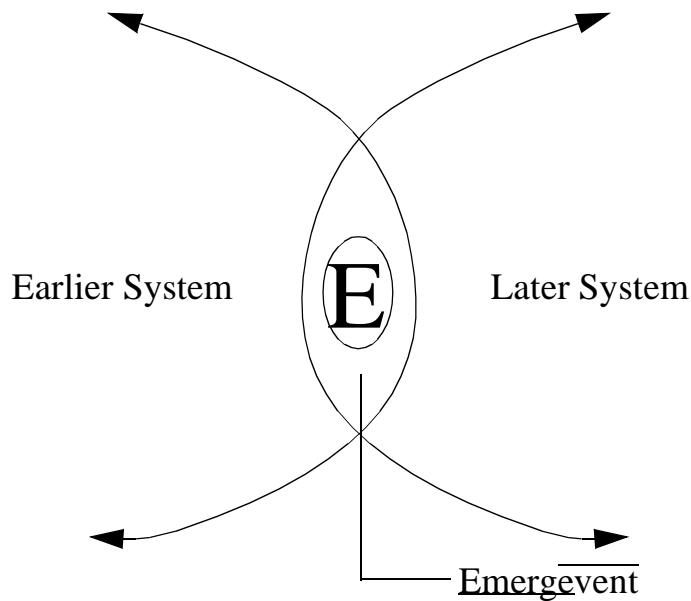
Within the dialectic of the unfolding Western philosophical tradition, every possible variation has been tried which the thoughtful could imagine. Yet the dialectic, like every cyclone, tornado, or hurricane, has a center which is still. Untouched by the raging dialectic of argument and counter argument, that hollow center which holds no position is the axis on which all the other positions turn. The axis of the philosophical dialectic cannot be understood without first comprehending the dialectical maelstrom itself. Thus, we will enter into the vortex ourselves. However, our entry will be driven by the necessity of locating the still point -- the non-position which the tornado of Western thought has as its axis. Our first clue to the fact that the whole dialectic is directed at and indicates a single non-position of the axis is the unity of the phenomenon of emergence. Emergence takes on a specific form as a changing play of phenomenon. It is as if emergence as a meta-phenomena were a standing wave within the vortex of dialectical interplay. We need to appreciate the form of this standing wave because of its elucidation of the seldom visible substructure of the

formal structural system. Emergence is a phenomenon explicated by the American Pragmatist G.H. Mead. He attempted in the 1930s to understand the relationship between relativity theory and Darwinian evolutionary theory and their implications for understanding science and society. An excellent exposition of Mead's work has been given by John D Baldwin. As Baldwin points out, the incomplete and fragmentary nature of G.H. Mead's own works has led to his not being given the serious study he deserves. Mead was a "process philosopher" like Whitehead, who based much of his thought on the study of objective or behaviorist psychology. He is best known for his formulation of objective concepts of Mind, Self and Society which have been taken up by sociologists to form the school of Symbolic Interactionism. But Mead's most important work is his only completed book, The Philosophy Of The Present. In this book he sets forth his process philosophy in the clearest terms and speaks of the central position of the phenomenon of emergence in that process philosophy. That presentation must be used as the starting point for understanding, his posthumous papers published as The Philosophy Of The Act. For although emergence is not mentioned as often in these papers, it is clear that it is an underlying concept which is in development or is serving as a background for his various notes. Here we will give a brief excursus on G.H. Mead's concept of emergence in

order to ground further exploration. This presentation will focus on this single concept out of his whole system of thought and will not attempt to do justice to the whole. For an introduction to the whole and its continuing significance, please refer to Baldwin's exegesis.

FIGURE 3

The Emergent Event bridges two systems. {FIGURE 132}



Going immediately to the crux of the matter, it is important to understand that for G.H. Mead the concept of Emergence was the linchpin of his whole philosophy. As a process philosopher, he attempts to focus in on the present as the process of time passing. Within the present he attempts to show how the past and future are bound together with our experience of what is “NOW.” His view of this unfolding occurs within the context of the new theories of relativity and quantum mechanics, as

well as Darwinian evolutionary theory. The view is global taking into account the whole of scientific endeavor seeing phenomena arising within the present in a series of levels: physical, biological, and social. It sees the scientific method as the primary means of human cognition. And given all these features of his view of temporality, he finds at the core of the present the phenomena of emergence. He defines emergence “as the presence of things in two or more different systems, in such a fashion that its presence in a later system changes its character in the earlier system or systems to which it belongs.”¹

This presence of the emergent event (“E”) in both systems simultaneously leads to some strange phenomena. The first of these phenomena which Mead discusses is the rewriting of history:

It is idle, at least for the purposes of experience, to have recourse to a “real” past within which we are making constant discoveries; for that past must be set over against a present within which the emergent appears, and the past, which must be looked at from the standpoint of the emergent, becomes a different past. The emergent when it appears, is always found to follow from the past,

1. PHILOSOPHY OF THE PRESENT, page 69

but before it appears, it does not, by definition, follow from the past.²

The emergent event appears unexpectedly within the span of the “specious present” and immediately changes the past irrevocably. The past is rewritten to accord with the new view made possible by the emergent event. Also, the future, which is projected from the specious present is radically altered as new possibilities suddenly come into view which were not apparent before. The present itself is altered because it becomes a time of dramatic alteration in the normal course of events.

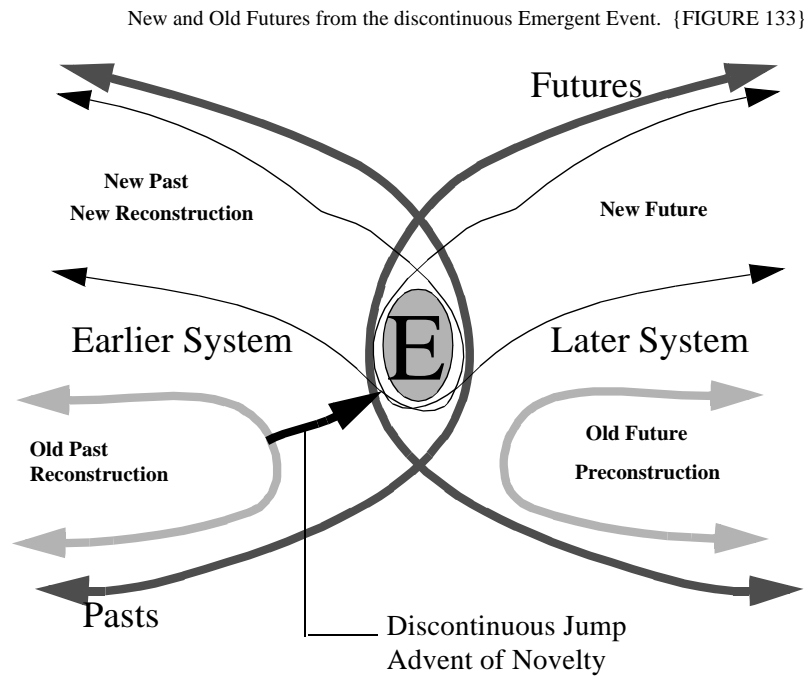
The picture which this offers is that of presents sliding into each other, each with a past which is referable to itself, each past taking up into itself those back of it, and in some degree reconstructing them from its own standpoint.

But if there is emergence, the reflection of this into the past at once takes place. There is a new past, far from every new rise in the landscape that stretches behind us becomes a different landscape.³

2. PHILOSOPHY OF THE PRESENT, page 2

3. PHILOSOPHY OF THE PRESENT, page 9-10

FIGURE 4



Mead immediately points out how this analogy to mountain climbing is faulty. However, the central point is that presents in which emergent events occur are qualitatively different from the normal course of events manifesting in the present. With a terminology not used by to Mead we can say that the emergent event reorganizes the gestalt of the specious present. This radical reorganization causes the reconstruction of the past, and the projection of the future to be fundamentally reordered as well, because past and future are intimately bound up with the present. In fact, since G.H. Mead's view of the present is relativistic using Minkowski's timespace as his model, we can say that the specious present is a whole consisting of projected future, reconstructed past, the "designated as real moment" and

the interface with the “nowhere” of non-casually related timespace. This relativistic whole whose dual is the spacetime $(x+y+z-t)$ of Einstein’s special relativity has an organic unity that forms a gestalt pattern. When emergence occurs, the gestalt pattern is broken and must reorganize into a new patterning regime. This causes all four timespace elements to reorganize. The specious present becomes qualitatively different because it contains the rare emergent event. The past is reconstructed anew, and new futures are projected. And, a point not considered by Mead, is that the “nowhere” interface with noncausal regions outside the light cone must also change. There is a dynamic in timespace between different relativistic perspectives. This causes the no-man’s land to arise between inertial frames that are unconnected causally. The unreachable area is determined by the reachable area and vice versa. Thus, when the reachable area changes the unreachable area must change as well. Our understanding of the unknowable and impossible changes, with every new discovery. Ignorance and knowledge are reciprocally delimiting. New knowledge means new ignorance too. This is usually captured under the rubric -- the more we know, the more we realize we don’t know.

I revert to my original proposition that a reality that transcends the present must exhibit itself in the present. This alternative is that found in the

attitude of the research scientist, whether he confesses it in his doctrine or not. That there is always will be a necessary relation of the past and the present, but that the present in which the emergent appears accepts that which is novel as an essential part of the universe, and from that standpoint rewrites the past. The emergent then ceases to be an emergent and follows from the past which has replaced the former past. We speak of life and consciousness as emergents, but our rationalistic natures will never be satisfied until we have conceived a universe within which they arise inevitably out of that which preceded them.⁴

The emergent event has an essential relation to the rewriting of history. In the rewriting of history we see the workings of what Kuhn calls “normal science.” Normal science works on well-defined problems within the paradigmatic structure dictated by the current gestalt. When the gestalt breaks up and reforms, instituting a new regime, then we see the socio-technical system that carries out the normal science program react. That reaction displays its underpinnings as a teleonomic formal-structural system. The emergent event is a mutation which is taken up directly into the teleonomic filtering system of the formal-structural system. It dictates a course change within the slack or tolerance

4. PHILOSOPHY OF THE PRESENT, page 11

allowed by the teleonomic filter. It causes the goal toward which the formal-structural system is striving to become clearer and more well defined. That goal is not known beforehand. This is why emergent events cannot be predicted in principle. The system is not teleological; instead it is striving toward an unknown end which becomes clearer in route with each emergent event. Once the mutation has occurred, then it becomes part of the filtering system by which normal science carries on its programs and manages non-emergent change until the next mutation occurs.

Thus we must look carefully at the relation between emergent and non-emergent presents. Emergence or genuine discovery are rare events. But following G.H. Mead's principle -- "that a reality that transcends the present must exhibit itself in the present" -- we must see how the emergent event manifests itself even when it has not reorganized the present into a new gestalt pattern. What we have seen already is that there are two kinds of emergence. There is genuine emergence and artificial emergence, also called excrescence. When genuine emergence is not present, then excrescence appears. Excrescence is the form of emergence when the genuine emergent event is not directly present. Excrescence, as has been noted, is the means by which the formal-structural system renders itself visible as it pursues the

dynamics of its program of normal science. When excrescence stops, the emergent event occurs to reorganize the whole gestalt of the dynamic formal-structural socio-technical system. Then immediately excrescence begins again as the reorganized formal-structural system begins the work of projecting its new past and its new future in the pursuit of well-defined problems dictated by its new paradigm.

Thus, if we want to look at the emergent event when it is not overtly present, we need to turn our attention toward its self-dual: excrescence. The mechanism by which emergent events are produced out of the formal-structural system itself is the same mechanism which produces excrescence and keeps the formal-structural system visible. This leads to the corollary that genuine emergence must in some way make the formal-structural system visible. Visibility means remaining “present.” This gives a hint that the formal-structural system itself is a means of rendering present. This means that the structure of the present, as projected by the formal-structural system’s internal dynamics and unfolding, is in some sense dictated by the underlying infrastructure of the formal-structural system. Explore the foundations of the socio-technical formal-structural as it makes itself visible and presents us with normal science or paradigm change, and you will see the inner structure of the

emergent event.

G.H. Mead explored this inner structure of emergence which is simultaneously the infrastructure of the formal-structural socio-technical system. He called that dynamic process scientific research, and saw all temporal unfolding in terms of the analogy of the dialectic of scientific methods application and discovery. Mead sees this dialectic as having four moments:

1. What is taking place conditions that which is arising.
2. Conditions do not determine the full reality of what emerges.
3. Conditions of the past are available in the present.
4. Emergence sets up a new past from the perspective of the emergent.⁵

Emergent events do not completely overthrow the past conditions, but rather grow out of those past conditions. No matter how radical the revisions of the past that occur, the emergent reorganizes within an area of tolerance, or free play, set up by the past but never before organized, the advent of the emergent. Because emergence organizes a niche left vacant within the range of inherited

5. PHILOSOPHY OF THE PRESENT, pages 16 -19

constraints, the nature of the new is never completely determined by past conditions. The genuinely novel has the ability to appear both as determined and simultaneously undermined as an historical event. From that point on it introduces its own new constraints within its niche which increases the locking in of the total teleonomic filter on a more specific future goal. The prior conditions and the new conditions mesh in the present to determine the workings of the socio-technical system. This new interlocking set of conditions are projected on the future as opening up new possibilities, and projected on the past as seeing history anew and also projecting a new unknown as the limits of the knowable. The new interlocking constraints become a new paradigm which dictates the problems of normal science. This changeover from one regime to another is a process which occurs as a rare unpredictable event. When it occurs, we see the formal system turn over completely so that its foundations that are normally hidden become momentarily visible. This process of turning over has a duration. This duration is the primal pulse of the socio-technical formal-structural system's chronobiological clock. The duration of repatterning sets the pace for the temporality of all events occurring in the process of unfolding of the socio-technical system. Mead makes point by saying:

What then is a present? Whitehead's definition would come back to the temporal spread of the passage of the events that make up a thing, a spread which is extended enough to make it possible for the thing to be what it is. The specious present of a human individual would presumably be a period within which he could be himself. From the standpoint which I have suggested, it would involve becoming. There must be at least something that happens to and in the thing which affects the nature of the thing in order that one moment may be distinguishable from another, in order that there may be time.⁶

We know from the point of view of chronobiology that every animal species has a different intrinsic experience of temporality. This leads to different lifespans from the point of view of physically measured time (an abstract invented reference outside the experience of all animals). But it is interesting to note that given average lifespans of different creatures, all except man have the same number of approximate breaths and heartbeats regardless of species. Thus from the point of view of each species within their own temporality, the average life of all are approximately the same. Man has extended his own natural span to be out of sync with other creatures to about one third again more heartbeats and breaths. From

6. PHILOSOPHY OF THE PRESENT, pages 19-20

the point of view of chronobiology, Whitehead and Mead's process-centered definition of time can be understood. The duration of the present for any process is the length of time necessary for it to "become" itself. Mead's example is the atom for which the present would be the time for all its electrons to circle once. He is, though, assuming physical time. Of more interest is the fact that many animals experience time differently in relation to each other as their lives speed by at different rates. Yet their own internal experience of time from the point of view of heart beats is similar. There is a justice deep in the core of nature that gives them equal internal lives regardless of apparent external duration experienced differentially in relation to each other. Physical time, on the other hand, is an abstraction that no one experiences. Animals experience their time in a milieu of other animals relativistically experiencing different contractions of lived time. The time it takes to become occurs in this milieu. We should add to Mead's formulation the time it takes to become "within the relativistic milieu." This is an important qualification because one's own lived time is only known differentially through our interaction with other creatures in different rates of time compressing in relation to ourselves. The richness of this differential milieu is constantly decreasing as species disappear. This means our own sense of time is losing depth.

For the socio-technical system the fundamental duration is the period of an emergence. This is the series of events by which the formal-structural system becomes itself by self-organizing. This sets up the fundamental pulse of temporality which is repeatedly generated in the effervescence of excrescence between emergent events. The emergent event represents the internal clock of the socio-technical system. All other dynamic cycles are measured against this primordial pulse which is repeated continuously in the process of producing excrescent artificial emergences. The primary pulse, expressing the time contraction of the system, has four succinct phases which G.H. Mead analyzed in his Philosophy Of The Act. They are *Impulse, Perception, Manipulation, and Consumption*.⁷ Each phase of the act contains within it elements from all the other phases. This is what makes the act a whole. Impulse contains perception, manipulation, and consummation. Perception contains impulse, manipulation, and consummation. etc. The act is what occurs in the specious present of the individual through which he becomes himself. Mead analyzed these in terms of organisms relating to their environments. At the emergent level of “life” environments first come into existence. The act is the means by which an organism relates to its environment. The act is adapted as it becomes the action of an intelligent organism.

7. Later as we study myth we will see these again as the faces of Aphrodite.

Organisms are by definition social, so that at each stage the social aspect of reality becomes more and more visible. In fact, because the act has within it the possibility of expressing emergent phenomena, Mead leaps to the conclusion that emergence is inherently *social*, -- i.e. the social level of reality most completely displays emergent events.

The social nature of the present arises out of its emergence.⁸

* * *

The social character of the universe we find in the situation in which the novel event is in both the old order and the new which its advent heralds. Sociality is the capacity of being several things at once.⁹

* * *

I wish to suggest that the social character of the present offers another standpoint from which to regard this situation. I have spoken of the social implications of the emergent present as offered in the occupation by the new object of the old system and the new, sociality as given in immediate relation of the past and present.¹⁰

8. PHILOSOPHY OF THE PRESENT, page 47

9. *ibid*, page 49

10. *ibid*, page 51

This insight of G.H. Mead has not been taken up by later thinkers. It has been forgotten by sociologists when they look for ways of founding their discipline. They are more comfortable with Durkheim's approach of calling the Kantian categories social, and thus adopting the whole of the formal-structural system as their own. However, Durkheim's approach to founding the social is purely static. Mead has pushed deeper and founded "the social" on an inherent dynamic that manifests the temporality of the formal-structural system. This is a revolutionary position for a social scientist to take which sociologists have shrunk back from by adopting everything from Mead except his radical vision of the social as emergent temporality. It has the same flavor as Sartre's Critique Of Dialectical Reason where the dialectic itself is treated dialectically.

However, we can adopt this radical perspective in which sociality is equivalent to emergence. We have sought to place emergence in the socio-technical system all along, and have attempted to keep in mind that the formal-structural system is dynamic and socially founded. Regardless of what phenomena we see organized by the formal-structural system, it is clear that this organization is secondary and a projection from the socio-technical system. We see projections of how the socio-technical system organizes itself in its attempts to understand other

phenomena. Thus, when emergence occurs, it is a reorganization of a socio-technical system. Perhaps it is a cadre of researchers pursuing a new phenomenon. Perhaps it is a corporation exploiting new markets. Perhaps it is a military organization disciplining an errant third world nation. Whatever the emergent event, it is primarily a social reorganization which is occurring that is projected onto the target phenomena. Thus, emergent events give us insight into social processes. In emergent events aspects of social processes that are normally hidden become momentarily visible. The “normal science” of sociology cannot handle these emergent social events within its framework. Only an extraordinary framework will deal with the comprehension of emergent phenomena. Thus, our sociology is an extraordinary science -- dubbed by normal “science” a pseudo-science. It is the sociology of emergent events which explores the deep structure of intersubjective temporality.

As the poet Edward Dorn remarked:

Thats right -- tho I didn't know it was missed
I TOOK a degree
which they had refused to GIVE to me.

Oh?

Oui They couldn't find the ...

the Object
of my dissertation:

THE TENSILE STRENGTH OF LAST
WINTERS ICICLES

You must be joking.

Not at all, it was
that conjectural --
its whats called a
post-ephemeral subject
always a day late, their error lay of course
in looking for an object

Ah Yess the Slinger mused
When it gets to you
then in their case, me
in mine,
it doesn't exist
Like the star whose ray
announces the disappearance
of its master by the presence of itself

Correct! that is within the limits of analogy¹¹

You cannot study the phenomena of emergence directly --
only very obliquely. Yet the temporality of all social
phenomena are determined by the advent of emergent
phenomena in relation to the intersubjective community.

11. SLINGER Edward Dorn

Mead constructed a non-dualistic social process philosophy for which intersubjectivity was not an issue. Instead the issue became emergence which at its core was discovered to be social in nature. What is the problem of intersubjectivity turns into the problem of emergent events. The root of sociality remains obscure in either case. However, by identifying emergence with sociality, Mead has taken a revolutionary step toward a new and radical paradigm for sociology, and all social sciences as well as physical sciences. The fact that quantum mechanics has a so-called psychological component, is a related phenomenon. Sociality is a basic constituent of the world which appears most clearly in the phenomena of emergent events in which the social construction of the world and knowledge alters. Only by attempting to study emergent phenomena, can the full measure and depth of its inherently social function which determines reality be appreciated.

In our first pass at understanding the phases of the emergent event that determines the specious present of the socio-technical system, we will adopt Mead's own categorization.

1. Something is out there; but I don't
know what it is

ACT: Impulse (like hunger)

SCIENCE: Presence of Problem
(Recognition)

2. Identification of the Anomaly

ACT: Perception (secondary qualities)

SCIENCE: Statement of the problem in
terms of its possible solution.

3. Understanding the anomaly

ACT: Manipulation (primary qualities)

SCIENCE: Formation of Hypothesis and
Mental Testing.

4. Integration of anomaly into new
pattern of theoretical system; history is
rewritten.

ACT: Consummation (end of act gives
value)

SCIENCE: Experimental or
observational test of the hypothesis.¹²

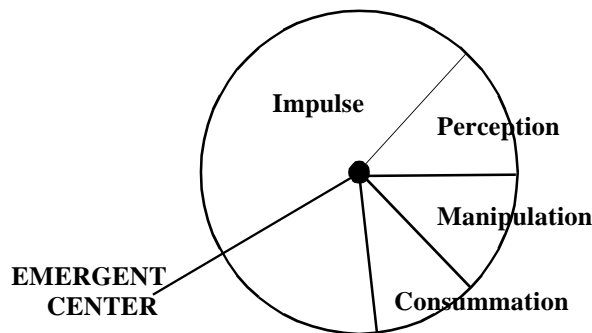
Mead's four-fold category scheme appears in two forms. It appears as the description of the Act and as a description of the scientific method. In either form it reiterates the basic fourfold structure of emergence already enumerated. It encapsulates the basic concept of

12. PHILOSOPHY OF THE ACT; pages 3-23 and page 82

the appearance of the emergent within two systems (new and old) simultaneously and the rewriting of history which is the response of the socio-technical system. Understanding these categories in relation to the concept of anomaly allows the coherence between the two approaches by Mead to be seen. An anomaly is present but non-locatable; this signals the beginning of the emergent event. In the act this appears as an impulse which includes the whole act within itself as a possibility. In each stage of the act all four phases are present. This achievement of a holistic theory by using interpenetrating phases is a great achievement of Mead.

FIGURE 5

All the other phases of the act within the impulse phase. {FIGURE 150}



At the center of this interpenetrating phase structure is the emergent events possibility. All acts spring from the possibility of an emergent events manifestation at any moment to repattern the socio-technical system. The

advent of emergent novelty hangs like a black cloud of chaos and disruption over every action within the socio-technical system. Every impulse is either an excrescence or the beginnings of a genuinely emergent event. Every perception is made possible by excrescence or is the vision of the truly novel. Every manipulation either reaffirms the status quo or acts toward a new emergent designated reality. Every consummation either supports the old value structure or creates a new value structure. Thus, action is directed at manifesting the status quo through normal science programs or is directed at revamping and repatterning the socio-technical system. Action or praxis carries out the implementation of theories, either old or new. New theories are developed by applying the scientific approach outlined by G.H. Mead. A problem is recognized, then identified explicitly. A theoretical explanation is formulated in relation to the dominant paradigm. The hypothesis is tested and that generates anomalies. Anomalies build until a paradigm change occurs which explains most test results satisfactorily. Then the new paradigm sets about rewriting history and defining the problematic within which all normal science research will be fit until sufficient anomalies accrue for another scientific revolution. The theories based on the new paradigm become the spring-boards for actions. Thus, praxis embodies the theories of normal science as socially

acceptable behavioral systems. Keep in mind that research is also an action complex. So the praxis of the scientific community which discovers things is a set of acts which expresses the received wisdom of normal science, but could at any time reveal a new set of relations between theory and experiment which could cause a paradigm shift.

Between the phases of the act and the phases of scientific inquiry there is an inner relation which together manifest emergent phenomena. This inner relationship has previously been understood in relation to the proto-technical, meta-technical, structural, and formal. The proto-technical is called “proto” because it is at least partially beyond the realm of rationality. Rationality is the cognitive parallel to normal science. It looks for understandable reasons for every act or phenomenon. Impulse and problem recognition are irrational processes. Perception and identification of the anomaly both concern the organization of the gestalt field. The ability to focus on the gestalt form of the anomaly means that the whole field is organized in a flexible way. This is a meta-technical phenomenon because it comprehends the rearranging of the perceptual field so that the anomalies may be brought into focus. Manipulation and hypothesis formation are structural because both allow transformation of the refocused gestalt. Manipulation

transforms the sensory object, taking it out of the realm of secondary qualities into the realm of primary qualities. In the realm of primary qualities it is possible to change the form of the object. Hypothesis formation makes a similar change to the theoretical system. The test brings that trial transformation into reality. In the test the hypothesis finds its consummation. In consummation the form and its contents are fully available. The formal system brings the trial transformation of the hypothesis to fruition. The formal system is the means by which total presentation is made possible. Structural presentation is always withholding something beyond the discontinuities. Proto-technical presentation is always to some degree irrational, as it lies before full gestalt formation has been fully effected.

The adumbration of the four stages of emergence proto-technical/meta-technical/structural/formal is of course a first approximation which gives a jumping off point for deeper exploration. It is not expected that this first approximation be crystal clear. Instead, it is enough to suggest that G.H. Mead was a precursor in the exploration of the phenomenon of emergence and that he recognized some of the essential structures of the phenomenon of emergence. We have attempted to present these structures in an accessible way by relating them to the phases of the unfolding of the socio-technical

system itself, but in reverse. This is a key concept that will be given deeper meaning in subsequent chapters. It cements the relation between the temporal unfolding of the socio-technical system and the event that marks that unfolding.

It is important to remember that emergent events are rare and seemingly random. They occur as drastic changes which repattern the gestalt in a radically different way. As drastic changes, emergent events are best modeled using catastrophe theory of Rene Thom. Catastrophe theory uses mathematical structures as the pattern for understanding discontinuous change. The mathematical structures at a higher dimensionality organize apparently discontinuous changes at the lower dimensionality. What is of interest is that this theory of Thom has led directly to the formulation of a semantic theory based on the archetypal changes embodied in the mathematical structures which model the changes in destabilized dynamic systems. This connection between semantics and catastrophe theory embodied in the work of Wilden and Thom is important for our understanding of emergence. Semantics is the opposite of syntax in that the former is almost totally unstructured while the latter is overstructured. Thom and Wilden have attempted to use the set of mathematical forms underlying catastrophe theory to derive archetypal changes that pattern the

semantic field. However, even more important, they have recognized in these mathematical forms a pattern for the entire field as a whole with respect to discontinuous changes of dynamic systems. This deep patterning of temporality gives structure to the successively higher states of system turbulence. The implication is that the fourfold phasing of emergence is just a first approximation which could, in reality, be very complex event structures. The fourfold structuring of emergence refers more to the underlying generators of emergent phenomena than to the actual pattern of the space-time events themselves. In truth, the interval of the emergent event must be considered as a minimal system in order to be seen at all. The minimal system has a tetrahedral format even though it may also appear as knot, Mobius strip, or torus. These basic geometric forms have in common an angular rotation of 720 degrees (4π). The emergent event as minimal system is, however, an abstraction which allows it to be identified and focused on. However, the actual catastrophic events may have a very complex patterning emanating from successively higher dimensional cusps and umbilics. That these higher dimensional determinate structures can pattern the space-time unfolding of the emergent event within the dynamical system, is astounding because of its complexity and intricacy. The fact that this complexity may be reduced to several archetypal dynamic forms

which motivate meanings is a fairly incredible idea.

But this brings one last point out into the open. Emergence structures meaning! Emergence is not just an abstract social foundation within temporality. Intersubjectivity is dependent on linguistic commonalty which via symbolic interaction is based on the exchange of meaning. However, no one understands the inner structure of meaning. Our premise is that meaning is not totally free form, but is structured and defined by the phenomenon of genuine emergence. It is distinguished from superficial significance of the objects which appear in relation to each other in the sea of diacritical excrescence. When emergence occurs, meaning erupts into the socio-technical system. The very form of the dynamics of the unfolding of emergent events releases this meaning. This may be, as Wilden believes, because emergent events have archetypal dynamic forms, and because the cuspoids and umbilics organize the whole of the emergent event into a single gestalt which embodies the change from one gestalt to another. However, we shall explore deeper reasons why meaning is unleashed in the emergent event in the chapters to come.

Intersubjectivity; emergence; sociality; meaning: these concepts form a complex which is completed by the introduction of the concept of “techne.” In our

presentation we always talk about the socio-technical system as the foundation for the reified formal structural system. Technology is given its complete definition in the formal-structural system. Yet technology is completed only with the advent of the meta-technical and the proto-technical. Technology has its own phases of unfolding which corresponds to the phases of emergence. Each emergence is an analog for the arising of all of techne. When Durkheim claimed that Kant's categories were social in nature, he made a fundamental connection between sociality and the formal-structural system. Kant's categories were the heart of the definition of the formal-structural system. They are a static picture which contained the seeds of Hegel's dialectics subsequently taken over by Marx. The dialectical structure of Kant's categories shows the hidden dynamic embedded there which over the centuries has become exposed and worked itself out. The vortex of philosophical positions strung from that root is only one manifestation. Durkheim claimed that seed from which the formal-structural system sprung became totally entangled with the technological to such a degree that they cannot be untangled. Thus, when the technological formal-structural system becomes fully manifest in modern industrial society, then that society becomes postindustrial and meta-technical entities such as software arise. Finally, we await the advent of proto-

technological entities as we attempt to return to preindustrial means of production. Society and technology are intertwined as they undergo this series of transformations. Attempting to claim otherwise is futile. In that process emergent events occur, and those events allow us to understand perhaps for the first time how deep into the past the roots of the motive forces of the socio-technical evolution go. Emergence gives us the key to understanding these roots and releases meaning into the world. Whether we can use those understandings and released meanings is still another story yet to be told. At least it is clear that technology in society is intersubjectivity is emergence is meaning! They are all bound together in a rough hewn conceptual kernel. Each interpenetrating with all the others with mutual elucidation. Now that we see that kernel before us, each concept belonging together with the others, the question becomes -- can we go deeper into that kernel which organizes the surface phenomenon of the development of Western culture to find its core? In the formula technology is society is intersubjectivity is emergence is meaning, we are led to ask next what is “the *is*.” What connects these concepts, giving them identity or at least intimating that they belong together. Next stop, the depths of the darkest continent *ontology* where from the most general of all concepts “Being” springs to claim the right to connect anything with anything else. My use of

the “is” to make my point is fortuitous as it turns out that in order to understand the phenomena of emergence in any deeper way, it is necessary to find out what is happening in metaphysics these days.

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palmer@exo.com
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Palmer, Kent Duane
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