WHOLES AND EVENTS: THE SUBTERRANEAN PATH FROM STOICISM TO WHITEHEAD

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Abstract: This paper explores the subterranean continuity between Stoic cosmology and Alfred N. Whitehead's process philosophy, proposing that a Stoic philosophical dispositive – a structured ensemble of theoretical strategies for organizing questions, answers, and codes of problem-solving – remains active within Whitehead's metaphysical system. The inquiry is not primarily philological, although it is rooted in the formulations of Chrysippus, with supplementary references to Zeno of Citium and Posidonius, but theoretical: its aim is to identify the fundamental characteristics of the Stoic theory of wholes (hology) and to show how these resurface in Whitehead's categories and metaphysical vision. The paper proceeds in four stages. First, it reconstructs the Stoic doctrine of perception, assent, and the conversion of events into meanings, analyzing the role of *phantasía, lektón, and sēmainómenon* in the constitution of knowledge. Second, it examines the Stoic notions of causality, temporality, and *krâsis di'hólon*, with special attention to the principle of *autotéleia*, the concept of *diastema* as durative present, and the theory of acausal connections through interpenetration. Third, these Stoic doctrines are placed in dialogue with Whitehead's *Concept of Nature* and *Immortality* (1941), where the rejection of Platonism, the reinterpretation of "ideas" as factors of facts, and the dynamics of qualities reveal the persistence of a Stoic dispositive within a modern cosmology. Finally, the paper situates Whitehead's originality in relation to the Cambridge pluralistic idealist milieu and Lotze's metaphysical agenda, showing how he radicalizes pluralistic idealism by integrating Stoic categories of quality, temporality, and holistic commixture. The outcome is a reconstruction of a Stoic-Whiteheadian holo-kinetics, articulated in ten theses, which redefines the relation between events and wholes, the modes of their causal and acausal interconnections, and the structure of the cosmic field of coexistence.

Keywords: Stoic Philosophical Dispositive, Whitehead's Cosmology, Event Ontology, Causality (Autotéleia), Diastematic Temporality, Holo-kinetics.

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1. REVISITING STOICISM: CARLO DIANO AND ALFRED N. WHITEHEAD

The primary objective of this paper is not philological – i.e., it does not aim to reconstruct as faithfully as possible the thought of the Stoics, including its fluctuations and developments – but theoretical. My intention is to identify the fundamental characteristics of the Stoic philosophical dispositive and the theory of wholes (*hololog*y) that it entails (Dappiano, "Hololog*i*a" 75). By "philosophical dispositive", I refer to a consistent set of theoretical strategies for selecting and organizing significant questions, delineating the range of plausible answers, and establishing the syntactic, semantic, and procedural codes for problem-solving.

This endeavour involves two main aspects. The first is that I have taken Carlo Diano's works as a primary reference point in order to ground this exploration in a solid philological foundation and a credible historical-philosophical framework.[1] The second is that I subject certain crucial conceptual aspects of Stoicism to a "symptomatic reading", drawing on selected conceptual elements from Alfred N. Whitehead's thought.

And it is precisely with a passage from Whitehead that I begin (and will conclude) this paper:

> Matter, in its modern scientific sense, is a return to the Ionian effort to find in space and time some stuff which composes nature. (…) Earth, water, air, fire, and matter, and finally ether are related in direct succession so far as concerns their postulated characters of ultimate substrata of nature. They bear witness to the undying vitality of Greek philosophy in its search for the ultimate entities which are the factors of the fact disclosed in sense-awareness. This search is the origin of science (Whitehead, *Concept* 19).

Although somewhat generic, this reference to the Ionian philosophers alludes to a theory of nature that, originating with the so-called "Ionian philosophers" (among whom Heraclitus and Empedocles should also be included), reaches its culmination in Stoic cosmology. In several respects, this paper aims to delve into the reasons behind this connection.

In presenting the Stoic doctrine, I will principally adhere to the formulations of Chrysippus of Soli, supplemented by fragments from Zeno of Citium, from Posidonius of Apamea, and from Antipater of Tarsus. The primary sources will be Diogenes Laertius' *Vitae Philosophorum* (DL) and the *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (SVF); on specific topics, I will use Sextus Empiricus' *Adversus Dogmaticos* (SE), and *The Fragments* of Posidonius in the Eldestein-Kidd edition (EK). All the sources will be provided in my own translation.

[1] I will cite Carlo Diano in my own translation.

2. PERCEPTION AND KNOWLEDGE

Our analysis of Stoic doctrine opens with an inquiry into the problem of knowledge. The structure of the argument is as follows[2]: the object, always corporeal, impresses itself upon the subject (also corporeal) through the senses; the subject passively receives (through *týpōsis*) these impressions within a material environment, the soul, thus undergoing a modification (through *heteroíōsis*). The impressions, which always represent something, merge in the same material environment through memory, thereby constituting the individual's internal experience.

The formation of an internal experience is linked to a reworking activity on perceptual content, whereby, in perceiving via *týpōsis*, we simultaneously perceive both ourselves and our act of perception. Thus, perception, as a "prehension (*katalambánein*)" by a body of a portion of its environment, is a modifying event characterized by the co-implication of an impressive action from the outside and an apprehensive action that is simultaneously reflective and directed outward. As a result of this process, perception, once integrated into internal experience, leads to the formation of general imaginative schemas that orient future perceptions (*prolḗpseis*).

A seamless transition from external perception to internal experience and thought requires an absence of conflict between perception and the perceived – that is, between the external cause of the impressive action and the act (felt as such) through which we perceive that cause. In other words, we must recognize the sensory representations (*phantasíai*) formed within us as reliable testimonies of the external objects that produce them. By doing so, we give assent (*synkatáthesis*) to the representations, thereby allowing them to become part of our internal experience.

The introduction of assent allows us to distinguish between intuitive representation and thought representation (*phantasía logikḗ*). An intuitive representation differs from a thought representation not in the characteristics of the represented object but in the way it is apprehended: in the former, the represented appears as a *physical event* (never merely a body, but *an occurrence* of it), whereas in the latter, it is grasped as perceptual content and thus as bearing meaning. A physically represented event hence becomes the meaning of its thought.

Therefore, to say that a physical event converts into a meaning is to say that the physical event receives its qualifying form within a natural dynamic in which thinking and knowing also take place, making language possible. This process is rooted in the very characteristics of perceptual prehension, where the conversion of events into meanings occurs. Unlike events, meanings are not bodies themselves but rather modifications of corporeal states. The Stoics define them as "thinkable expressibles" (*lektá*), thought images that manifest within a sign complex and are distinct from the concrete reference of that complex (*sēmainómenon*).[3]

[2] I refer to DL 7.49–54. For further insights, see Togni.
[3] SE VIII, 11–12.

This duplication introduce the first clear distinction between the extensional domain of a meaning (*sēmainómenon*) and its intensional counterpart (*lektón*).[4] The Stoics, however, avoid a slide into sceptical conventionalism due to the doctrine of *oikeíōsis*, as formulated by Diogenes Laertius:

> They [the Stoics] assert that the first impulse of a living being is self-preservation, a drive bestowed upon it by nature from the very beginning. Chrysippus, in the first book *On Ends*, maintains that the primary property (*oikeîon*) of every living being is its own constitution and the corresponding awareness of it. It is logically untenable to admit that nature would render the living being alien to itself (for otherwise, it would not have created it), nor that it could be alien to nature, nor that it could fail to be one of its own creations. Therefore, it must be said that nature, having formed the living being, aligns it with itself as its own creation; for this reason, it repels from it whatever may cause harm and embraces all that accords with its constitution (DL 7.85).

Thus, the doctrine identifies self-awareness (*synaísthēsis*) as the first and fundamental evident representation. The root of evidence, and with it the possibility of true discourse, lies therefore in perception in general and in *synaísthēsis* in particular. In other words, evidence is a psychic state and thus entails a corporeal modification. Furthermore, if *oikeíōsis* applies to all living beings, then grounding evidence in it implies recognizing evidence as the individual manifestation of a universal law of nature.

We then connect the doctrine of *oikeíōsis* to the conversion of physical events into meanings. The equivalence of *sēmainómenon* and *lektón* occurs when the intuitive (sensible) representation presents itself to our assent with such evidence that the psyche cannot help but comprehend what is represented. In this case, we speak of *phantasía katalēptikḗ*, catalectic representation, whose relationship with the *sēmainómenon* is immediate and indisputable. Like all representations, catalectic ones also derive from perception the character of modifying events of a body, and thus they possess duration.

Thus formulated, catalectic representation, whose possibility is rooted in the anthropological structure of the thinking being, serves both as the fundamental criterion of truth in knowledge and as the imaginative schema from which immediate judgments about a *hólon* arise. In other words, the object of an evident apprehension is characterized as a *concrete fact*[5], that is, a fact considered in its unity and in the relations it maintains with the parts of a higher-order whole of

[4] See Mates 19–26.

[5] I use the term "concrete" in its Latin etymology, as the past participle of *concresco*, which we might also render as "complete in its constituents"; the Stoic term conveying this notion is *hypárchon*. The definition of "catalectic representation" as transmitted by Sextus Empiricus would therefore read as follows: "A catalectic representation is one that derives from a concrete fact and conforms to it. It is imprinted and moulded like a seal, in such a way that it could not derive from what is not a concrete fact." (SE VII, 248).

which it is itself a part. Knowledge, from this perspective, ideally presents concrete facts through judgments.

The *synkatásthesis*, which lies at the core of judgment, emerges here as a regulated freedom of assent: its movement, expressed as "yes, no, perhaps" in response to an intuitive representation, becomes significant when such a representation enters our experience problematically, raising doubts about the relation between the perceived object and the act of perception (e.g., the apparent bending of a stick in water, the perceived diameter of the sun). If this doubt does not arise, as in the case of catalectic representation, the freedom of assent does not disappear but loses its epistemological function.

3. THE CATEGORIES

Appealing to *oikeíōsis* as the root of evidence leads us to a fundamental conclusion: knowledge of nature is, ultimately, an individual extension of nature itself. This conclusion can be aptly expressed in Whitehead's words:

> Nature exhibits the fact that it is apprehensible by consciousness. The ingression of sense-objects amid events is a character of nature exhibiting this patience. The stratification into layers of simultaneity, which is an essential character of this ingression, is at the same time an adaptation of nature, so that our finite consciousness of it is possible, and is also an adaptation of consciousness for the apprehension of nature. In other words, it is both a fact of nature, and is also the way in which we apprehend nature (Whitehead, "Uniformity" 12).

This conclusion directs us toward the Stoic doctrine of categories, which is fundamentally physical rather than logical, as the categories constitute determinations of being and pervasive characteristics of existing bodies. Given that being, in its cosmological sense, possesses a dynamic and processual character for the Stoics, the categories should be understood as determinations of a cosmological process that define the characteristics of bodies within the flow [6].

Developing Zeno's thought, Chrysippus distinguishes four categories: substrate (*hypokeímenon*), quality (*poión*), mode of being (*pōs échon*), and mode of being resulting from a relation with another being (*prós tí pōs échon*). A fifth category, the "something" (*tí*), was later added, encompassing both fully existent realities (*hypárchonta*, the bodies) and those with derived subsistence (*hyphistámena*, the incorporeals).

First, let us consider the substrate. The term used by Chrysippus, *hypokeímenon*, emphasizes its material nature, but this could be misleading, as it might suggest a static nature of the substrate. Actually, the substrate can be considered "material

[6] For a comprehensive overview, see Graeser.

processuality", general corporeality, the cosmic flow that has as its sole specification a generic and universal spatio-temporality, identifiable with cosmic movement (cycle).

Qualities require particular attention, starting with Chrysippus' interpretation, which identifies them with breath and vital tension (*pneũmata kaí tónoi*), rooted in the physical universe and permeating the body of the cosmos, shaping existing bodies. This means that existing bodies are such as parts of the body of the universe, sharing the characteristic of being "matter endowed with quality". However, the body of the universe is not endowed with three-dimensionality and resistance. Given the characteristics of its substrate, the universe is a continuous, fluid, and processual body. This quality must also persist in existing bodies, which emerge as the final articulation of corporeality within the development of being, possessing – at least to some extent – three-dimensionality and resistance.

Let us then characterize qualities as "forms of existing bodies". Firstly, as forms, qualities are responsible for the effects of *týpōsis*, the action of an external body on a psyche: this leads us to root this category in the dynamic of *katalambánein.*

However, a potential misunderstanding must be addressed: while *týpōsis* is generally understood as a physical imprint, applying this notion to the perceptual fact would be inconsistent with the theory of the *sēmeîon*, which holds that *týpōsis* gives rise to a symbolic representation of the world. We can interpret perceptual *týpōsis* extensively as a projective relationship, physically mediated by a sense organ, which produces a modification in the psyche. Chrysippus appears to move in this direction when he recognizes the correspondence between *lektón* and *sēmainómenon* as a fact of nature, while rejects an interpretation in terms of direct imitation and acknowledges the presence of a representational technique (grammar), whose proper use governs the construction of correct discourse (*lógos orthós*).[7]

With this clarification, we can recognize in qualities primarily the apprehended configurations of bodies: as such, they are the delimitations of "sensory objects", which exist as modifications of a corporeal sensorium. This first characteristic of qualities constitutes the basis of the intensional rank of meaning. But as we know, the modifications of the corporeal sensorium derived from perception always have a directionality outward from the sensorium itself, derived from the fact that such modifications still form part of the portion of the environment being apprehended. For this reason, when the sensorium recognizes a sensory object, it projects it outward toward a substrate to grasp the cause of the impressive action: it is in this projection that assent (*synkatáthesis*) is placed, and the characteristic of qualities as real configurations of bodies, i.e., "perceptual objects", comes to light. This distinction between sensory and perceptual objects offers a broad interpretation of the distinction, likely due to Antipater and reported by Simplicius (SVF II 390), between qualities in a permanent state (*echómenon*), which enable the qualitative recognition of a

[7] Chrysippus, in this regard, speaks of representation as a *qualitative alteration* (*alloíōsis*) of the soul (DL 7.49–52). Isnardi Parente 65–67 discusses this issue.

body, and qualities in a dynamic state (*kinoúmenon*), which actively manifest within the body itself.[8]

The heart of the category lies, therefore, in the fact that sensory objects, present to the apprehensive action of the sensorium, are incorporated into events as perceptual objects since the apprehensive action itself is an event. As a rule, we can say that the projection of sensory objects into events (their reappearance as perceptual objects) is simultaneously a fact of nature and the way in which we apprehend nature. The perceptual object is thus characterized as an attribute of an event, and reciprocally, the event constitutes the spatio-temporal placement (the situation) of the perceptual object.

By reviewing the Stoic theory of meaning in light of these considerations, we can say that the projection of sensory objects onto a material processuality configures events and assigns meaning to perceptual objects which, when incorporated, qualify the events themselves. When comparing this categorial dynamic with Whitehead's theory of ingression (Whitehead, "Uniformity" 8 ff.), we can identify significant symmetries. As a Stoic integration of the theory of ingression, we can add that perceptual *týpōsis* is the symmetric and inverse projective relationship of ingression, and both relationships unfold in an activity of modification (*heteroíōsis*).

The examination of the category of quality allows us to clarify what we mean by "event", of which quality constitutes an attribute. To do this, I draw on some insights from Carlo Diano, starting with his notion of "eventic form" (*forma eventica*), which I will likely use more broadly than Diano himself intended and to which we can relate the concept of quality.

The rooting of the category in the dynamic of *katalambánein* aligns with what Diano writes about the event: it is not *quicquid èvenit* (whatever happens), but *id quod cuique èvenit* (that which happens to someone):

> That something happens is not enough to make it an event: for it to be an event, this happening must be felt by me as a happening for me. [Of an event] we can only speak in relation to a specific subject and within the scope of that subject. And since it is within this relationship and from this scope that the occurrence, being constituted as an event, also reveals itself to consciousness as an occurrence, not only occurrences can be felt as events, but also what we call 'things', in the act in which man perceives their existence as something that is for him and not for itself (Diano, *Opere* 1185–6).

Diano thus confirms that the events configured by quality always have a relational character, which unfolds in two aspects. We can distinguish in the event:

a. A perspectival relationality, whose poles are the sensorium and the substrate, within which emerges

[8] See also Isnardi Parente 113.

b. A secondary relationality, which connects qualified events based on their position in the spatio-temporality of the substrate.

It is in this sense that we can speak of qualities as eventic forms: unlike Platonic ideas, they always exist as configurations within a material processuality and are always understood within this relationship.

Here it is important to distinguish between *fact* and *event*, which respectively translate the notions of *hypárchon* and *týchē*. A fact is an event considered in its singularity and completeness, whereas an event is a fact viewed in its spatio-temporal location, connecting it to other facts within a material processuality and according to a perspectival relationship with the sensorium. In general, a fact is the way in which a *something* (*quicquid, tí*) presents itself to a *someone* (*cuique*) through a *týpōsis*, and it is a *concrete fact* in the case of evident presentation (*phantasía katalēptikḗ*). In this sense, the minimal units of judgment, linguistically expressed in elementary propositions, always concern a fact.

Abstracted from its eventic form, the fact invokes the third category, the *mode of being* (*pōs échon*), allowing us to include among significant elementary propositions not only those that attribute a stable modification to the substrate (e.g., "Socrates humanizes") but also those that attribute an unstable modification (e.g., "Socrates walks"). From this perspective, we can say that *poión* and *pōs échon* are both corporeal modifiers, distinguished by their temporal stability, as the qualifying action of the eventic form coincides with the duration of the qualified event.

Consequently, every judgment we make, even at the simplest level, introduces a temporal indicator through the verbal form. This indicator must already be constitutive of the *lektón* and must therefore have a reference in internal experience. But the only experience of time we live is, according to Chrysippus, *duration*, the flow in which past, present, and future interweave; thus, the object of judgment can only be indicated and highlighted within the temporal interval of its occurrence.

We can thus lay the foundations for a Stoic hology. If every qualification of the substrate is an event, factual in that it includes a duration, then each event participating in the multiplicity of the body of the universe represents a mode of being of the primordial substance, a determination that the substrate assumes through the action of the informing principle inherent in it: its occurrence is thus virtually contained in the substrate itself.

Consequently, events are "mutually independent parts",[9] or "complete parts", but only as parts of an integral whole originally informed by *lógos*: *phýsis*. This means that the parts are complete (they are facts – *hypárchonta*) only if the whole is complete. Conversely, if even one of these parts were not complete, the condition of completeness (*autotéleia*) of the whole would also fail:[10] there would no longer be

[9] "Mutual independence" should not be understood as "absolute existence", but as "distinct recognizability".

[10] For further reading, see Isnardi Parente 136–8.

concrete parts but parts in a relationship of total mutual dependence, with each part being a constituent of every other part.

These considerations might seem to contradict a fragment of Chrysippus reported in Plutarch's *De Stoicorum repugnantiis*: "The cosmos is a perfect body, but the parts of the cosmos are not perfect, as their being depends on how they relate to the whole and not on their existence in themselves" (SVF II 550).[11] However, this is only an apparent contradiction: the fragment discusses the relationship (the fourth category) of events with the integral whole, not the mutual relationship between events, nor their distinct recognizability. As Diano clearly noted: "In Stoicism, reality is made up of events, and every event presupposes the entire cycle in which the divine *lógos* is enacted and completed, and every point is always in relation to the periphery and coincides with it" (Diano, *Opere* 1189). The fourth category cannot, however, be universalised in the relationship between parts, as this would prevent perceptual apprehension by a sensorium, thereby preventing the conversion of events into facts. In other words: the fourth category is constitutive of all events as parts of *phýsis* (and this is what the fragment addresses). Between these parts, there exist both reflective relationships – referring to the second or third category, depending on their degree of temporal stability, and constitutive of events insofar as they are facts – and non-reflective relationships, which instead refer to the fourth category and are not constitutive of facts, being incorporeal. This interpretation is supported by the testimony of Simplicius, likely referring to Antipater (SVF II 403), and appears confirmed by the continuation of the Plutarchian fragment:

> Since each part moves in a certain way according to its nature, being connected with the rest, it is reasonable that it also moves in the same way by itself. And if, hypothetically, we imagined that it exists in some void outside of this world, then, just as when it was connected in every direction it moved towards the center, it will continue to maintain this same movement, even if, hypothetically, it were to find itself suddenly in a void around it. (SVF II 550).

Let us now shift our focus to complex propositions. As we have seen, they cannot properly be considered indicators of facts, as their semantic correlate does not require the involvement of eventic forms. Instead, they are models, that is, propositional schemes in which two or more indicators of facts are correlated through the introduction of connectives (*synártēsis*), which may be conditional ("if"), conjunctive ("and"), or disjunctive ("or"), revealing an implicative link. What is important in complex propositions is not the elementary propositions into

[11] This issue is explored in depth by Pohlenz 181 ff.

which they can be decomposed, but rather the implicative link that is established, allowing us to construct argumentative models traditionally called *anapodictic syllogisms*, among which the causal model, which establishes a possible causal connection between facts, represents the paradigmatic argumentative model.

The implicative link, irrespective of its formulation, directly correlates with Stoic physics, particularly with the doctrine of causes. A complex proposition indicates a causal connection between facts by establishing an implicative link between elementary propositions, based on the anticipations provided by our internal experience. The goal is to move from an implicative link between propositions, immediately evident when we think of it, to a causal connection between events, of which we become aware only if the events actually occur and present themselves to us as such (in that specific connection).

Interpreted this way, the implicative link presupposes the principle of *autotéleia*: the fact designated by the premise must either take place within time or fail to occur altogether. If it occurs, then the fact is an event, a complete part of the cosmos, and thus entails the completeness of the correlated fact designated by the conclusion. Conversely, if it does not occur, then it is not an event, and therefore the possibility of connecting the implicative link to a causal connection vanishes (the implicative link remains a merely possible causal connection).

This allows us to convert all connectives into temporal terms and, more generally, to temporalize the implicative link and the relational schemes underlying complex propositions; according to the testimony of Alexander of Aphrodisias (SVF III, "Antipater Tarsensis" 26–27), the temporal conversion of connectives appears to be the condition required by monolemmatic syllogisms, as formulated by Antipater. The elimination of the second premise as redundant (in a syllogism of the type 'If it is day, it is light. It is day. Therefore, it is light') is indeed possible because the antecedent proposition already refers to a concrete fact, that is, an event that has been prehended. The monolemmatic syllogism thus reveals that we can formulate an implication only if the sensible representation referenced by the premise has already been transformed into a perceptual content present in our internal experience. We must therefore already be convinced of the relevance of every sensation that, now or in the future, confirms what is stated in the premise. This clarifies not only how the implication establishes a causal relationship between events but also how its very formulation is fundamentally rooted in a causal relationship between two bodies, as for the Stoics, this is the nature of sensation. Ultimately, this reveals that "formulating an implication" is not merely a theoretical construct but an event in itself, an occurrence woven into the same causal fabric it seeks to describe. In Stoic terms, just as no event stands outside the chain of corporeal interactions, neither does the act of implication itself.

4. TEMPORALITY, CAUSAL AND ACAUSAL CONNECTIONS

The principle of *autotéleia* is, therefore, the (holological) principle according to which a complex proposition establishes a causal connection between facts through an implicative link between simple propositions. It asserts that every causal connection between individual events presupposes the cosmos as an integral causal system and ensures that the order and connection of the *lektá*, if well constructed in a *lógos orthós*, serve as a system of experiential anticipations that depict the order and connection of being. As Diano also notes, the Stoic syllogism sets aside the conceptual necessity of forms and shifts attention to the historical and processual nature of events (Diano, *Opere* 49–51): accordingly, an implicative chain functions as an argumentative model whose consequentiality stems from embedding a *concrete fact* within a temporally determined causal sequence. As such, the implicative chain is significant insofar as it establishes basic connections and conjunctions between represented things, but this is possible only by recognizing in the represented things certain events, whose connections and conjunctions are properly causal chains within the material processuality in which events are spatially and temporally situated.

The principle of *autotéleia* thus underpins a philosophical dispositive that we find powerfully echoed in Whitehead's "Uniformity and Contingency":

> The peculiarity of the space-time process is, that any part of it establishes the whole scheme within which the remainder is set (4);
> Any part [of the uniform space-time] settles the scheme of relations for the whole, irrespective of the particular mode in which any other part of it, in the future or the past or elsewhere in space, may exhibit the ingression of sense-objects (8);
> Their [«factors of fact» or «entities»] embeddedness in an all-embracing fact is essential for their very being (9).

However, if events constitutes concrete parts of a complete and processual all-encompassing fact, related to one another through causal chains (representable in argumentative models), then their boundaries are not spatial but causal. It was primarily Chrysippus who clearly conceived the universe as a causal series of events without any discontinuities (any interruption would imply a break in the cohesion of the universe).

Alongside the *autoteleîs* causes, which are perfect and fully necessitating, Chrysippus recognized a variety of other causes, the most significant of which are the *synektikaí* causes, which are intrinsic to bodies and determine their natural course.[12] The fundamental distinction lies between "external causes" to bodies, of

[12] See Cicero (*De fato*) and Clement of Alexandria (Stromata VIII), in SVF II 344–353, 950–956, 974.

which the *autoteleîs* causes are the paradigmatic case, and "internal causes," unified in the *synektikaí* causes.[13]

In line with Chrysippus, we can extend the notion of external cause to any connection that establishes some kind of transaction between events according to a consequential relationship.[14] Actually, we can consider an external cause as any "transactional boundary" between events, capable of distinguishing the events not by isolating them but by embedding them into a perspectival seriality. As for the internal causes, they do not concern the conjunction of distinct events within causal series but rather the identity of the events themselves, that is, their distinguishability and recognizability.

Closely related to the notion of cause is the notion of time. Even in this case, within Stoicism, there are conceptual oscillations, although they revolve around a dominant meaning, that of *diástema*. With this term, Zeno already understood the interval of every kind of movement, thus establishing a very close connection between time and event: the *diástema* is the dimension of movement, and therefore it is the extension of the event (EK 98).[15]

In this way, we arrive at a notion of "spatialised time", which generalises to the *tópos* (the place, the spatial container of a body) what Zeno had envisioned for the *kenón* (empty space, the container of the cosmos during the cyclical period of the dissolution of cosmic order and the indefinite expansion of matter). By pushing Zeno's indications further, without contradicting the overall framework of Stoic physics, we can discern in this notion of spatialised time the profound intertwining of the concepts of *diástema* and *chṓra* (internal space of a body, enclosed within the boundaries of a container), in a way that, however, subordinates the three-dimensionality of *chṓra* to the one-dimensionality of *diástema*,[16] that is, the materiality of a body to its processuality. From a categorical perspective, this subordination indicates the action of quality in the (spatio-temporal) constitution of an existing body: the *diástema* is qualified material processuality, within whose duration the event possesses stability, and is thus recognizable by a sensorium and expressible in an elementary proposition. In this sense, the *diástema* is the persistence of the qualifying action of an eventic form within a portion of spatial-temporality.

[13] The term derives from the verb *synéchō*, meaning "to hold together," "to give coherence," but also, in temporal terms, "to give continuity".

[14] I take up the term "transaction," which I find consistent with the Stoic dispositive, from Samuel Alexander: "A relation of space or time is a transaction into which the two terms, the point or lines or planes or whatever may be, enter; and that transaction is itself spatial. Relations in space are possible because Space is itself a connected whole, and there are no parts of it which are disconnected from the rest." (Alexander 1.166).

[15] For further insights, see Pesce 54.

[16] There is, moreover, a convergence between the two notions in the sense of "intermediate stretch," "spatial interval." *Diástema* is originally a spatial notion, deriving from the verb *diïstêmi*, meaning "I place in different locations," "I distinguish".

This point warrants a closer examination of the notion and its ambiguities, particularly as emphasized by its critics. The primary ambiguity, emphasized by Plutarch in his *De communibus notitiis* (SVF II 517-518), concerns the determinations of present time, fluctuating between a durative conception (the present as the proper time of events and thus the only existing time) and a punctual conception (the present as *nŷn*, the elusive boundary between past and future).

Although it is not possible to reconstruct a unified and philologically unassailable theory of *diástema*, it seems consistent with the Stoic philosophical dispositive to conceive of *diástema* as *incorporated time*, meaning as a participant in the very constitution of bodies. Indeed, if it is the dimension of movement and the extension of the event, these two characteristics are not merely measures of the body but bring it into its unity,[17] whereby *diástema* is the necessary condition for the body to exist as the fulfilment of a process and to be thought of as complete. In other words, the *diástema* is the effect on the body of its *synektiké* cause.

This clarification allows us, if not to resolve fundamentally, to at least frame a solution to Plutarch's objection: *diástema* is the durative present of existing bodies, while *nŷn* is the boundary that separates two bodies according to a "before" and "after", that is, according to a consequentiality in a causal chain: it is the temporality of the transactional boundary between distinct events. Having no extension (the boundary between two bodies is not itself a body; otherwise, this would lead to an infinite regress), *nŷn* is not *diastematic* and, as such, is not thinkable until it is absorbed into the actuality of the causal chain.[18]

In this framework, the terminal points of the *diástema* constitute the internal boundaries of a body within a causal chain, whereas *nŷn* marks its external boundary.

Building on these initial insights, we identify three recurring modalities of the *diástema*: as the durative present constitutive of bodies in their processual existence, as the durative present of causal chains, which themselves are branches of the absolute causal chain, i.e., the cosmos, and as the *diástema* of psychic time.

From a conceptual perspective, this third recurrence is necessarily implied by the very nature of the event, as *id quod cuique évenit* (that which happens to each), thus bringing us back to the reflexive dynamics of *katalambánein*. Hellenistic Stoicism struggled to conceptualise time as a phenomenon of consciousness; attempts in this direction can be found in Chrysippus, Apollodorus of Seleucia, and Archedemus of Tarsus.[19]

However, the most interesting insight comes from Posidonius, cited by Arius Didymus, where a distinction is made between time "according to the whole" (*katá pãn*) and "according to the part" (*katá ti*), identifying the former with cosmological

[17] "It is not the *hic et nunc* that localize and temporalize the event, but the event that localizes the *hic* and temporalizes the *nunc*" (Diano, *Opere* 1186).

[18] See Clement of Alexandria in SVF II 346.

[19] For a reconstruction of the argument, see Schofield.

time and the latter with the time of events (EK 98). In the same fragment, Posidonius further associates this latter concept with a definition of the present moment (*nŷn*) as "the shortest time grasped by sensation". What is particularly relevant here is the explicit attribution of *nŷn* to the activity of the sensorium, as the minimal temporal threshold of *katalambánein* that enables it to perform a reflexive action.

We can integrate this insight into the theory of categories. The time *katá pãn* can be interpreted as the generic and universal spatial-temporality characteristic of material processuality (the first category, the substrate). Conversely, the time *katá ti* initially evokes the fifth category (*ti*, "something"), but the subsequent reference to the activity of the sensorium directs us back to the second category, quality. The clearest parallel lies in the temporality of sensory objects, specifically in their duration as modifications of a corporeal sensorium. In this framework, *nŷn* becomes the minimal duration of that particular event which is the modification of the sensorium associated with the apprehensive act, at the moment when this act is recognized by the sensorium itself and establishes the *hic et nunc* as the angular point of a perpectival seriality of events. This is consistent with what we read in the same fragment: concerning the *when* (*katà tò póte*), the present "is composed of some aspect of both the past and the future, being determined by them. This determination is meaningful (*sēmeiṓdē eînai*)" (EK 98).

Let us consider a final case: that of "holistic commixtures" (*krâsis di'hólon*) and the principle that makes them possible in Stoic physics, namely, the interpenetrability of bodies, their ability to pass through one another while remaining distinct.[20] Explaining commixture through interpenetrability is highly improbable if attempted in terms of causal chains between interpenetrating bodies, and it instead seems to imply the presence of another type of connection. How, then, can we characterize these entities which, being evidently representable, are concrete existents? And what is their temporality?

First, it is crucial to clarify that, although causal relations cannot be established between the constituent bodies, *krâsis di'hólon* remains subject to the *autotéleia* of the cosmos. Since *phýsis*, as the one and only nature, is permeated by a universal principle of cohesion (*tónos*), every concrete existent is necessary due to its participation in *phýsis* in its essence. Within this *autotelḗs* order, concrete existents relate through causal connections and through interpenetration connections, with the latter still giving rise to concrete existents available to enter into causal links.

To clarify this point, we must distinguish *krâsis di'hólon* from ordinary mixture (*mîxis*). In a *mîxis*, the constituent bodies are perceived and thus recognizable separately: this is the case with a pile of grain, a crowd, room furnishings, or even

[20] On this topic, see SVF II 463–481, particularly the testimonies of Stobaeus, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Philo of Alexandria.

artifacts whose parts are functionally connected, such as a wardrobe. In contrast, in *krâsis di'hólon*, the constituent bodies are not separately perceivable and are recognizable only at the end of an inferential reasoning process, while the resulting fusion is perceptible according to its own sensory quality (Stobaeus, SVF II 471; Philo of Alexandria, SVF II 472). An example of this is the mixture of red, yellow, and blue, which results in a new color, brown. What we perceive, according to a specific sensory quality, is the resulting color, not the three colors that constitute it.

Broadly speaking, a holistic commixture exists insofar as it is perceived by a sensorium, thereby becoming a fact. For this reason, *krâsis di'hólon* constitutes an important situation for stabilizing the systematic framework of *phýsis*. The bodies that constitute it exhibit, like any independent part, an internal tension (*tónos*) through which the *pneũma* bestows durable unity and cohesion on the substrate within a certain portion of material processuality. This tensional movement is neither a change of position, a qualitative transformation, nor a transition from potentiality to actuality: it is the characteristic movement of a body's mode of being within its duration. We can define it as a movement of self-recognition that, starting from the center of the body, reaches the outermost limits of the portion of the substrate that constitutes it and returns to the body's center (Diano, *Opere* 1195).

Translated into causal terms, the tensional movement is precisely the *synektiké* cause of the body, which maintains its identity within the commixture, while no causal links exist between the bodies, that cannot be distinguished according to a before and an after. In other words, in interpenetration, bodies, based on their own tensional movement, enter into acausal connections which involve different times (the *diástema* of each body) in the same space, or more precisely, in the same portion of the substrate. Along this line, the Stoic theory of holistic commixtures succeeds in linking to Whitehead's notion of concrescence.

Drawing once again on Whitehead, we can interpret acausal connections as "stratifications into layers of simultaneity." Whitehead uses this expression in close connection with his theory of *ingression*:

> The process of projection [of sense-objects into a spatio-temporal continuum] consists in our awareness of an irreducible many-termed relation between the sense-object in question, the bodily sensorium, and the space-time continuum, and it also requires our awareness of that continuum as stratified into layers of simultaneity, whose temporal thickness depends on the specious present. (Whitehead, "Uniformity" 8)

We have already encountered this philosophical dispositive within the theory of categories, interpreting the dynamics of quality and its incorporation as an eventic form; the process of projection is precisely the *ingression* of sensory objects among events. Within this schema, the expression aptly captures the condition of interpenetration of bodies within a spatio-temporal continuum and the

resulting *krâsis di'hólon*. The acausal connection that takes place between bodies in a holistic commixture is a stratification within an interval of material processuality; more precisely, it is a sub-stratification connection that determines the *diastematic* thickness of the event emerging from *krâsis di'hólon*. Revisiting Posidonius's idea of *nŷn* as the minimal temporal threshold of *katalambánein*, we can extend this discussion to psychic time and argue that the temporal thickness of, for example, the color brown corresponds to the thickness of the minimal perceptual duration in which the recognition of brown occurs.

Once again, to use Whitehead's words previously cited: "The ingression of sense-objects amid events (...) is at the same time an adaptation of nature, so that our finite consciousness of it is possible, and is also an adaptation of consciousness for the apprehension of nature" (Whitehead, "Uniformity" 12).

5. WHITEHEAD'S STOIC DISPOSITIVE: AN INTERPRETATION OF "IMMORTALITY" (1941)

As I stated from the outset, my aim has not been to determine what the Stoics "truly" said, but rather to explore how the Stoic philosophical dispositive can orient us within a hology. This is the question that motivates the symptomatic reading, through Whitehead, of certain crucial theoretical passages embedded in the Stoic philosophical dispositive.

The next question I raise is: what makes Whitehead particularly effective in a symptomatic reading of Stoicism? I will preemptively answer this: within Whitehead's cosmology, there exists an active philosophical dispositive that is inherently Stoic. Clearly, this response requires further elaboration, particularly since no explicit references to Hellenistic Stoicism or its exponents can be found in Whitehead's extensive work, whereas there are numerous references to Aristotle and, above all, Plato. Thus, the presence of a Stoic philosophical dispositive in Whitehead cannot be attributed to direct engagement with Stoic texts.

To shed light on this matter, we must first situate Whitehead within the debate on idealism that took place between Oxford and Cambridge from the late 19th to the early 20th century. Several years ago, in a paper dedicated to the origins of analytic philosophy (Dappiano "Cambridge"), I sought to demonstrate how one's stance within this debate was, in many respects, correlated with their position on Hermann Lotze, whose program for a realistic refoundation of idealism entered the debate following Thomas Martin Lindsay's 1876 article in *Mind*. In summary, Lotze's metaphysical agenda aimed to set the World of whatever exists (to which realism refers) in relation to the World of whatever has value (to which idealism refers). The mechanistic natural world coexists with the world of the spiritualistic mind. Although their cosmic unity lies in the material world as it is, it remains an object of faith, not of knowledge. Therefore, those who rejected Lotze's conviction

regarding the unity of the two worlds could still develop theories about either one or the other. Lotze's theory – that the mechanical plurality of facts displays the intimate teleological unity of values – inevitably captured the interest of British idealists, as it allowed for a formulation of the part/whole problem, where the part was assigned to the mechanical world of facts, and the whole to the teleological world of values.

The presence of Lotze's metaphysical agenda allows us to draw a distinction between two forms of idealism: monistic idealism, exemplified by Oxonian absolute idealism, which subordinates the world of facts to the world of values according to an appearance/reality polarity, and pluralistic idealism, where every real entity is generated through the interdependence of the two worlds, deriving both its identity and its relation to other real entities to this interdependence. [21] The first group primarily includes figures such as F. H. Bradley, along with T. H. Green and B. Bosanquet. The second group can be associated with thinkers like W.R. Sorley, J. Ward, J. E. McTaggart, and J. S. McKenzie, all of whom were members of the philosophical community at Trinity College, Cambridge, a community to which Whitehead also belonged at that time. Whitehead himself spoke of the significance that his participation in this community had for him (Whitehead, "Autobiografical Notes" 6). As with all classifications, this one should be treated with caution. For instance, in the case of Bradley, it does not account for the difference between *Appearance and Reality*, a foundational text of monistic idealism, and the earlier *Principles of Logic*, which aligns more closely with Lotze's program. Moreover, there were extensive exchanges between proponents of both perspectives, as well as shared arguments on specific issues. The distinction is valid only insofar as it highlights the presence of dominant "centers of gravity" within the authors considered.

I propose that Whitehead's idealism arose within this intellectual milieu, shaped by his engagement with the debate on Lotze's metaphysical agenda. Although Whitehead does not directly confirm this (despite his familiarity with Lotze, as evidenced by his early *A Treatise on Universal Algebra*, 1893), indirect evidence strongly supports this view when we examine his "Immortality". In many passages of this text, references to Lotze's metaphysical agenda, particularly its pluralistic interpretation, are clear. For instance, Whitehead writes:

> Consider the term 'Immortality' and endeavour to understand it by reference to its antithesis 'Mortality'. The two words refer to two aspects of the Universe, aspects which are presupposed in every experience which we enjoy. I will term these aspects 'The Two Worlds'. They require each other, and together constitute the concrete Universe. Either World considered by itself is an abstraction. For this reason, any adequate description of one World includes characterizations

[21] See, e.g., Sorley 283–297.

> derived from the other, in order to exhibit the concrete Universe in its relation to either of its two aspects (Whitehead, "Immortality" 684–685).

In the essay, Whitehead defines the two aspects in various complementary ways: the first aspect (the World of Mortality) is also identified as the World of Fact, Origination, Activity, Creation, Temporality, Multiplicity, and Change; the second aspect (the World of Immortality) is alternatively identified as the World of Value, Persistence, Possibility, Timelessness, Unity, and Coordination. These two chains of synonyms clearly indicate the influence of Lotze in Whitehead's thinking. However, my focus is on another aspect: the response to Lotze's metaphysical framework reveals in fact the Stoic philosophical dispositive within Whitehead's work. This theoretical move marks Whitehead's originality in the context of the pluralistic idealism of Cambridge, to which he acknowledged an intellectual debt.

This originality is evident early in "Immortality", where Whitehead writes:

> The contrast of finitude and infinity arises from the fundamental metaphysical truth that every entity involves an indefinite array of perspectives, each perspective expressing a finite characteristic of that entity. But any one finite perspective does not enable an entity to shake off its essential connection with totality. The infinite background always remains, as the unanalyzed reason why that particular finite perspective of that entity has the special character it does have (...). The entity is then experienced in a wider finite perspective, still presupposing the inevitable background which is the Universe in its relation to that entity. (682)

In this paragraph, we observe two key elements: first, there is an implicit reference to Samuel Alexander's *Space, Time, and Deity*, a work to which Whitehead's cosmology frequently refers, and which itself draws on Lotze. Alexander considers finite existences, including minds, as "volumes of space-time" with a determinate contour (a situation) within which connections are established with other finite existences (Alexander 1.269–78, 340; 2.74–80). Every existence, therefore, is a point of departure for perspective contours, or interwoven perspectives, within space-time, where multiple existences coexist (Alexander 1.65–93, 135–40). Alexander qualifies a perspective contour as a "concrete whole", which has its point of departure in a pulse of experience (Alexander 1.220–37). The totality of perspective contours forms the map of space-time, the primordial stuff of the universe, and it remains present as the background of each finite existence (Alexander, 1.341–3; 2.428).

The second significant element in this passage is that the finite entities Whitehead describes correspond precisely to the "events" discussed by Carlo Diano:

> The event is not *quicquid èvenit* (whatever happens), but *id quod cuique èvenit* (that which happens to each). (…) It is always in the relationship of two terms: one is the *cuique* ('to each') as pure existentiality situated in the *hic et nunc*, which the event reveals (…); the other is the space-time periphery from which

> the *èvenit* (the 'happens') is felt to originate. The first term is finite, the second is infinite, and as *ubique et semper* (everywhere and always), it encompasses all space and all time. (…) This relationship is felt rather than thought, and only as a felt relationship is it real. The first definition we have of this periphery made present by the event is that of *ápeiron periéchon* (infinite surrounding), which Anaximander and the Greek theologians identified with the divine. (...). There are different kinds of events, each with its own dimension and direction, but all are characterized by the lived presence of the *ápeiron periéchon*. This is evidenced by two of the most typical systems of events: Stoicism, which expresses the most closed form of the event, and existentialism, in which the event appears in its most open form. (...) In Stoicism, reality is composed of events, and every event presupposes the entire cycle in which the *lógos* (divine reason) is enacted and completed, and every point is always in relation to the periphery and coincides with it (Diano, *Opere* 1185–89).

In Whitehead's passage, as a response to Lotze's agenda, we therefore see the notion of the "event" aligning with Stoic thought, even if Whitehead himself might not have consciously recognized this connection. This alignment becomes even clearer when we consider Whitehead's rejection of Platonism in "Immortality". In Section IV, he writes:

> The value inherent in the Universe has an essential independence of any moment of time; and yet it loses its meaning apart its necessary reference to the World of passing fact. Value refers to Fact and Fact refers to Value. [This statement is a direct contradiction to Plato, and to the theological tradition derived to him.] (684).

Whitehead repeatedly emphasizes this point, challenging both Platonism and the British Idealists' response to Lotze, particularly their subordination of the world of facts to the world of values. For Whitehead, the interconnection between the two worlds is such that values only realize themselves as "modifications" (or "configurations") of events in time. These events, in turn, acquire their identity (i.e., they become distinguishable and recognizable) by incorporating the modifying function of values. In this context, "value" should be understood not merely in ethical or aesthetic terms, but more broadly as anything that qualifies an event and defines its modes of occurrence, which is precisely what the Stoics grouped under the category of Quality.

This is the theoretical space, organised by Whitehead's rejection of Platonism, in which his assimilation of the Stoic philosophical dispositive becomes apparent.

Continuing with the text, Section VI begins with the following statement:

> The fusion involves the fact that either World can only be described in terms of factors which are common to both of them. These factors are the famous

> 'Ideas,' which is the glory of Greek thought to have explicitly discovered, and the tragedy of Greek thought to have misconceived in respect to their status in the Universe (687).

To understand this passage, it is important to clarify what Whitehead means by "factors." In *The Concept of Nature*, Whitehead explains that perceptual experience, the source of our knowledge of nature, is rooted in a flow of relations, within which three components can be identified: facts, factors and entities. Here the fact is "the undifferentiated terminus of sense-awareness", representing the raw data of perception before analysis. Factors are "the termini of sense-awareness differentiated as elements of the fact". Entities, in turn, are "the factors in their function as the termini of thought" (Whitehead, *Concept* 13).

Thus, factors are the constituents of facts; we might call them the categories of facts, which become entities when they are objects of cognition. The error of the Aristotelian tradition lay in separating entities and factors, interpreting the former as substances and the latter as attributes. In doing so, this tradition split nature into two realms: the nature perceived through sensation and the nature causing the sensation. Consequently, the concept of fact became confused, and the event, as a concrete fact observable in its entirety, vanished.

Developing this critique further, Whitehead arrives at the key observation that underpins this paper:

> Matter, in its modern scientific sense, is a return to the Ionian effort to find in space and time some stuff which composes nature. (…) Earth, water, air, fire, and matter, and finally ether are related in direct succession so far as concerns their postulated characters of ultimate substrata of nature. They bear witness to the undying vitality of Greek philosophy in its search for the ultimate entities which are the factors of the fact disclosed in sense-awareness. This search is the origin of science (Whitehead, *Concept* 19).

By mentioning earth, water, air, fire, and ether, Whitehead is not simply referring to the specific material elements proposed by the "Ionians" but to their general endeavour to locate the constituents of reality (factors) within the perceptual world. The "Ionians" sought to understand the cosmos as a unity of change and permanence, where the elements or qualities (factors) of reality are directly involved in the process of events. So, Whitehead emphasizes that the essence of both events and facts is rooted in their relational and perceptual nature.

This rejection of dualism reinforces Whitehead's broader critique of both Platonism and Aristotelianism, aligning him more closely with a Stoic perspective, where the interplay of qualities (or factors) and their concrete realization in events is central to the understanding of the universe.

Let us return, then, to "Immortality". What does it mean that ideas are factors (i.e., categorical constituents of facts) shared by both worlds? And what are the consequences of the misunderstanding, for which Platonism is responsible, of this state of affairs? The first consequence lies in the theoretical distortion produced by the concept of "independent existence," where the temporal reality of the event, and time itself as the duration of the event, are reduced to mere appearance. Indeed, as Whitehead writes,

> There is no such mode of existence; every entity is only to be understood in terms of the way in which it is interwoven with the rest of the universe. (...): An 'Idea' is the entity answering questions which inquire 'How?'. Such a question seeks the 'sort' of the occurrence (687).

The idea, therefore, is a category that, as a *factor*, enters into the constitution of the fact (of the occurring body) and, as an *entity*, enables its recognition:

> Each 'idea' has two sides; namely, it is a shape of value and a shape of fact. (…) The ultimate character of the universe (…) has two sides – one side is the mortal world of transitory fact acquiring the immortality of realized value; the other side is the timeless world of mere possibility acquiring temporal realizations. The bridge between the two is the 'Idea' with its two sides. (688) (...). Every factor in the Universe has two aspects for our abstractions of thought: the factor can be considered on its temporal side, in the World of Change, and on its immortal side, in the World of Value. We have already employed this doctrine in respect to Platonic Ideas (693).

> Here, Carlo Diano's insights into Stoicism help to clarify Whitehead's vision of ideas:
> Of the forms that man attributes to events, none is in itself; they are always *kat'állo ti* (for the sake of something else) and *héneká tinos állou* (in view of something else), and they can only be understood in relation. As forms, they are also contemplatable, but their contemplatability does not exhaust their essence; it is merely a means to grasp what does not appear in them, something that by its nature excludes any contemplatability and can only be experienced. They are *sýmbola* (symbols), not *eĩde* (ideas); eventic forms, not the 'forms' (Diano, *Opere* 1191).

Thus, when Whitehead asserts that the tragedy of Greek (Platonic) thought lies in its misunderstanding of ideas in relation to their status in the universe, he is in fact attributing to ideas the dynamics of Stoic qualities, understood as modes of occurrence and configurations of bodies within a material, processual reality. This approach allows Whitehead to reconfigure the relationship between abstract ideas and the concrete world, presenting a more integrated and dynamic vision of reality, where the ideas of Greek thought are not static forms but active, relational constituents of the world's ongoing process. Framed in these terms, the interconnection

between the two worlds, mediated by ideas, is revealed in the space-time duration of events, captured within the duration of a perceptual act. In Stoic terminology, the interconnection between the two worlds is precisely manifested in the *diástema* of events, which is apprehended through the *diástema* of *katalambánein*.

The survey of the Stoic philosophical dispositive active in Whitehead allows us to locate, within his cosmology, the presence of a processual and dynamic theory of wholes, in their reciprocal relationship and with their constituent parts. This theory provides the foundation for a *holo-kinetics*, based on ten assumptions:

1. The world is the integral totality of events, and each event presupposes the integrity of the world in which it is immersed.
2. Every concrete whole coincides with its own spatio-temporal extension, which exhibits its categorical constitution.
3. Concrete wholes, understood as bodies, can enter into acausal synchronic relations that give rise to new concrete wholes through holistic commixture.
4. Concrete wholes, understood as events, enter into causal diachronic relations within fields of coexistence and according to causal chains.
5. Within each field of coexistence, there is (at least) one perceiving whole, which constitutes itself as a point of perspective and translates, according to a projective relation, the field of coexistence into the perceptual contour of its own spatio-temporal extension (*perspectival contour*).
6. The translation of fields of coexistence into perspectival contours occurs through a linguistic modeling process.
7. Concrete wholes, understood as facts, enter into mutual relations within perspectival contours and according to syllogistic chains.
8. The coincidence between a field of coexistence and a perspectival contour is a projective relation that establishes *evidence*. Evidence is a psychic state that occurs within the spatio-temporal extension of the perceiving whole.
9. Fields of coexistence and perspectival contours are themselves concrete wholes endowed with spatio-temporal extension. The totality of their mutual relations constitutes the *map of the integral whole*, or the *cosmic field of coexistence*.
10. It remains undecided whether the cosmic field of coexistence is an open or closed system. If the cosmic field of coexistence translates into a (single) cosmic perspectival contour, as foreseen in Stoic cosmology, the field is a closed (and isolated) system, with a constant and invariant order structure (possibility of a theophany[22]). Otherwise, the cosmic field of coexistence translates into an open network of perspectival contours, with an emerging and processual order structure: this development is compatible with Whitehead's cosmology and can be elaborated by resorting to a Chaos Theory or a Catastrophe Theory[23].

[22] Worthy of further investigation is the development given to this perspective by the Cappadocian Fathers, particularly by Gregory of Nyssa with his *Apophatic Explicatio in Hexaemeron*.

[23] We find some insights in this direction in Beaulieu.

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