
LEIBNIZ'S MONADODOLOGY AS A PERFORMATIVE CREATIVE PROCESS

By Pierre Beaudry, 7/21/2016

INTRODUCTION



Lyndon LaRouche has many times demonstrated Leibniz's insight that science is not a mere "description of our experience of nature," but an active application of the cognitive power of the human mind to change the universe and, in doing so, distinguishes itself from the mind of an animal. Such a resourcefulness of power is located in a unique form of practice which distinguishes man from the beast as truth is distinct from opinion.

This raises two questions: how is that distinction expressed in Leibniz's *Monadology* and what is the nature of the performative creative process that gives it its dynamic power to change?

This report is an attempt to answer both of these questions by showing how to use this process for solving axiomatic moments of crisis in the history of mankind.

Figure 1 God having a forethought for the creation of man. Chartres Cathedral.

1. PERFORMATIVE ACTION AS A CREATIVE ACTION OF CHANGE

“Time reversal is the measure of change because change is the measure of time reversal.”

Dehors Debonneheure

Performative action is not a trick or an act of language, like linguists such as J. L. Austin, John Searle, and other academics have made the claim it was; it is the shadow of a paradoxical state of mind which reflects the process of creation by generating an action of reproducing one's own intention of change as in the image of God the Creator. As in the actual creation of man by God, that is, the action of creating a perfect Divine Performative Idea, the ideas of your mind are nothing but the attempt to recreate that divine intention into the back of your own mind. The irony, here, is that in God's mind, there is no back of the mind; He's all up front.

One of the best works of art reflecting such an idea of a performative action is the representation of God sitting on the Northern Portico of the Chartres Cathedral, in France, and having forethought of creating man. (**Figure 1**) The process involved, here, is similar to replicating the light of Reason throughout the universe in a triply-connected least action form of absorption, reflection, and refraction into everything that exists.

Such a triply-connected least action is continuous in God's mind, but not in ours. In our minds, this action is formed by discontinuous singularities that need to be surmounted as obstacles such as in the creation of caustics on a catenary surface. As in the case of the formation of a catenary envelope, the interplay among such discontinuous singularities has to come to a unique adjustment that cannot be produced in any other way but by a series of inversions within this process.

Leibniz, after Cusa and Leonardo, was the first to elaborate philosophically on this Platonic process, in his *Monadology*. The difficulty, however, was to put his theory of mind into practice. As Leibniz put it: “The art of practice is such that one brings chance itself under the yoke of science. The more one does this, the more does theory conform with practice.” In other words, to make, to do, and to

become are one and the same thing provided that theory is unified with practice, because creative practice is one and opinions are many.

The best way to understand such a process, therefore, is to project the characteristics of light and shadow of Leibniz's *Monadology* into Plato's Cave, in order to discover that what is perceived on the dimly lit wall of our imagination, is nothing but deformed shadows coming from a source of light that cannot be seen or even be apprehended, except, in part, by the study of indirect modalities such as the phenomena of projection, absorption, reflection, and refraction. Therefore, it is certain aspects of those modalities that I am now going to investigate through the metaphorical process of light and shadow, because creativity cannot be grasped as an object of thought without creating that process of thought, myself, subjectively.

2. THE PERFORMATIVE MONADODOLOGY OF LEIBNIZ

“You can tell the degree of a hidden intention by the degree of the shadow it casts.”

Dehors Debonneheure

An intention always casts a shadow, except when it is a performative action of change. The reason why that is the case is because, if the intention is not applied to oneself, it cannot be applied to another. Therefore, a performative action must always have transparency. This is the dynamic principle of Leibniz's *Monadology*.

Leibniz has a view which is very similar to Lyn's idea of axiomatic transformation and progress of the human mind in the history of mankind, and, most notably, on the question of the changing activity of representations inside the soul's yearning to change. The “yearning” toward completion, which is pulled by final causes, is the fundamental characteristic of everything which tends towards increasing energy-flux-density of the universe in its totality; that is to say, towards anti-entropic developments within the universe that Lyn had identified as the fundamental “ontological infinitesimal motion of Leibniz's *Monadology*.”

Such an anti-entropic developing power was expressed by Leibniz with the use of the French notion of “*Appétition*” to indicate this internal principle of change inside of the Monad; a principle attached to final causality which cannot be affected by any external cause. Think of *Appétition* as the transmission principle of all of your representations; and that, if you have anything else in your mind, you must be doing something wrong.

In the manuscript of the original French publication of the *Monadology* (1714), a section of which I have translated into English below (with the French original in blue), Leibniz put capital letters to “*Monade, Perception, and, Appétition*” not only to indicate a substantive modality invested in these concepts, but also to indicate the importance he attributes to their activities. For example, in *Monadology*, Sections 10 to 17, Leibniz wrote:

« 10. I also take as being accepted that every created being, and consequently also the created Monad, is subjected to change, and moreover that this change is continuous in each. *Je prends aussi pour accordé que tout être créé est sujet au changement, et par conséquent la Monade créée aussi, et même que ce changement est continué dans chacune.* »

« 11. It follows from what was just said that the natural changes in Monads come from an *internal principle*, since an external cause could not have any effect on its inner being. *Il s’ensuit de ce que nous venons de dire, que les changements naturels des Monades viennent d’un principe interne, puisqu’une cause externe ne saurait influencer dans son intérieur.* »

« 12. But aside from the principle of change, there must also be an *account of what is changing*, which would constitute, so to speak, the specific nature and the variety of simple substances. *Mais il faut aussi qu’outre le principe du changement il y ait un détail de ce qui change, qui fasse pour ainsi dire la spécification et la variété des substances simples.* »

« 13. This account must envelop a multiplicity within the unity or in the simple substance; because since all natural change takes place by degrees, something changes and something remains; and consequently there must

exist a plurality of affections and relationships within the simple substance, even though it is not made up of parts. Ce détail doit envelopper une multitude dans l'unité ou dans le simple. Car tout changement naturel se faisant par degrés, quelque chose change et quelque chose reste ; et par conséquent il faut que dans la substance simple il y ait une pluralité d'affections et de rapports, quoiqu'il n'y en ait point de parties. »

« 14. The passing state which envelops and represents a multiplicity within the unity, or within the simple substance, is nothing other than what is called *Perception*, which we must distinguish from apperception or conscience, as it is apparent in what follows. In this matter, the Cartesians are extremely defective, because they failed to take into account perceptions that we are not aware of. This is also what made them believe that only Minds were Monads and that Beasts had no souls or other Entelechies. Like the common people, they have also failed to see the difference between a prolonged loss of consciousness and absolute death ; which has led them to fall again into the Scholastic assumption that souls were completely separated [from bodies] , and this has also convinced some twisted minds into believing the opinion that souls were mortals. L'état passager, qui enveloppe et représente une multitude dans l'unité ou dans la substance simple, n'est autre chose que ce qu'on appelle la *Perception*, qu'on doit distinguer de l'aperception ou de la conscience, comme il paraîtra dans la suite. Et c'est en quoi les Cartésiens ont fort manqué, ayant compté pour rien les perceptions, dont on ne s'aperçoit pas. C'est aussi ce qui les a fait croire que les seuls Esprits étaient des Monades et qu'il n'y avait point d'Ames des Bêtes ni d'autres Entéléchies ; et qu'ils ont confondu avec le vulgaire un long étourdissement avec une mort à la rigueur, ce qui les a fait encore donner dans le préjugé scolastique des âmes entièrement séparées, et a même confirmé les esprits mal tournés dans l'opinion de la mortalité des âmes. »

« 15. The action of an internal principle which causes change or the passing of one perception to another may be called *Appetition*: It is true that the appetite cannot fully satisfy the whole perception to which it strives, but it always obtains some of it, and succeeds in attaining new perceptions.

L'action du principe interne qui fait le changement ou le passage d'une perception à une autre, peut être appelée *Appétition*: il est vrai que l'appétit ne saurait toujours parvenir entièrement à toute la perception, où il tend, mais il en obtient toujours quelque chose, et parvient à des perceptions nouvelles. »

« 16. We experience in ourselves a multiplicity within the simple substance whenever we find that the simplest thought we are aware of, envelops a variety inside that object. Therefore, all those who agree that the soul is a simple substance should recognize this multiplicity within the Monad; and Mr. Bayle should find no difficulty in this, as he has done in his dictionary article *Rosarius*. Nous expérimentons nous-mêmes une multitude dans la substance simple, lorsque nous trouvons que la moindre pensée dont nous nous apercevons, enveloppe une variété dans l'objet. Ainsi tous ceux qui reconnaissent que l'âme est une substance simple, doivent reconnaître cette multitude dans la Monade ; et Monsieur Bayle ne devait point y trouver de la difficulté, comme il a fait dans son Dictionnaire article *Rorarius*. »

« 17. Besides, we have to confess that *Perception* and that which depends on it are *inexplicable by mechanical means*; that is to say, by means of figures and motions. Even by supposing the existence of a Machine so constructed that it could think, feel, and have perceptions, we could conceive of it as being larger yet maintaining the same proportions, such that we could enter into it as if into a mill. That being the case, we would only find in visiting its interior such pieces of machinery that push one another, but never that which could explain a perception. Thus, it is in the simple substance, and not in the composite or the machine, that we have to search for the perception. Thus, there is nothing else to be found in the simple substance, except perceptions and their transformations. Furthermore, it is of this alone that all the *internal Actions* of simple substances are made of. On est obligé d'ailleurs de confesser que la *Perception* et ce qui en dépend, est *inexplicable par des raisons mécaniques*, c'est-à-dire par les figures et par les mouvements. Et feignant qu'il y ait une Machine, dont la structure fasse penser, sentir, avoir perception ; on pourra la concevoir agrandie en conservant les mêmes

proportions, en sorte qu'on y puisse entrer, comme dans un moulin. Et cela posé, on ne trouvera en la visitant au dedans, que des pièces, qui poussent les unes les autres, et jamais de quoi expliquer une perception. Ainsi c'est dans la substance simple, et non dans le composé, ou dans la machine qu'il la faut chercher. Aussi n'y a-t-il que cela qu'on puisse trouver dans la substance simple, c'est-à-dire, les perceptions et leurs changements. C'est en cela seul aussi que peuvent consister toutes les *Actions internes* des substances simples. » (Translated by the author from Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, [LA MONADOLOGIE](#), annotated edition by Émile Boutroux, originally published at C. Delagrave, Paris, 1881, 231 pages.)

Simultaneous to Leibniz's developing the self-changing function of the Monad, there is also the unraveling action of the function of its discovery in the reader's mind. In other words, the *discovery of the function is the function of its discovery*. The *Monadology* is a perfect example of such a performative process, which is true to itself and cannot be affected by any external cause, mental or physical. This is why the reader may find unusual meanings to be considered, here, in Leibniz's *Monadology*, most notably in the notions of "*Perception*" and of "*Appétition*," which are intended to cause changes in the reader's mind. The point is to discover, in yourself, the appetite for changing the way you think by considering the impact of those two notions, and apply them to the process of going from one state of your knowledge to a better one.

First of all, there is the notion of "*Perception*" which should not be identified solely with the idea of "bodily sense perception," and there is the notion of "*Appétition*" which should not be confused merely with the idea of "bodily appetite." The reason why Leibniz used these terms was to bring the reader to the trough of his mind by means of well chosen shadows. The Leibniz notion of « *Perception* » means, as he said in section 14, "a passing state which envelops and represents a multiplicity within the unity, or within a simple substance,..." ; that is to say, a One of the Many; while the notion of "*Appétition*" relates to the idea of yearning or aspiration.

Leibniz uses these terms because there is nothing else inside of the human mind that makes it progress but that single reciprocal performative function of *Perception* and *Appetition*. There is no duality, here; the Monad is One and Simple. As Leibniz wrote to the Dutch Cartesian, Burchard De Volder: “Indeed, considering the matter carefully, it may be said that there is nothing in the world except simple substances, and, in them, perception and appetite.” (Letter of Leibniz to Burchard De Volder, June 30, 1704)

This may appear to be shocking to you, as it did to De Volder, unless you understand Leibniz’s performative action as a reciprocal function of change within itself. Furthermore, what Leibniz says is the same that Lyndon LaRouche has identified as the apprehension of an axiomatic transfinite moment of change within the human mind which is motivated by final causality.

On the one hand, the Leibnizian idea of *Perception* is a representation of the “Many” in the “One,” as Plato expressed it in his Ontological Paradox, most notably in his *Parmenides*. On the other hand, the idea of *Appetition* is the striving and natural tendency and inclination that the mind has to go through in its creative process, from one *Perception* to another improved *Perception*, from one *gestalt* to a higher *gestalt*, or as Riemann developed, from a lower manifold to a higher manifold. The idea is that the mind is constantly urged to change and to transform itself by generating representations of the world and of itself as it progresses in a transfinite manner. *Appetition* always aspires for a new *Perception* and each new *Perception* is attracted by a new *Appetition*. Thus, the mind develops from a *performative function of change whose intention is to always change its own function*.

As both Leibniz and LaRouche keep emphasizing, the role of the future is the key to determining the direction of history of this performative process of change for humanity as a whole and, therefore, both of them give priority to mind over matter; that is, priority to final over efficient causality. This is confirmed by Leibniz when he wrote:

« 78. These principles have given me the means of explaining, in a natural way, either the union or the conformity between the soul and the

organic body. The soul follows its own laws and the body also follows its own. And they come together by virtue of the preestablished harmony among all of the substances, since they are all representations of the same universe. Ces principes m'ont donné moyen d'expliquer naturellement l'union ou bien la conformité de l'âme et du corps organique. L'âme suit ses propres lois et le corps aussi les siennes ; et ils se rencontrent en vertu de l'harmonie préétablie entre toutes les substances, puisqu'elles sont toutes les représentations d'un même univers. »

« 79. The souls act in accordance with final causes by way of *Appetitions*, ends and means. Bodies act in accordance with the laws of efficient causes or motions. And the two realms, that of efficient causes and that of final causes are in harmony with each other. Les âmes agissent selon les lois des causes finales par *Appétitions*, fins et moyens. Les corps agissent selon les lois des causes efficientes ou des mouvements. Et les deux règnes, celui des causes efficientes et celui des causes finales sont harmoniques entre eux. » (*Ibidem.*)

The intention of Leibniz is to awaken in the reader's mind a yearning to change his mechanistic view of the world, and to discover his own appetite for changing his way of thinking, by himself, through final causality, which must be made an integral part and habit of his own mind's activity. The key is to discover that the complementary relationship of inversion between final causality and efficient causality comes from a preestablished harmony between mind and matter.

With respect to the common principle of change in Lyn's and Leibniz's thinking, Ernie Shapiro had a very important insight at the conclusion of his class series, which conforms entirely with what I have just stated above. He said:

“This reminds me of Lyn's elaborate discussion of what he calls the dialectical method or the phenomenological method of proof in Dialectical Economics. One starts with the simplest, most pervasive phenomenon in the area under investigation and shows that taken in and by itself, one is forced into paradoxes. So, one has to go outside the bounds of that delimited domain into a broader subsuming one. This process of negation and

successive hypothesis formation continues until one has taken the entire relevant totality into account. In his discussion of this process, Lyn emphasized that its development is characterized by freedom. Also that the significance of any particular can be understood only in terms of how it affects and is affected by the whole and its development as a totality. Each Monad in Leibniz's *Monadology* needs to be viewed in that light, which I believe is what Leibniz had in mind.” (Ernie Shapiro, *EFFICIENT AND FINAL CAUSES IN LYN, LEIBNIZ, AND KEPLER*. E-mail 7/18/16.)

This is a very important point, because this is a typical form of performative action that is ordered by final causality in the same manner that Leibniz had discovered through preestablished harmony from time reversal. At the age of 85, Lyn gave an assessment of his debt to Leibniz, acknowledging the masterful impact the *Monadology* had on him by expressing, as he said, “the true, unique secret of the human mind.” Lyn wrote:

“The origin of the most central, fundamental, and most memorable of those deeper roots of my presently knowledgeable outlook, is to be located in my reaction to a study, dating from my adolescence, on the subject of Gottfried Leibniz’s concept of the *Monadology*. [...]

“This was the subject which occupied most of the pages of my scribbles deposited into those high school recess-periods' notebooks which I filled out during those years. It was the *Monadology* whose specific mode of argument gripped me for reason of its relevance to my already established rejection of what passed for the teaching of Euclidean Plane Geometry, as later, of Solid Geometry, and, still later, of so-called Cartesian ("Analytic") Geometry, and, then, the perverted, Cauchy version of the Differential Calculus.” (Lyndon LaRouche, [On Monadology](#), EIR, Feb. 22, 2008.)

In other words, what Lyn had discovered in the *Monadology* was the most competent basis for modern physical science; that is to say, for understanding the activity of the human mind in performing actions that reflect constant changes from *Perception* to *Perception*:

“Thus, true science is not the mere observation and description of our experience of nature. Science properly comprehended, is also a centrally underlying principle of the cognitive powers which distinguish the creative scientific and artistic potential of the human mind from what might be described, loosely speaking, as the "mental life" of the beasts. It is the crucial expression of that which distinguishes an actually human soul from the kind of mere opinion which is found among the beasts which we may have adopted as household pets. Thus, as I shall show in this reflection on my own experience, Leibniz did not exaggerate, either in placing the importance which he did on the role of the conception of the *Monadology*, or in denouncing the incompetence of the method of Sophistry employed by Descartes and by such followers of Descartes as the so-called Newtonians.” (Lyndon LaRouche, [On Monadology](#), EIR, Feb. 22, 2008.)

CONCLUSION: HOW THE LIGHT OF TRUTH CASTS NO SHADOW

I suggest that the reader pay very close attention to the intentions behind shadows, because they have a lot to say about the light of truth in your mind, and you can easily discover that with the following simple, but rigorous, epistemological exercise.

There is an interesting experiment that you can do with the light of a candle which is to project its flame against a white surface as if you were projecting an idea from your mind onto the surface of another mind. If your mind is truly performative, it will project your ideas in such a manner that they will not cast any shadow! Only the light of your ideas will penetrate the other mind.



Figure 2 The performative fire of your mind never casts any shadow on the minds of others. Compare the idea of this image with the idea of **Figure 1**.

Moreover, if you compare creative ideas to fire, and especially to the Promethean characteristic of fire, which burns in the belly of whoever is passionate about searching for truth, you will find that your knowledge will always perform truthful ideas from universal principles which all have the power to unify the individual and the universal within a dynamical conception of change. Such is the science of Promethean fire, a fire which casts no shadow.

However, if you are not performative and you have hatred in your soul, the flame of your ideas will cast a shadow of fear instead of a light of courage. As an example, take the case of the current failing Deutsche Bank and the reaction of certain people that Helga has noted in her recent report. Helga said:

“In Germany we had an unprecedented, really unexpected wave of hatred against Deutsche Bank. Conservative industrialists, long-term supporters (whom you had never expected to say something like that), they had a completely violent reaction and said: ‘Let them go bankrupt! Shut them down! Why should we spend another penny to save these criminal crooks?’ And I think that is what people are not fighting through, because the Herrhausen principle is not just saving Deutsche Bank; it's with a gun to the head saying: Either you accept the paradigm shift or you all go under, we all go under with you. But if you want to survive, you have to accept this shift. And if we had an international campaign--which we have a little bit--but if we had a real campaign, the pressure would get greater on the German government, which is the place where the pressure has to end up.” (Helga LaRouche, Morning Briefing, July 18, 2016.)

The point that Helga is making is that if you have a truthful solution and you have love of mankind in your heart, you don't need to react with fear; you simply need to muster your courage and act on it. That action alone will create new *Perceptions*.

Indeed, why should a source of light cast any shadow? Why should the light of your mind cause any obscurity in someone else's mind? The point to be made, here, is that a performative action is not a declarative formula like “I do” in a marriage ceremony, or “I hate this” as an expression of your disapproval; it is a creative action which causes a change in the world view of another person's mind, and that change requires courage. Performative action is also the very essence of classical artistic composition. This is the reason why after you come out of a great representation of classical music, you have not been entertained; you have been provoked to transform yourself into a better human being.

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