

Real Science?

Paper II: *A Patchwork of Parts or a coherent, indivisible Whole?*

II. Is There an Alternative Methodology?

Now, everything laid out in Part I of this paper seems reasonable except for one *rather crucial* omission. The usual Pluralist methodology that was clearly and strongly condemned, was not really adequately described in that initial paper, and to cap it all any reasonable description of an alternative was also absent! Criticism in the abstract will, of course, NOT be enough!

The first step towards the new alternative methodology will, I'm afraid, seem to be a large step backwards, for instead of the analytic – Whole & Part approach of Plurality, the alternative can only be Holism.

Now, at first glance Holism seems to be a view where everything is indissolubly determined by everything else. The cutting down of relevant factors that is the essence of Plurality, will be totally illegitimate in this context. Theoretically the isolate, extract and then abstract methodology of Plurality would be banned as a distorting scheme, and one imposing a whole series of unjustified biases on everything studied by such means

But, this seems to offer NO real solution. Any holistic alternative method seems to be impossible from the outset.

If we can't analyse successively right down to basic immutable units, what can we do? How do we treat everything simultaneously?

Now, of course, when presented in that way, the answer must be that we can do NOTHING!

But, the everything happening at once, with everything affecting everything else, and all mediations of equal weight is a simplistic and incorrect characterisation of Holism. It is frankly the definition of Holism concocted by its enemies.

It is the conception which imagines that such complexity must finally result in totally random and unpredictable outcomes and which therefore can only be dealt with "in total" or "on average". Indeed, whenever classical Science came across unavoidable situations, that were indisputably and inherently holistic, they didn't turn a hair, and extracted average or statistical laws to cover those cases.

Any questioning as to what lay beneath such collective behaviours were dismissed as "unknowable" and rejected. [Kant's Unknowable Thing-in-Itself comes to mind]

But, hidden within these "tailorings" of non-conforming Reality, there was a morsel of Truth.

The trouble is that the usual explanation affixed to all these cases HID the real content behind the "random chance" label.

In fact holistic situations do not only produce such random situations. They, in fact, produce everything in our World, both the seemingly ungraspable AND the clearly obvious.

The holistic processing that constitutes Reality produces TWO very different and contrasting interludes.

One constitutes a seeming "total stability", while the other can only be described as cataclysmic revolutions.

It was the "stability" phase that was taken on board and refined into a methodology of study by the pluralists to isolate, extract and abstract relations that were evident, but obscured or distorted in Reality.

The pluralist revolution happened when situations could be **controlled** to "reveal" these just-0beneath-the-surface relations. Plurality addresses Reality by insisting on standing on only one of Reality's legs – the seemingly stable leg, and forcing fragments of Reality into doable Domains, where they could be studied in detail.

Indeed, we can say that Plurality totally ignored the Wood for the Trees.

It threw away any underlying Change, and ignored all obviously minor contributions, while it nailed most others "to the floor". It "released the essence" from the fuzzily available Real (so to speak!).

And, as long as the situation was kept stable, such a methodology was indeed very productive.

BUT, and it is a very big BUT, what happened when the situation tumbled irrevocably and cataclysmically into global Change – when some sort of revolution occurred? For, there can be no doubt that these interludes did happen, and when they did, they did not only reformulate the whole situation, but also CREATED wholly new entities, processes and even Laws, which seemed to bear NO relation to what had gone before? Could Plurality cope? No it could not!

Indeed, Plurality banished all qualitative Change completely. Now, in a World in which everything is always changing, such a method seems totally incomprehensible, and indeed certain to fail abysmally.

But, you must not forget the main plank on which Plurality was built.

That plank is CONTROL!

By extensive and powerful controls, Mankind IMPOSED constancy on Reality in fenced off areas, and studied them intensively. All of Science securely pinned Reality to the floor, in order to study it in detail, and at leisure. Indeed, sometimes it was considered necessary to actually kill it to ensure complete stability.

The methodology, both in investigation, and in use, imposed the necessary constancy, and Reality could be “revealed” as composed of “eternal laws”, which not only explained the main relations, but also inferred that it could deal with the troublesome aberrations and blurrings too.

So Plurality ruled O.K. by its bullying tactics in the face of Reality

So what of our unavoidable interludes of major Change? What on earth could be done about them?

For the beginning of an answer, see the next paper in this series.

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