

'IMMEDIACY' IN WHITEHEAD AND BLAGA

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Abstract: In Whitehead's metaphysics there is a concept of 'immediacy' which is interesting to interpret in relation to the concept of 'immediacy' found in Lucian Blaga's metaphysics. Immediacy stands in opposition to the wholeness of existence and the complexity of reality in both thinkers. In Whitehead, immediate experience is merely a facet of the constructed series of events and processes fundamental for existence and reality and for connecting our objective, scientific and logical descriptions of the world, and the more everyday world of subjective experience. In Blaga, immediacy is the label for limited (animal-like) existence deprived of the metaphysical dimension. However, in Blaga, man is defined by the metaphysical dimension and thus, in terms closer to Whitehead's view, always engaged in a crusade to comprehend both 'physical multiplicity' (the World) and 'the infinite ground of all mentality' (God), which is consonant with Blaga's concept of man's defining situation within 'the horizon of mystery'. Both metaphysics accepted a perspective, or, an interpretation of the idea that God creates the World as well as the World creating God. In our view, the Unmoved Mover image of God remains as a 'trace' in the idea of permanent reference for the World. This is comparable with the perspective found in the metaphysics of Lucian Blaga, where the metaphysical center, the 'Great Anonym,' 'pushes' backwards the human being, via limitative 'divine differentials' occasioning the limiting stylistic matrices for the creative and intrusive ontological and metaphysical drive of man.

Keywords: metaphysics; existence; immediacy; Alfred N. Whitehead; Lucian Blaga.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of 'immediacy' is present in the philosophical works of Alfred North Whitehead (1861–1947) and Lucian Blaga (1895–1961), who were contemporaries: they were both metaphysicians (although, I would rather use the form 'metaphysicists' for their specialization), but they never crossed paths or exchanged ideas¹. Alfred N. Whitehead aimed at a 'synoptic vision'² of nature and reality, where the values of nature are paramount for metaphysical synthesis, comprehensive for nature and reality, where science is not disconnected from art, morals and religion. Lucian Blaga aimed at a philosophical system, a 'metaphysical

¹ Notably, though, A. N. Whitehead met Russell and Albert Einstein.

² Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, David Ray Griffin & Donald W. Sherburne (eds.), New York, The Free Press, 1985, p. 5.

vision on the totality of existence' (*Schița unei autoprezentări filosofice/The Sketch of a Philosophical Self-Presentation*, 1938), based on trilogies investigating knowledge, culture, values and cosmology.

The enterprise of knowledge as 'all constructive thought, on the various special topics of scientific interest, is dominated by some such scheme, unacknowledged, but no less influential in guiding imagination', something that Bacon did not consider, as Whitehead noticed in the Preface to *Process and Reality*. In Blaga, too, something rather unacknowledged guides all constructive thought and imagination, be it in science or in art, namely the 'stylistic matrix'.

Whitehead and Blaga are both philosophers, actually meta-theorizing *about* physics and, also, concerned with issues *beyond* physics. A. N. Whitehead, against both Hume and Newton, approached the 'relatedness of nature', a relatedness both knowable through senses and a meaningful philosophical (and not solely linguistic or artistic) quality of relatedness. Whitehead also approached the universe as 'a field of force – or, in other words, a field of incessant activity'³. Lucian Blaga, on the other hand, interpreted the antinomies, such as the puzzling particle-wave nature of light, as points of reference and illustration in the creation of a philosophy of knowledge where there are at least two types of knowledge not just Type I, which is actually scientific knowledge, but also Type II which is knowledge comprehending the unknown without explaining it ('minus' knowledge), and saw the created world of man as a matricial result of stylistic matrices bestowed and imposed upon the world by the Great Anonym.

Whitehead explains reality via patterns – there are processes, the 'conrescence' of processes of data transfer into new data, based on principled repetition of patterns ('eternal objects'). We should note that, in Whitehead, 'process philosophy' is the 'philosophy of organism' to fully understand what kind of relatedness he envisions.

The concept and reality of patterns is present and fruitful in philosophy, mathematics and physics, sustaining efficiently the interdisciplinary relevance of visions and conceptions. Even more, the relatedness of parts and patterns is in Whitehead that of an organism.

Our main focus of interest, immediacy, is best investigated as part of the existential, observable, current and concrete realm, before arriving at the secondary qualities and the abstractions. Thus, immediacy is the approachable range of sensed and interpreted comprehension (be it closer, or farther, or further still) where processes unfold and where we acknowledge them, before we interpret them and extract scientific, derived and abstract knowledge.

In Whitehead, immediacy is introduced in relation to the main concepts of 'process' and 'reality', which are the pillars of his philosophical system. The comprehension of reality in Whitehead starts from the 'actual occasion' (a 'granular' event), leading to sets of data and interpretational processes. Then, the integrative interpretation of data gives way to a bulk of interrelated processes ('prehensions') well-integrated into new units of new data. The integration of data

³ Alfred N. Whitehead, *Nature and Life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p. 27.

emphasizes patterns, which are repeated and, thus, confirmed (Whitehead calls them ‘eternal objects’).

The philosopher passed from a vision of continuous events and continuous passage of time, to a vision of nature consisting in distinct events. The distinctiveness of things and events represented a sort of atomicity of everything in accordance with the manner in which people perceive immediate experience. This implied the granularity and indeterminism of reality calling for a comprehensibility of quantum mechanics in his philosophy. The comprehension of immediacy opens the door for considerations of science, ontology and metaphysics.

In *Process and Reality*, we find a discussion of events, a notion employed by Whitehead along with the phrase ‘actual entities’ (and networks of events or the ‘nexus of actual occasions’), since ‘the mysterious quanta of energy have made their appearance’⁴ and on one occasion the philosopher announces that ‘the ultimate metaphysical truth is atomism’⁵. This way he arrives at a scientific ontology interpreting events in material connections and in connections of other orders and not only particles of matter. Presentational immediacy is complemented by symbolic reference so that we may understand these connections. Immediacy is a type of ‘pure’ presentational mode of causality, overcome by our access to a more symbolic understanding of the world. And, in our view, this is what led Whitehead to the idea of a human specificity in completing the schemes of thought. We shall gradually approach and clarify this important idea in what follows.

In Whitehead, we should talk of process philosophy⁶. This is a ‘process metaphysics’ or a metaphysical perspective on processual reality; it proves applicable to philosophy and philosophy of science, as well as to religion (Charles Hartshorne), discourse pragmatics, neuropsychology, quantum physics or astrophysics’ measurements⁷.

The role of philosophical language is clearly related to conceptualization of sensed, experienced and imagined things. Although language can be ‘elliptical’, it is adjusted by ‘a leap of the imagination to understand its meaning in its relevance to immediate experience’. Whitehead involves language and imagination along with the feelings and the senses in this ‘useful function of philosophy’ that ‘is to promote the most general systematization of civilized thought’: specialism and common sense interact as the special sciences are to modify common sense. Philosophy is at an important level defined by the criticism of common sense.

⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 78.

⁵ Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, David Ray Griffin & Donald W. Sherburne (eds.), New York, The Free Press, 1985, p. 35. Knowledge is completely a human enterprise: Imagination, feelings, mentality intuition are part of conceptual prehensions.

⁶ Johanna Seibt, "Process Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2023 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2023/entries/process-philosophy/>>.

⁷ See for instance, Michael Fortescue, *Pattern and Process: A Whiteheadian Perspective in Linguistics*, John Benjamin Publishing, 2001, mentioned also by Johanna Seibt, "Process Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2023 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2023/entries/process-philosophy/>>.

But philosophical enterprise does not stop at criticism; it is also creation. In other words, ‘philosophy is the welding of imagination and common sense’ into specialized results which both restrain and enlarge the imaginations of the specialists in certain aspects, always aiming to ‘conceive the infinite variety of specific instances which rest unrealized in the womb of nature.’ The germ of free imagination is the key to understanding science as creation. Whitehead’s *ontological principle* captures the idea that

‘if there be a relevance of what in the temporal world is unrealized, the relevance must express a fact of togetherness in the formal constitution of a non-temporal actuality. But by the principle of relativity there can only be one non-derivative actuality, unbounded by its prehensions of an actual world. Such a primordial superject of creativity achieves, in its unity of satisfaction, the complete conceptual valuation of all eternal objects. This is the ultimate, basic adjustment of the togetherness of eternal objects on which creative order depends. It is the conceptual adjustment of all appetites in the form of aversions and adversions. It constitutes the meaning of relevance. Its status as an actual efficient fact is recognized by terming it the ‘primordial nature of God.’⁸

One way to comprehend immediacy is via primary qualities. Reality itself is reached via primary⁹ and secondary qualities as Whitehead indicated in his view of the ‘bifurcation of nature into two systems of reality’¹⁰, although the secondary ones result from the primary qualities, that is, from the acknowledgement of immediacy, especially when recalling the leading principle in Whitehead’s masterpiece *Process and Reality*, namely, ‘the relatedness of nature’.

Here is a place for a brief comparison between Whitehead and Blaga. In my view, in confluence with the vision of Lucian Blaga, Whitehead considers that the poetic ‘red glow of the sunset should be as much part of nature’ (and a part of the wholeness of reality created by man), as are ‘the molecules and electric waves by which men of science would explain the phenomenon’¹¹. Therefore, the

⁸ Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, David Ray Griffin & Donald W. Sherburne (eds.), New York, The Free Press, 1985, p. 32.

⁹ The method of discerning *primary* and, hence, *secondary* qualities was also employed by other great thinkers such as Locke, Galileo, Descartes, but it should be understood in Whitehead as a confirmation of the importance of senses and interpretation for, as in Berkeley, all qualities ‘swim or sink together’ (A. N. Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986, pp. 43-4), so, a sharp and rigid distinction, or, hierarchy, is unsustainable. Whitehead shows: ‘Hume notices the comparative failure of the higher faculty of imagination in respect to mere sensa. He exaggerates this comparative failure into a dogma of absolute inhibition to imagine a novel sensum; whereas the evidence which he himself adduces, of the imagination of a new shade of colour to fill a gap in a graduated scale of shades, show that a contrast between already familiar/known shades can be imaginatively extended so as to generate the imagination of the missing shade. But Hume’s example also shows that imagination finds its easiest freedom among the higher categories of eternal objects.’ (*Op. cit.*, p. 115)

¹⁰ Alfred N. Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature*, Cambridge University Press, 1986, p. 30.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 29.

‘bifurcation of nature’ is to be considered *cum grano salis*, not as hierarchy where the primary is above the secondary; also, it is not to be canceled, but it is to be understood as a co-existence:

‘The primary qualities are the essential qualities of substances whose, in spatio-temporal relationships constitute nature. ... The occurrences of nature are in some way apprehended by minds ... But the mind in apprehending also experiences sensations which, properly speaking, are qualities of the mind alone. These sensations are projected by the mind so as to clothe appropriate bodies in external nature. Thus, the bodies are perceived as with qualities which in reality do not belong to them, qualities which in fact are purely the offspring of the mind. Thus, nature gets credit which should in truth be reserved for ourselves: the rose for its scent: the nightingale for his song: and the sun for his radiance. The poets are entirely mistaken. They should address their lyrics to themselves, and should turn them into odes of self-congratulation on the excellency of the human mind. Nature is a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless; merely the hurrying of material, endlessly, meaninglessly.’¹²

As a significantly human enterprise, philosophy forces nature into meaning via feelings, sense, imagination and rational thought. The primary qualities ‘flow’ into secondary qualities and into superior orders of meanings: poetic, revelatory, transcendent.

Now, about the dull scientific character of nature and reality: what we get from the quote above is not the celebration of scientific dullness, not the recommendation for it, but the idea that nature and reality are *rendered complete* due to poetry and meaning and both the dull scientific knowledge and the meaning (and color and scent etc.) associated with the world are the accomplishments contributed by man, the subjective knower. So, poetry and meaning (that is, thought, esp. philosophical thought) are as important as the scientific enterprise for the access and comprehension of nature and reality. Here lies a valuable and fascinating correlation with the philosophy of Lucian Blaga that we are going to develop and contextualize in the next section of this study and in the conclusions.

The scientific regularities and the meanings together allow for the unity of nature and for the unity of knowledge.’ The elucidation of meaning is one of the chief tasks of philosophy’, notes Whitehead. Engaging in the knowledge enterprise, the human being involves and, to a certain extent, forms and conforms, by the combined activity of thought, senses and experience the unity of the mind with

¹² Alfred N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, New York, The Free Press, 1967, p. 54. Whitehead considers philosophically the beautiful Hebrew poetic consideration that ‘all things flow’. He takes it as an intuitive generalization with philosophical value in the support of his idea about the ‘relatedness of nature’. Lucian Blaga would categorize it as a revelatory metaphor (opposed to that plasticising metaphor a mere poetic ornament) specific for the human capacity to ‘force’ the revelatory process to metaphorically shape the unknown into a highly creative type of knowledge which not necessarily diminishes what is unknown but provided a way to still approach it and use it for human purpose (called by Blaga knowledge type II, or, ‘Luciferian knowledge’).

matter, and the reality of nature with meaning(s) and ‘scientific abstractions’. The latter, as providers of certainty, are very successful, says Whitehead, until proven wrong: they seem to be rendering facts in a concrete fashion. However, mathematical and physical abstractions are not everything, as their abstractions are not the whole story, they are not (they do not form) the complete image of the reality of nature and of the relatedness of nature, too.

An epistemological interpretation of the relatedness of nature and the processual integration of data we can find in Lucian Blaga’s work titled *The Experiment and the Mathematical Spirit* (1969)¹³. There, the Romanian philosopher investigates the active intervention of man in the course of natural phenomena as a factor influencing the very definition of ‘experiment’. The experiment becomes a research method by a large-scale reduction of the ‘universal complicity assumed to be involved in the production of any phenomenon’. In Whitehead, this would be the ‘complicity’ between the primary and secondary qualities that ‘flow or sink together’. On the one hand, Blaga identifies the ancient Aristotelian-Goethean experiment, understood as an extension of ordinary empiricism, where the role of mathematics was considered a gateway to superior knowledge: the working conditions allowed the establishment of ‘statistical laws’. Blaga also indicated the Galilean-Newtonian type of experiment, which replaces ordinary empiricism, and which, combined with the mathematical spirit, becomes the dominant method in science, describing the science entering the phase of the ‘precision’ spirit. In Whitehead this is accomplished by ‘togetherness,’ by concatenation of data in more and more complex and complete schemes of (integrated) thought. And when Blaga considers that in the future we shall or we might be the witnesses of the alternation of precision phases with statistical phases, we are actually coming closer to Whitehead’s ‘becoming of continuity.’

In what concerns the integration of data into our schemes of thought, Whitehead emphasizes ‘the Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness’ (the error of placing the equality sign between the abstract and the concrete, or, to take the abstract for the concreteness deprived of unnecessary details, along with that, disregarding and misunderstanding the philosophical enterprise)¹⁴. Thus, Whitehead defines philosophy as the *crucial critique of abstractions*, the only thing able to reposition abstractions in their correct place and to complete the schemes of thought.

Only these completed schemes of thought are the path toward the unity of nature and the unity of knowledge in relation to nature. Hence, the importance of

¹³ Lucian Blaga, *Experimental și spiritul matematic [The Experiment and the Mathematical Spirit]*, 1st ed., Bucharest, Editura Științifică, 1969. (A rather necessary comment: Blaga added it later on in his life as annex to his *Trilogy of Knowledge* – in his philosophical system, eventually consisting in four trilogies of knowledge, culture, values and cosmology – but it got published posthumously). See also the recent German edition: Lucian Blaga, *Das Experiment und der mathematische Geist*, transl. by Rainer Schubert, Rumänisches Kulturinstitut, „Blickpunkt Rumänien” 3, Wien, New Academic Press, 2017.

¹⁴ See also the comments in Ronald Desmet and Andrew David Irvine, "Alfred North Whitehead", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2022 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), URL = <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2022/entries/whitehead/>>.

the ‘survival’ of poets and philosophers, their present-day relevance and the crucial noteworthiness of their work. Philosophy and poetry ‘complete’ the world, while philosophy surveys what is universal in the concrete facts investigated and it surveys science with the goal of their completion (the completion of the scientific schemes of thought)¹⁵. Philosophy is not a provider of thought-schemes at the margin of science, awaiting the correction of its schemes from science. First, it is a question of completion not of correction, and, second, it is philosophy that is called to complete scientific schemes of thought, while (artistic) feelings further complete these schemes¹⁶.

In *Process and Reality* (Part I), Whitehead addressed the completion of the metaphysical scheme of thought: his ontology and theory of perception became a theory of feelings. Thus, ‘process philosophy’ as the ontology of ‘the philosophy of organism,’ analyzes interrelated organism-like elementary processes. They are called ‘actual occasions’ or ‘actual entities’ and mark the starting point to conceive our lifeless and life contexts (and ‘occasions’ and ‘entities’ and ‘events’) in correlation: religion with science, matter along with mind, all in one scheme of thoughtful understanding. This is why philosophy fuses in its schemes of thought science and also religion. One may say that valid schemes of thought grow together as protein chains, and, with the same representational image, feelings grow together, in concrescence (as Whitehead shows in Part III of *Process and Reality*), in a ‘becoming of continuity’¹⁷ and not the other way around, ‘as we may understand it, according to their valuation and harmony’.

Following the concept of immediacy in Whitehead we should acknowledge its connection to the manner in which the philosopher conceives God: as primordial entity and as judgment saving the world while passing it ‘into the immediacy of his own life’¹⁸. The consequent nature of God is his judgment on the world and thus, we may notice, his judgment provides the unity of nature. He saves the world as it passes into the immediacy of his own life. It is the judgment of a tenderness, says Whitehead, devoted to his conception of feeling, with the role of completing the schemes of thought and rendering the world whole. His judgment is embracing everything, loses nothing that can be saved and makes the world everlasting in God¹⁹.

In Whitehead, religion contributes as well to immediate experience, providing a specific understanding of access to the world, while admitting modifications from the complete circle of our knowledge and ‘waiting to be

¹⁵ Alfred N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, New York, The Free Press, 1967, p. 87.

¹⁶ Minute realities around us indicate a very deep need for the completion of the schemes of thought via sensitivity and feeling. I often wondered how come that so many MDs are poets and why so many scientists felt the need to write as well in a more literary way. Anyway, for the purpose of this study, both Whitehead and Blaga, understood in a very positive way the role of poetry. For Blaga, human access to ‘revealing metaphors’ is the key to human ability to access the metaphysical realm.

¹⁷ A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, New York, The Free Press, 1985, p. 35.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 345.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 346-347.

realized'. There is a paradoxical situation of religion in this vision: 'Religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind, and within, the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real, and yet waiting to be realized; something which is a remote possibility, and yet the greatest of present facts; something that gives meaning to all that passes, and yet eludes all apprehension; something whose possession is the final good, and yet is beyond all reach; something which is the ultimate ideal, and the hopeless quest'.²⁰

IMMEDIACY IS NOT OUR HOME

In Blaga, immediacy is denoted by this noun²¹ interpreted to mean the proximity of environment and possibilities, not thinking very far, living in a 'survival and security' paradigm. Immediacy in Blaga is not solely the perception of the ontological realm, as in Whitehead, but it is a descriptive label for the ontological realm seen critically on the level of the lenses of a living creature endowed with a destiny beyond biology. Lucian Blaga shows:

'Existence within mystery and revelation is an exclusively human mode. (...) Existence within the immediate and for safety is of course a mode which the consciousness of no animal can surpass (...) Man is entrapped in his creative destiny in a marvellous way; for this destiny man is capable of casting off – even at the risk of self-destruction – the advantages of equilibrium and the joys of safety.'²²

From the perspective of any living creature, existence is defined by the preoccupations of survival and security, limited to this perspective and comprehended solely from this angle. Having said that, in Blaga, the human being dwells in two worlds and between worlds, too, for immediacy is merely a point of departure for the human being, as man lives 'for revelation and in the horizon of mystery'.

In Blaga, as in Whitehead, man has a metaphysical dimension, which is true, but it is maybe important to say that in the Romanian philosopher's vision the human metaphysical aspiration is crucial and has epistemological, cultural and anthropological implications.

²⁰ Alfred N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, New York, The Free Press, 1967, pp. 191–2.

²¹ We have used in English also 'the immediate' for immediacy as translation solution only to further emphasize the grammatical category of noun and the fact that we are talking about something deprived of mediation, the nearby proximity to 'the natural'.

²² Lucian Blaga, 'The Genesis of Metaphor and the Meaning of Culture' [philosophical extract translated by Anda Teodorescu], in Angela Botez, R. T. Allen, Henrieta Anișoara Șerban (eds.), *Lucian Blaga: Selected Philosophical Extracts*, with a Foreword by Calvin O. Schrag, Delaware, Vernon Press, Vernon Series in Philosophy, 2018, pp. 100.

‘It is therefore man alone that has a creative destiny which modifies and even changes biological laws. (...) before he could become ‘Man’, man suffered not only a *mutation of biological structures* but also an ontological mutation. In an *inexplicable* biological outburst, a *new* mode of existence, *unique* in the universe, declared itself in man: existence within the scope of mystery and for revelation. This mode make man different from the rest of the animal world. From the metaphysical point of view, one more thing ought to be added: man ‘creates’ in order to reveal a mystery: his creative act goes beyond the immediate [immediacy] but is limited by ‘transcendental brakes’’.²³

Man’s ontology advances into metaphysics. One should notice that the theme of man representing a cultural ontological mutation unique in the universe has both metaphysical, epistemological and cultural implications. Blaga shows which are the ‘qualitative singularity’ characteristics of man:

„1. Man does not exclusively exist through the immediate [immediacy] and for safety; but within the scope of mystery and for revelation too; 2. Man is endowed with a culture-creating destiny (culture is metaphorical and stylistic); 3. Man is endowed not only with cognitive categories as is the animal but with abyssal categories as well; 4. Man has the possibility of not only ‘manufacturing’; but also of ‘creating’ a civilisation variable in stylistic and historical terms.’²⁴

Let us highlight several related views. First, this being is singular, unique and radically different from animals, because the human being does not live for immediacy (survival needs, immediate gain and security), but in the horizon of mystery, and for revelation; it has a creative, cultural destiny (not just cultural episodes, or moments). Relatedly, the human being has structurally access to abyssal categories alongside the cognitive ones. The abyssal categories sustain the formation and efficacy of stylistic matrixes providing style for human endeavors. This means that man’s creations, even those of knowledge, are never just intellectual and rational endeavors as in Kant, or Hegel, but much closer to Whitehead, man creates complete works of content and style (or, as Whitehead said, complete schemes of thought). All in all, man creates civilization not only as a sum of achievements, let's say, as crafts, but as totalities: as stylistic-intellectual-scientific-philosophical-historical ‘monuments’.

An idea of particular impact that emerges from the metaphysics of culture in Lucian Blaga: in his philosophical system a special accent is placed on the cultural drive of man, which is the foundation of the epistemological calling and part of the human’s irresistible enticement toward revealing mysteries. All derives from an ontological specificity: *of being in the horizon of mystery*. Being in the horizon of mystery is the ‘home’ of man. Departing from immediacy, man is seduced by mystery, majestic and immense, which man approaches via knowledge and

²³ *Ibidem*, p. 101.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 102. See also Blaga’s work, titled *The Historical Being*.

creation, without diminishing it and, quite often, producing, paradoxically, the increase of mystery.

Much before the emergence of the discussion around more recent topics of ‘subject’, ‘subjectivity’ and of the ‘last man’, Lucian Blaga defines man as a *creative subject* whose subjectivity generates science, culture (including philosophy and art) and history as the apogee of biological evolution and in this sense, as last man:

‘(...) biological evolution was *completed* in man. No new and higher biological type can come out of man. Man is an end: in him the potentialities of biological mutations have been extinguished because they were completely realized and because he suffered a decisive *ontological mutation* which left behind all other species.’²⁵

Human specificity is forged in relation to reaction to immediacy, to a sort of emancipation from immediacy which is as much ontological as it is metaphysical. Man is a symptom of fascination with the horizon of metaphysics (for, the ‘immediate exists for man only as a passage. As a symptom of something else, as a signal of a ‘beyond’’).²⁶ The ‘existence in the world’, means to acknowledge immediacy in order to overcome it and here there is a relevant connection to the idea of ‘immediacy’ in Whitehead, which is not to be approached exclusively in a positivistic scientific manner by man’s comprehensive knowledge of the world but also with the sensitive and artistic capacities of man which complete the schemes of thought and include meaning into the process of comprehension, thus, *making* the world real.

With this remark, we should comment on Blaga’s approach of ‘style’ analyzed as a difficult problem of knowledge and as a phenomenon and act of consciousness (quite similar to J. Lacan, too) and not just as ‘taste’ or ‘will to style’:

‘A work of art, a social institution, a moral precept, a mathematical idea are facts which, in the full sense of the word, are moments in the order of a conscious intentionality as conceived by phenomenologists and by morphologists of culture. To this Blaga adds an absolutely original element, an existential, ‘abyssal’, stylistic determination of the human manifestations. He founded ‘abyssal noology’ as the discipline interested in the structures of the ‘unconscious mind’.’²⁷

Often, creation is an expression of a horizon of unconscious realms, ancestral, abyssal and spiritual. If we are to connect the Romanian folk song *Doina*

²⁵ *Ibidem*, in the fragment transl. by Georgeta Bolomey, p. 103.

²⁶ See also Henrieta Șerban, *About ‘vision’ and ‘horizon’ in philosophy*. A Philosophical Letter, based on the philosophy of Lucian Blaga, https://www.academia.edu/50833725/About_vision_and_horizon_in_philosophy.

²⁷ Cf. Angela Botez et al, *op. cit.*, editorial introductory comment to the excerpt ‘The Phenomenon of Style and Methodology’ part of *Horizon and Style* (1935), p. 105.

to the Romanian word *plai*²⁸ and the Russian songs with the steppe this philosophy of space takes things a bit further, in the direction of the investigation of the horizons of the unconscious.

‘The spatial horizon of the unconscious is endowed with emotional accents which the actual landscape does not possess. It is easy to identify such an emotionally coloured horizon in *doina*: it expresses the melancholy, neither too heavy, nor too light, of a heart which climbs and descends upon an indefinitely undulating plain, always moving on, again and again; or the yearning of a heart which wishes to cross the hill as an obstacle or fate, and which always has to pass over hill after hill; or the fondness of a heart which wanders under the sign of destiny which has ups and downs, rises and plunges of level, rhythmically repeated, monotonous and without end. With this spatial horizon our spirit feels itself organically and inseparably united, with this spatial matrix, indefinitely undulating, endowed with certain accents, which make it the structure of a certain destiny.’²⁹

Thus³⁰, there is a ‘psychology of the unconscious’ involved with the mysteries of human creation: “we admit the existence of an ‘unconscious mind’³¹ alongside the ‘unconscious soul’.” However, in Blaga, the revelation of mysteries through creation(s), alike the revelation of mysteries through knowledge, is also subject to transcendental censorship. Man’s unceasing assault to mysteries alarms the ‘Great Anonym’, the metaphysical center. The consequence is the transcendental censorship, which eventually consists in the emission of the ‘divine differentials’ meant to keep man at the gates, as far away as possible from this center, via the stylistic matrixes which order and also limit human creation.

Man’s humanity as ‘substance’, or as a defining finalist characteristic and orientation, cannot be dissociated from his culture and creativity, from his historicity (nor from a dual paradisiacal and Luciferic epistemological horizon, as shown in the first Trilogy, *The Trilogy of Knowledge*). Man does not live on biological coordinates, nor exclusively on symbolic coordinates. Unlike Ernst Cassirer, Lucian Blaga does not consider that man creates his cultural environment and lives *in* culture, but something more: man’s home is the horizon of the mystery from where he leaves and where he returns, through biological, cultural, social, historical passages.

This philosophical vision, so original and bold, and, so little amenable to easy tests and verifications, may be dismissed as an unfounded idealization of the human race. So be it? Let’s go back to the obviously lucid line of argument that Lucian Blaga proposes, who understands the immediate objection, that not all

²⁸ The proposed translation for this Romanian word, which became a philosophical and emotional term in Blaga’s works is ‘upland’, which sometimes could be a space with a possible undulatory shape. *Ibidem*, p. 140. But maybe a ‘hillock landscape’ would have been more suggestive.

²⁹ Angela Botez et al, *op. cit.*, p. 135. Fragment from *The Mioritic Space* (1936) translated by Anda Teodorescu.

³⁰ See the nuanced confluences with the insights of Lacan and Freud.

³¹ *Noos, nous* central for a new discipline called by L. Blaga ‘abyssal noology’.

people are creators of culture, but to which he answers that virtually, all people ‘participate in culture’, after ‘humanity’, ‘active or *receptacular* [our emphasis]’. Culture is not a simple mitigation of animality, but a definitive exit from animality and a reaction against animality and a linear arid destiny for safety. Also, people do not just create, but sometimes create at the cost of their existence, or, make history in the most cruel and destructive way.

CONCLUSIONS

Whitehead provides a scientific ontology, while Blaga analyses ontology with pronounced epistemological, cultural, historical and anthropological aspects and with multiple references to the contemporary facts, as acknowledged in the first part of the 20th century. Hence, it would be incorrect to embrace the idea that Blaga proposed a mystical philosophy. The acknowledgement of the scientific tenets of his times are evocated often in his epistemology (in Luciferic knowledge, or knowledge type II, leading to antinomies increasing exemplified through the dual particle-wave nature of light), in his study of the scientific spirit, or of the mathematical experiment and spirit, or, of the philosophical consideration of anthropology with recourse to updated biological knowledge.

Whitehead and Blaga are both philosophers meta-theorizing *about* physics and, also, concerned with issues *beyond* physics, that is, the perceptible, the analysable, the testable, or, the ‘immediate’. Both are interested in scientific facts and in a sort of philosophical attempt and approach of, let’s call it, ‘emancipation from immediacy’. Both thinkers see a main role of philosophy in the criticism of the common sense, Whitehead in *Process and Reality*, and Blaga, in *On the Philosophical Consciousness* [*Despre conștiința filosofică*, 1947]³².

Whitehead approached the universe as ‘a field of force – or, in other words, a field of incessant activity’, while Blaga proposed a cosmology of incessant activity of human assault of mystery and mystery increase overlapping the physical aspects to be investigated: ‘sending flamed arrows into the metaphysical darkness’. Lucian Blaga, for instance, interpreted the antinomies, such as the paradoxical particle-wave nature of light, as points of reference and illustration in the creation of a philosophy of knowledge.

Both metaphysics accepted a perspective, or, an interpretation of the idea that God creates the World as well as the World creates God. In our view, the unmoved mover image of God remains as a ‘trace’ in the idea of permanent reference for the World. This is comparable with the perspective found in the metaphysics of Lucian Blaga, where the metaphysical centre, the Great Anonym, ‘pushes’ backwards the human being, via limitative ‘divine differentials’ occasioning the limiting stylistic matrices for the creative and intrusive ontological and metaphysical drive of man.

³² On an informative key, this work was relatively recently translated into German language: Lucian Blaga, *Über das philosophische Bewusstsein / Despre conștiința filosofică*, traducere de Rainer Schubert, Berlin, Frank & Timme, 2016.

In Whitehead’s metaphysics there is a concept of ‘immediacy’ interpretable in relation to the concept of ‘the immediate’ found in Lucian Blaga’s metaphysics. Immediacy stands in opposition to the wholeness of existence and the complexity of reality in both thinkers. In Whitehead, immediate experience is merely a facet of the constructed series of events and processes fundamental for existence and reality and for connecting our objective, scientific and logical descriptions of the world and the everyday world of subjective experience. In Blaga, the immediate is the label for the limited (animal-like) existence deprived of the metaphysical dimension. In Blaga, man is defined by the metaphysical dimension and thus, in terms closer to Whitehead’s view, always engaged in a crusade to comprehend both the ‘physical multiplicity’ (the World) and ‘the infinite ground of all mentality’ (God), which is consonant with Blaga’s concept of man’s defining situation as a situation within the scope of mystery and for revelation.

However, Whitehead conceived as well a *non-temporal actuality, belonging to God*: this is a type of immediacy we do not find in Blaga unless we want to relatively force the interpretation of the stylistic matrixes in this direction.³³ To the main axis of philosophical vision in Whitehead, namely knowledge-civilization–patterns–God-manifest we have a corresponding main axis of philosophical vision in Blaga: knowledge-civilization-history-style-the-Great-Anonym (and this Great Anonym, a metaphysical center or God is manifest as paradoxical limitative instance and enabling instance of human creation via styles and matrixes of style).

Eventually, both thinkers find an important role of the human imprint in knowledge (the feelings, the imaginative comprehension of the unknown and the artistic apprehension of the world). In Whitehead, poetry and meaning are called to complete (with color, sound and scent) the schemes of thought, while in Blaga they are indicators of the ‘stylistic matrixes’ and of the spatial horizon of the unconscious is endowed with emotional creative accents specific for a particular human spirituality and creativity, a glorious particularity.

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³³ The metaphysical center, the Great Anonym, induced into ontology and, therefore, imposed upon man’s existence the stylistic matrixes, consequence of divine differentials (of which the mathematical ones are but a case amongst many), in order to defensively react to the creative (and threatening) assault of man into the mysterious metaphysical realm.

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