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Abstract: A more suitable philosophical position to counter the claims of scientific materialism re the nature of physical reality can possibly be found in combining the metaphysics of A.N. Whitehead and C.S. Peirce. Peirce postulated a habit-forming tendency or inbuilt potentiality of the cosmic process as a whole to move over time toward ever greater organization and more complex structure. But he is vague on how “the law of the mind” applies to nature below the level of human self-awareness. Whitehead's notion of actual entities (momentary self-constituting subjects of experience) as the “final real things of which the world is made up” logically allows for some primitive form of subjectivity with the requisite potentiality for habit-formation at all levels of existence and activity within nature. In addition, Whitehead's notion of structured societies made up of subsocieties with a “regnant” subsociety seems philosophically to justify the new emphasis on bottom-up rather than top-down causation in the emergence of more complex levels of existence and activity within the life-sciences.
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