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# An Examination and Exposition of Process- Thought and Extrapolation of its Themes for Theological Use

Christian Just

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, doctorjust@gmail.com

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AN EXAMINATION AND EXPOSITION OF PROCESS-THOUGHT  
AND  
EXTRAPOLATION OF ITS THEMES FOR THEOLOGICAL USE

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A Thesis Presented to the Faculty  
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,  
Department of Systematic Theology  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Divinity

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by

Christian Frederic Just

May 1973

Erwin Gruber

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research paper



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of Christianity, theologians have sought to express the doctrines of the faith in cogent and unassailable terms. In so doing, they have latched on to any number of philosophical systems that appear to be conducive to such transmission. It has been argued that such uses of philosophy by theology are both theologically dangerous and philosophically impoverished. That is a difficult argument to uphold, although, historically, it might find justifying examples. In any event, it seems impossible for humans to couch their religious thoughts in anything but human modes of thought, which is the task of philosophy.

#### The Purpose of the Study

It is the expressed purpose of this study to investigate the possibilities for theological use of process philosophy. Within that scope and purpose, certain objects had to be met. First, it was necessary to understand as fully as possible the philosophical system itself. Second, certain judgements had to be made as to the availability of that system for theological and religious purposes. Finally, it was necessary to expand on the philosophical scheme to include certain theological notions that are not inherent in the system.

Process philosophy, and any theologies that develop from it, holds a particular fascination for this writer. First, it is truly a twentieth-century philosophy. This, in itself, does not make it a better philoso-

phy than those which preceded it. It does, however, allow for certain advantages; because of its historical position, it has the advantage of being able to evaluate and criticize previous philosophies and, hopefully, employ what is good in them and avoid what is bad. Second, process philosophy is a whole new kind of philosophical undertaking for this period. The current philosophical scene has a great disregard, if not disdain, for metaphysics. Process is one of the few newly-developed philosophies for which metaphysics is a sympathetic concern. Third, process seems to hold open some doors that are viable options for theological assertions. There are places at which process and 'traditional' theology must diverge; but there are several areas that would allow even conservative theologians the opportunity to express the faith in terms that are not only cogent to contemporary man, but even acceptable to him.

Because of the nature of this paper, and the time allocated for it, it is impossible to do full justice to the philosophical scheme, much less to any theological insights that might be gleaned from it. Within the past few years, the influx of process theologians has become overwhelming. It was impossible, therefore, to touch all bases and evaluate every critique of process and every development upon it. Consequently, the following has been the guiding principle for investigation. I have tried, wherever possible, to read and digest the writings of whom I consider to be the two major figures in the development of process-thought: Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. Whitehead's writings contain such technical vocabulary that it is nearly prohibitive, and I had to resort to secondary sources to get a hold on his thought. However, I

have tried, within my limitations, to use secondary sources only where the primary sources of Whitehead were completely mystifying, or unavailable. Whitehead's Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Natural Knowledge and his The Principle of Relativity were not available; limited access to his Modes of Thought was available. The paucity of references to and insights from these works might be noticeable. Hartshorne's profuse output precluded investigation of his many articles in periodicals and journals, although a few were selected solely on the basis of their titles, as they appeared to apply to some particular aspect of this study. Another notable lack was his important work, Reality as Social Process, which was not available. I would hope that its lack will not prove a serious defect.

Having investigated the many writings of these influential men, I set to read as many theologians, who based their work on these two men's thought, as was possible in the allotted time. Several interesting observations come from those readings. It was noted that many of them seem to have merely reiterated Whitehead's theory of God, in a somewhat Christian context. I choose to call the Christianity of such endeavors "Christicism", which I define as an attitude that whatever sounds like it might be religious, or could possibly be altered to become so, is available and necessary for Christian teaching and assertion. Little has been done in these works in the areas of christology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, ethics, or eschatology, which qualifies their 'Christian' aspect heavily.

The purpose of this paper, then, in its entirety, is to outline, as cogently as possible, the various options that process-thought

offers for Christian thinking. There is an inherent danger in this enterprise, a danger which is two-fold. There are some points at which this philosophy and traditional Christian theology are irreconcilable. Those have been noted where they have been noticed. But the danger is that they will not be noticed. Second, it is my hope that where I have extended beyond any previous applications of process-thought to points of doctrine I have done so well and accurately.

In writing the issues of theological concern, some assumptions have been operative. The basic options that have been employed stem from a Lutheran perspective on the Scriptures and the nature of the theological task. This work, therefore, might be judged from the standpoint of how well the theological options have been considered within that framework. Further, in using this perspective, the author has tried to be sympathetic to process-thought and work, or rework, it to conform to that perspective. The relationship between revealed and natural theology has been taken with utmost seriousness. The author fully realizes that certain doctrines are discoverable only from the realm of revealed theology and can never be fully integrated into a natural theological scheme. It does seem possible, however, to suggest some ways that such a natural theology can express those doctrines, and I have tried to show that.

#### The Summary of the Paper

The next chapter (II) deals with a hodgepodge of issues that were considered necessary but limited enough to refrain from including as a separate chapter. These include a summary of both Hartshorne's and

Whitehead's evaluation and use of philosophers that preceded them. An evaluation of the entire metaphysical enterprise is also included here, with the intent of giving another tool for evaluating process material. Included, too, is a very brief history of process theological thought in this century, which sketches major developments and has no intent of being anywhere near inclusive or comprehensive. Finally, because both Hartshorne and Whitehead are the giant figures in this development, short biographical sketches have been included.

Chapter III has a more intense purpose. This chapter is an exposition of the systems of both Whitehead and Hartshorne. No truly logical order was established for this exposition; the organizing principle was some of the chief technical words of Whitehead and the major concerns of Hartshorne. Again, this is an exposition, not an interpretation or commentary; its intent is to furnish the basics of these men's thoughts so that we might better be able to use them in theologizing.

Chapter IV is the first point at which this paper intends to become critical. In this chapter we shall examine some significant theological doctrines in the light of process-thought. The doctrines to be considered are the notion of God, a plausible Christology, a process anthropology, a possible pneumatology, the issues involved in eschatology, some notion and concept of the Church, and an exploration of process ethics. In each case, where Whitehead and Hartshorne have something definite to say, that is, where they actually addressed themselves to the issue in their writings, we shall present that two-fold approach. In those instances where they have had little to say, that is, they have mentioned or only discussed the issue only briefly, we shall tend to

amalgamate the two positions. Where we have extended the systems to areas untouched by their thought directly, we shall endeavor to show how we can support our contentions with references to both.

#### Some Notations

Throughout the text of this study, the major works of the two proponents here considered are abbreviated. The standard abbreviations used for each man are:

Whitehead:	AI	Adventures of Ideas
	PR	Process and Reality
	SMW	Science and the Modern World
	CN	The Concept of Nature
	Sym	Symbolism: It Meaning and Effects
	RM	Religion in the Making
	MT	Modes of Thought
Hartshorne:	BH	Beyond Humanism
	LP	The Logic of Perfection
	DR	The Divine Relativity
	AD	Anselm's Discovery
	MVG	Man's Vision of God
	NT	A Natural Theology for our Time
	CSP	Creative Synthesis and Philosophical Method

These abbreviations are employed simply for the sake of space. Full bibliographical information on these books will be included in the bibliography for the entire study.

## CHAPTER II

### PROCESS-THINKERS AND THEIR PREDECESSORS

To understand any development in philosophical thought, it is necessary to understand the thought-modes that preceded it. This is especially true of a systematic metaphysics, since it must borrow so extensively from previous schemes both in language and concepts. It is interesting, but hardly profitable, to trace these conceptual strands back to the earliest musings of the pre-Socratic Greeks. It is much more productive to look in detail at those philosophies which are more contemporary with this system under investigation. It is also very helpful to examine in what way any system devotes its attention to the philosophical giants of the modern era- Kant, Hume, and Descartes -and how they are employed. It is of extreme importance to note to what extent previous philosophies have positively or negatively affected the current material.

It is the purpose of this chapter to devote itself to a cursory examination of those thought-schemes which preceded process-thought. Observations will be made concerning the entire metaphysical enterprise,<sup>1</sup> a very small space is reserved for 'ancient' history, while the major portion will be devoted to those areas and men of the early modern and modern period who most concretely influenced process-thought. The chap-

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<sup>1</sup>This section deals primarily with the configurations of metaphysical thought. A more detailed discussion of the relationship between this enterprise and theology is to be found in Appendix A.

ter will include a brief history of the development of process theology in the twentieth century. Finally, the chapter will contain very brief biographical sketches of the two major proponents of process-thought: Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne.

### Principle Systems

Stephen Pepper has outlined four basic world systems in the history of philosophy- formism, mechanism, contextualism and organicism.<sup>2</sup> These systems, according to Pepper, are better known by other names in the history of thought.

Formism is often called "realism" or "Platonic idealism." It is associated with Plato, Aristotle, the scholastics, neoscholastics, neorealists, modern Cambridge realists. Mechanism is often called "naturalism" or "materialism" and, by some, "realism." It is associated with Democritus, Lucretius, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Reichenbach. Contextualism is commonly called "pragmatism." It is associated with Peirce, James, Bergson, Dewey, Mead. There may be a trace of it in the Greek, Protagoras. Organicism is commonly called "absolute (or objective) idealism." It is associated with Schelling, Hegel, Green, Bradley, Bosanquet, Royce.<sup>3</sup>

Such hypotheses have basic inadequacies, notes Pepper, the most general statement of which would be that formism and contextualism lack precision, whereas mechanism and organicism lack scope.<sup>4</sup> It would be helpful for this study to investigate these four options and determine into which categories process-thought fits. It should be noted that we are assuming that process-thought is an eclectic system, although it will demonstrate characteristics of one of these options with greater force

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<sup>2</sup>World Hypotheses (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1942).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 143-6.

than the other three.

Formism is based on the root metaphor<sup>5</sup> or similarity.<sup>6</sup> In essence, what the hypothesis argues is that the particulars of an individual article or entity are such that we note certain basic agreements in characters. That is to say, within certain limitations of gradations, it is commonly recognized that, for example, blue is blue (whether or not we call it navy, indigo, turquoise, etc.) and that this would suggest that each particular entity that displays a blue sensation participates with all other "blue" entities- that is, it has the common character "blueness". This, formism suggests, indicates that the sensate realization of blue in a particular individual is merely a subjective realization within that individual of an objective reality, namely "blueness". The

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 84-114. The root metaphor method is outlined by Pepper thus:

A man desiring to understand the world looks about for a clue to its comprehension. He pitches upon some area of common-sense fact and tries if he cannot understand other areas in terms of this one. This original idea becomes his basic analogy or root metaphor. He describes as best he can the characteristics of this area, or, if you will, discriminates its structure. A list of its structural characteristics becomes his basic concepts of explanation and description. We call them a set of categories. In terms of these categories he proceeds to study all other areas of fact whether uncriticized or previously criticized. He undertakes to interpret all facts in terms of these categories. As a result of the impact of these other facts upon his categories, he may qualify and readjust the categories, so that a set of categories commonly changes and develops. Since the basic analogy or root metaphor normally (and probably at least in part necessarily) arises out of common sense, a great deal of development and refinement of a set of categories is required if they are to prove adequate for a hypothesis of unlimited scope. Some root metaphors prove more fertile than others, have greater powers of expansion and of adjustment. These survive in comparison with the others and generate the relatively adequate world theories. (pp. 91-91)

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 151 ff.

character (ideal), "blueness," is something other than the conglomerate of all blue articles. "Blueness" is, in effect, a reality beyond those particulars.

By extension, therefore, formism would argue that when a significant number of particulars participate in a character, that character must be seen as an external reality to each particular. Accordingly, there are several basic principles of existence- "blueness," "fatness," "chairness," "human-ness" -which are the bases for perceived reality. Pepper notes that formism lacks precision,<sup>7</sup> the point at which, I contend, is precisely at the issue of how these multiple principles interrelate to form "blue chairs" or "fat men." Is there a basic principle? It would appear not.

"The root metaphor of mechanism is a machine."<sup>8</sup> That said, it is necessary to show how the analogy works. Two kinds of mechanism are discernible in the history of systematic philosophy- discrete and consolidated. Mechanism postulates primary categories (field of location, primary qualities, and primary laws) and secondary categories (secondary qualities, a principle connecting the two categories, and secondary laws).<sup>9</sup> Discrete mechanism assumes "that many of the structured features of nature are loosely, or . . . externally related."<sup>10</sup> It works primarily with particles of reality in the spatiotemporal arena. Consolidated

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<sup>7</sup>Supra, p.8, note 4

<sup>8</sup>Pepper, p.186.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 191-4.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

mechanism is more concerned "to describe to us the unique structure of the spatiotemporal whole."<sup>11</sup>

In short, what these two forms of mechanism hope to show is the total working of the machine (consolidated) and the workings of its cogs (dicrete). Its lack of scope is a serious problem. In dealing with primary categories, it tends to overlook the secondary categories. It is precise in detailing interrelationships, but narrow in what constitutes a property of primary concern. Is creativity, for example, a viable option for a primary category? It would appear not, since this is inexplicable in terms of fields of location or primary laws. This lack of scope seriously hinders mechanism from describing the fullness of reality.

Contextualism is a bit more difficult to describe briefly because it, like organicism, is a synthetic rather than analytical system.<sup>12</sup> The root metaphor of contextualism is the historical event.<sup>13</sup> "By historical event, however, the contextualist does not mean primarily a past event, one that is, so to speak, dead and has to be exhumed. He means means the event alive in its present."<sup>14</sup> The basic categories of contextualism are change and novelty which are exhibited in the categor-

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 212.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 142. A synthetic theory is one which deals primarily with contexts and complexes and views analysis as derivative. An analytical theory is one which deals with the nature of elements and facts, while regarding complexes as derivative.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 232.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

ies of quality and texture. By quality and texture, the contextualist means "the spread of an event, or its so-called specious present, its change, and its degrees of fusion. . . the strands of the texture, its context, and its references."<sup>15</sup> The spread of an event is the duration over which it exhibits itself. For example, I might argue that I am writing this passage in one moment. But the fact is that there is no single moment for the completion of this complex activity. A matter of seconds, at least, is needed. But a sentence can be written over a long period of time; I write a part of it, go get a drink of water, write a few more words, light my pipe, and then finish it. The writing of the sentence can be seen as one event interrupted by several others, the spread of which interruptions often determine the finished product of this sentence. This clues us as to what change is. When I sat down to write, I had no intention of engaging in all those other activities, but I altered significantly that intention. And as that intention was altered so was the activity of the writing. But as another (or even myself at a later time) looks at at the sentence, he cannot discern that this was the product of such a multiplicity of events. This is what is known as fusion.

The texture of the event has strands. The strands of the event of writing the sentence above are the writings of the various phrases of it as well as the activities that accompanied and interrupted the writing. These interruptions could also be seen as the context of the writing. The strands are but details of the context, a delineation of it. The

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 236.

context, in this case, was my study; but it might well have been a library, the living room with the television blaring, a bus station, etc. The context seeks to describe the locale and other considerations that affect the change and bring it about. The references are references to these strands and context. Reference might be linear (writing, drinking, pipe-lighting in that succession), convergent (that which sees that the activities aforementioned are not similar, but when undertaken to interact, they have a similarity in that event), or instrumental (writing the sentence was the primary activity, the other events merely contributed to it).<sup>16</sup>

With such description, the contextualist is thus concerned with synthesizing all events of history into such a whole. He analyzes the constituent elements that make up the "one" event, but in so analyzing, his goal is to show the configuration of the event and the why of its change. He is synthesizing the event from these components. In so doing, the contextualist gives away considerable precision because, in so combining the events, he must relegate certain components to a secondary position, a practice which could be dangerous in the light of reexamination.

Organicism shares much in common with contextualism, but

organicism has to deal mainly with historical processes even while it consistently explains time away, whereas contextualism has to admit integrative surrounding and extending through these structures endanger its categories. Organicism takes time lightly or disparagingly; contextualism takes it seriously.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 237-263.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 280-1.

"The organicist believes that every actual event in the world is a more or less concealed organic process."<sup>18</sup> The task, therefore, is to discern what that process is. In accomplishing this task, the organicist uses various categories.

These are: (1) fragments of experience which appear with (2) nex-uses or connections or implications, which spontaneously lead as a result of the aggregation of (3) contradictions, gaps, oppositions, or counteractions to resolution in (4) an organic whole, which is found to have been (5) implicit in the fragments, and to (6) transcend the previous contradictions by means of a coherent totality, which (7) economizes, saves, preserves all the original fragments of experience without any loss.<sup>19</sup>

Point (4) above is the pivotal point in that around it the entire system hangs and has its meaning. If there is not a whole, then there are unresolved contradictions in the reality of things and the fragments of experience are capable of being lost.

#### The Hypothesis of Process-thought

The cursory examination above of the four major world systems leads us to ask into which category process-thought rightly belongs. It should be noted that Whitehead refers to his system as "organism"<sup>20</sup> which would suggest that process should rightly be called organicism. However, Whitehead uses the categories of other systems so extensively, and borrows from the men associated with those systems so frequently, that such an evaluation ought to wait for a delineation of these uses. Hartshorne

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 283.

<sup>20</sup> PR, passim.

calls his system "neoclassical metaphysics"<sup>21</sup> and his borrowing from such men as Bergson and Peirce would suggest that he would fit into the school of the contextualists. If both these men are to be considered as process philosophers, it is necessary to find a category into which they both can fit.

Pepper notes contextualism and organicism share much in common. He says "it is tempting to regard these two theories as species of the same theory, one being dispersive and the other integrative."<sup>22</sup> This may give us our handle, but we cannot use the terms that Pepper has employed; a new name is necessary. In using a new name I recognize that I am engaging in eclecticism, which Pepper finds untenable.<sup>23</sup> The name I should like to use is process-thought,<sup>24</sup> chosen because it meets the criterion of describing the organicism of Whitehead and because it fits the logical concerns of Hartshorne.

Process-thought, hereafter to be shortened to process, is an eclectic enterprise. It uses organicism quite extensively; one might even argue that this is the basis of the system. It is heavily engaged with contextualism. But it also borrows from formism and mechanism. From formism one can see the attention given to classes in logical argumentation concerning perfection; the notion of deity in process also seems

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<sup>21</sup>Hartshorne, passim. Especially, LP, passim.

<sup>22</sup>Pepper, p. 280.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 104 ff.

<sup>24</sup>This name, "Process-thought" is from Norman Pittenger, Process-thought and the Christian Faith (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968).

to carry a formistic attitude,<sup>25</sup> From mechanism, process has taken the concern with a total description of the spatiotemporal whole. It would now be most helpful to see in what way these borrowings have been made and how they affect the system.

#### Precedent Philosophies

Because of the vast amount of material with which both Whitehead and Hartshorne work, it would be outside of the limits of this paper to give a detailed analysis of the way in which they use other schemes in developing their own. We shall content ourselves with looking at the major influences that these two have themselves indicated.

Whitehead expresses a great deal of dependence of seventeenth-century thought.<sup>26</sup> He devotes approximately forty pages to Locke, Hume, Descartes, and Kant in Process and Reality, the summary of which would appear to be this. From Hume, Whitehead has excerpted the notion of repetition, and the way in which it is affected by feeling. From Locke, Whitehead has taken the concern with the idea, but has reconstructed this thought to make it more tenable.

(Locke) writes: ". . .and ideas become general by separating from them the circumstances of time, and place, and any other ideas that may determine them to this or that particular existence." Here, for Locke, the operations of the mind originate from ideas 'determined' to particular existents. This is a fundamental principle with Locke; it is a casual concession to the habits of language with Hume; and it is a fundamental principle with the phil-

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<sup>25</sup>This may explain the critique leveled against Whitehead that his notion of God is little more than an addendum to his metaphysics. See Chapter III, Section I of this study.

<sup>26</sup>PR, p. 198 ff.

osophy of organism.<sup>27</sup>

Further explaining the way in which process borrows from Locke, Whitehead writes

Locke's principle amounts to this: That there are many actual existents, and that in some sense one actual existent repeats itself in another actual existent, so that in the analysis of the latter existent a component 'determined to' the former existent is discoverable. The philosophy of organism expresses this principle by its doctrines of 'prehension' and of 'objectification.'<sup>28</sup>

The influence of Descartes is perhaps best described as a negative force. Whitehead is quite concerned with Cartesian principles, especially as they have been incorporated into scientific thought, but his concern is such that it leads him to refute many of the principles which Descartes employed.

Descartes asserts one principle which is the basis of all philosophy: he holds that the whole pyramid of knowledge is based upon the immediate operation of knowing which is either an essential (for Descartes), or a contributory, element in the composition of an immediate actual entity. This is also a first principle for the philosophy of organism. But Descartes allowed the subject-predicate form of proposition, and the philosophical tradition derived from it, to dictate his subsequent metaphysical development. For his philosophy, 'actuality' meant 'to be a substance with inhering qualities.' For the philosophy of organism, the percipient occasion is its own standard of actuality. . . . Descartes' notion of an unessential experience of the external world is entirely alien to the organic philosophy.<sup>29</sup>

With Cartesian categories, science worked and developed a split universe.

The universe was split in two: there was the world outside, a world from which science had banished all things of the spirit; and there was a world inside, and world of thought, feeling, and perception.

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 209-210.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 211.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 219-220.

Descartes gave this split official status in philosophy. Reality, he said, is divided into extended substances (bodies) and thinking substances (minds) and neither type of substance involves the other in any way.<sup>30</sup>

Against this understanding, Whitehead postulates "that neither physical nature nor life can be understood unless we fuse them together."<sup>31</sup> The Cartesian dualism was impossible for Whitehead because it failed to take into account the fullness of reality. In much the same way that Whitehead argued against the Newtonian scientific outlook, he refuted the Cartesian philosophical understandings upon which that Weltanschauung was based.

The influence of Immanuel Kant on Whitehead is likewise primarily negative. The Kantian notion of the objective as a construct of the subjective is a misconception, according to Whitehead. In this, Hume and Kant are philosophical brothers and equally rejected by Whitehead and process. The doctrine maintains that there are actually two worlds again. "one world of mere appearance, and the other world compact of ultimate substantial fact."<sup>32</sup>

Whitehead summarizes his being influenced by seventeenth-century philosophers thus:

We have now come to Kant, the great philosopher who first, fully and explicitly, introduced into philosophy the conception of an act of experience as a constructive functioning, transforming subjectivity into objectivity, or objectivity into subjectivity; the order is immaterial in comparison with the general idea. We find the first beginnings of the notion in Locke and in Hume. . . .The

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<sup>30</sup>Eugene Peters, The Creative Advance (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1966), p. 31.

<sup>31</sup>MT, p. 175.

<sup>32</sup>PR, p. 231.

full sweep of the notion is due to Kant. The second half of the modern period of philosophical thought is to be dated from Hume and Kant. In it the development of cosmology has been hampered by the stress laid upon one, or other, of three misconceptions:

- (i) The substance-quality doctrine of actuality.
- (ii) The sensationalist doctrine of perception.
- (iii) The Kantian doctrine of the objective world as a construct from subjective experience.

The combined influence of these allied errors has been to reduce philosophy to a negligible influence in the formation of contemporary modes of thought.<sup>33</sup>

On a more contemporary scene, the influences upon Whitehead seem to be the scientific theory of quantum physics and the philosophical writings of Henri Bergson. From the quantum theory, Whitehead found his tool for attacking the static concepts of Newtonian physics and Cartesian philosophy. Introduced to the scientific scene was now a notion of novelty and chance which could easily relate itself to creativity. Further, because laws now were seen as no more than statistical probabilities and not unbreakable maxims, the influx of non-material influences on reality was now a real possibility. From Bergson, Whitehead found a philosophical concept of processual time and intuitive function. Bergson's philosophy is far more influential on Whitehead's than Whitehead admits. The Bergsonian scheme, therefore, demands far more than cursory examination.

Of ultimate importance to Bergson is a differentiation between "physical time," that which is measured by a clock and is the subject of scientific mathematical conception, and "pure time" (duree reelle),

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., pp. 236-7.

which is the flow of time.<sup>34</sup> This is unmeasurable, because the measurement of time is but an abstraction of the concrete reality. This sounds very much like Whitehead's conception of time.<sup>35</sup>

Another feature of Bergson's thought that seems to influence Whitehead greatly is the notion of intuition. Bergson argues that man has two capacities- intellect and intuition. The one, intellect, uses symbols, remains outside of what it knows and produces a knowledge that is only relative to some viewpoint. The other, intuition, enters into what it knows, does away with symbols and produces an absolute knowledge.<sup>36</sup> While Whitehead has extended this principle to all entities, whereas Bergson regards it solely as a human function, this notion sounds significantly like Whitehead's 'prehension.' Especially since Bergson regards intuition as a social activity, that is more exhibit-able in the social animals; Whitehead, too, regards prehension as more demonstrable in the social animals.

Further points of comparison are on the general agreement between Bergson and Whitehead on the general metaphysical enterprise- the turning over of mechanistic and materialistic emphases. Bergson's doctrine of creative evolution is quite compatible with Whitehead's insistence on the factor of creativity in the world. Further, Bergson's vital impetus (elan vital) and original impetus of life (un elan original de la vie) sound very much like Whitehead's subjective aim.

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<sup>34</sup>T. A. Goudge, "Henri Bergson," Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol. I, Edited by Paul Edwards (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), pp. 287-8.

<sup>35</sup>William W. Hammerschmidt. Whitehead's Philosophy of Time (New York: King's Crown Press, 1947).

<sup>36</sup>Goudge, p. 291.

It is quite possible that Whitehead and Bergson developed separately, but it is more likely that Bergson influenced Whitehead, since Whitehead quotes him, although sparingly.

Turning our attention to the other major proponent of process, Charles Hartshorne, we find very much the same precedents, but influencing him in other ways. The very name that Hartshorne gives to his enterprise, neoclassical metaphysics, would suggest that the classical metaphysicians were highly influential in his development. This is the case, but, as with Whitehead, the influence of Kant, Hume, Locke, and Descartes is more negative than positive. Hartshorne's purpose appears to be to overthrow the critiques these men leveled against classical metaphysics and to reconstruct a metaphysics in the classical vein that would answer the objections and presuppositions of these giants. Since we will be focusing on his answers to these critiques in the section dealing with his system, we shall not deal with them here.

A further influence on Hartshorne was the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. This is not a major influence on Hartshorne, but Husserl's work on psychologism seems to have set the stage for Hartshorne's first book, The Philosophy and Psychology of Sensation. A more significant influence was the work of Charles S. Peirce. Of probable influence here is Peirce's stress on logic,<sup>37</sup> a concern with which Hartshorne is highly involved. Peirce divides logic into three parts- speculative grammar, critical logic, and speculative rhetoric.<sup>38</sup> These divisions are readily

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<sup>37</sup>Frederick Copelston, "The Philosophy of C.S. Peirce," A History of Philosophy, Vol. VIII (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1967), pp. 65-66.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

discernible in Hartshorne, especially in his use of logic in defense of theism and ontology. Peirce's metaphysics are a strange blend of various strands, but that strand which denotes metaphysics as "the absolute acceptance of logical principle not merely as regulatively valid, but as truths of being,"<sup>39</sup> seems to be the same metaphysical principle as Hartshorne's procedure of arguing away all possible objections to his metaphysics by reduction to absurdity or logical impossibility of the other side. Hartshorne has also stated that Peirce's influence on him was to give him a better model of possibility.<sup>40</sup> than did Whitehead.

Which brings us to the greatest and most obvious influence on Hartshorne, Alfred North Whitehead. Whitehead's effect is such that the two are practically to be considered a unit in philosophical thought. From Whitehead, Hartshorne found an ally in speculative philosophy in an age of positivism. It might be said that Hartshorne is the logical advocate for Whitehead's system. I think it would be more productive to note that whereas Whitehead's major concern is with cosmology, Hartshorne's is with ontology within the same area.

#### A Short History of Process Theology<sup>41</sup>

Within the first few years following Whitehead's Science and the

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<sup>39</sup>Hartshorne, Charles and Paul Weiss, ed., The Collected Papers of Charles S. Peirce, 1.487, cited in Copelston, p. 76.

<sup>40</sup>Eugene Peters, Hartshorne and Neoclassical Metaphysics (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), p. 9.

<sup>41</sup>The information for this section drawn from Delwin Brown, "Recent Process Theology," Journal of the American Academy of Religion, XXV, 1 (March, 1967), pp. 28-41, and Norbert O. Schedler, "The Development of Process Theology," Unpublished lecture delivered at Concoria Senior College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Spring, 1969 (mimeographed).

Modern World and Religion in the Making, process-thought suffered quite heavy opposition in theological circles. Both from the right and from the left, theologians attacked the new philosophy as demonstrating a misconception of God and evil and rejected it as a supercilious attempt at theological bombast at a time when suffering was at a peak. However, some significant theologians viewed it as a worthwhile enterprise. Reinhold Niebuhr, for example, found it to be a much needed emphasis for modern religion. Within the decade, Whitehead was finding considerable acceptance among American and British theologians.

One of the first attempts to use Whitehead was by Lionel Thornton in his The Incarnate Lord, an attempt at a very supernaturalistic christology. Later, and more widely read, was William Temple's Nature, Man and God, which quoted Whitehead extensively, but, in the end, rejected his view of God. In the United States, most significant of the Whiteheadians was Henry Nelson Wieman, who was attracted, most of all, to Whitehead's view of God as the principle of concretion. During the rest of the thirties, Whitehead seemed to fade in theological circles.

In the forties, the attention given to Whitehead was primarily an analysis of whether or not Whitehead's notion of God was available for religious purposes. The rejection of that possibility came first from sometime theologian, Walter Lippman, who, in his A Preface to Morals, argued that Whitehead's God, for the purposes of religion, is no God at all. This debate was culminated by a critical examination by Stephen Lee Ely, The Religious Availability of Whitehead's God, which argued that, because a conception of God suitable for religious purposes would align the divine purpose with human good, Whitehead's God does not fill that

purpose because Whitehead's God is above the human good and only enjoys the results of the human good and does not contribute to it. Reactions to Ely were many. Victor Lowe argued that Ely had not refuted Whitehead's God but a misunderstanding of that God. More complete was Bernard Loomer's response, which tried to circumvent the difficulties in understanding the natures of God. Loomer argued that there is a mutual interaction between God and humanity (and the rest of the world) which makes both man and God mutual benefactors and beneficiaries.

One man, perhaps more than any other, made Whitehead's philosophy open for theological purposes- Charles Hartshorne. In his defenses of not only Whiteheadian interpretation, but also for metaphysics as the only key for future theology, opened the door for other men to develop process theologies. His major contribution to the early debate, Beyond Humanism, argued that the Whiteheadian notion of God is not only available for religious purposes, but is actually more compatible with the Gospel witness concerning God than is the medieval interpretation of God as an unchanging absolute. Later, in Man's Vision of God and the Logic of Theism, Hartshorne maintained that the process concept of perfection, that God is surpassable by none other than himself but does surpass himself, does more justice to religion than does the old concept of an unchanging and unchangeable God.

With Hartshorne's contributions far from over, these early contributions allowed others to expand and build on the process scheme. John B. Cobb, in his A Christian Natural Theology, argues with Hartshorne that the notion of change in God is essential for religion. Bernard Meland, recognizing the element of secularization in the world, proposes that

process offers the key to religiously interpreting the world while maintaining a secular stance. Daniel Day Williams, in The Spirit and the Forms of Love, developed a Christian ethic based of process principles.

All these were augmented by William Christian's definitive work on Whitehead, An Interpretation of Whitehead's Metaphysics. In the final section of this book, Christian explains with more clarity than any other previous writer the relationship between God and the world. Christian's work is regarded as one of the best systematic treatments of Whitehead's thought, and is a strong argument for religious us of Whitehead.

Some other attempts to move beyond the notion of God in process to other articles of Christian faith include Norman Pittenger's Process-thought and the Christian Faith, which outlines a short christology and anthropology; Peter Hamilton's The Living God and the Modern World which likewise offers a christology; and most recently, Charles Curtis' The Task of Philosophical Theology, which has offered very brief accounts of the relationship between process philosophy and points of Christian doctrine.

#### Alfred North Whitehead: A Short Biography<sup>42</sup>

Alfred North Whitehead was born in Ramsgate, England on February 6, 1861. His father was a clergyman of the Church of England, as well as a

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<sup>42</sup>The information for this section was drawn from Norman Pittenger, Alfred North Whitehead (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1969), pp. 1-9, and Alfred North Whitehead, "Autobiographical Notes," The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead, Paul Schlipp, editor. (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1941), pp. 1-14.

schoolmaster on the outskirts of Ramsgate. It was from his father that Whitehead received his early education in both Latin and Greek. At the age of fourteen, he was sent to Sherburne, a boy's school, where he continued in Latin and Greek and began studies of the Roman and Greek historians. It was here, too, that his interest in mathematics had its start, an interest that was later to consume most of his energy. In 1880, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where he centered his studies entirely on mathematics. In 1885, Whitehead was admitted as a fellow of Trinity. That same year he married Evelyn Wade, with whom he shared a serenely happy marriage which produced three children.

In 1898, Whitehead's first book, A Treatise on Universal Algebra, was published. He tells us that it was based on the work of earlier mathematicians, who were later to affect his mathematical thinking. This work led to his election to the Royal Society in 1903. Whitehead had plans for a second volume, but never published it. Rather, when he read Bertrand Russell's The Principles of Mathematics, also a first volume, and discovered that his and Russell's prospects for continued volumes were identical, they merged their efforts, and after eight years finished their work on Principia Mathematica. In 1910, Whitehead moved from Cambridge to London, that same year publishing An Introduction to Mathematics. From 1911 to 1914, he held several positions at University College of London, and from 1914 to 1924, a professorship at the Imperial College of Science and Technology in Kensington. In 1924, Whitehead retired from the faculty of Cambridge University, upon which he received an invitation to teach at Harvard, which he accepted. Prior to his leaving London, he published The Concept of Nature, in 1920, and, in 1922,

The Principle of Relativity.

Curing the years at Harvard, he published Science and the Modern World (1925), Religion in the Making (1926) and Symbolism: Its Meaning and Effect (1927), which was based on lectures he delivered at the University of Virginia. In 1928, he published a collection of essays under the title, The Aims of Education. The following year, he produced his greatest metaphysical work, Process and Reality, which was the result of the Gifford Lectures which he delivered on a return to the British Isles at the University of Edinburgh. In 1929, The Function of Reason appeared, and four years later, Adventures of Ideas. His last book, Modes of Thought, was published in 1938, nine years before his death on December 30, 1947, at the age of 86.

Charles Hartshorne: A Short Biography<sup>43</sup>

Charles Hartshorne was born in Kittanning, Pennsylvania on June 5, 1897. His father was the rector of the Episcopal church in Kittanning. Hartshorne attended school at Teates School, five miles outside of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where he matured intellectually and had his first contact with the theory of evolution. It was here that he found an interest in birds, the study of which was his constant avocation throughout his life.

At the age of eighteen, Hartshorne entered Haverford College, but, during his sophomore year, withdrew and joined in World War I in France as an orderly at a hospital on the Normandy coast. Upon his return, he

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<sup>43</sup>The information for this section drawn from Eugene Peters, Hartshorne and Neoclassical Metaphysics, pp. 1-14.

enrolled at Harvard University in 1919, and two years later received his B.A., the bulk of his work done in philosophy. He continued at Harvard and received his M.A. in philosophy in 1922, and the following year, after a concentrated effort, his Ph.D. in philosophy.

Hartshorne was regarded as one of the most brilliant students at Harvard, and for the year 193-24 was awarded a Sheldon Traveling Fellowship, which he used at the University of Freiburg, where he heard Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. His fellowship was renewed and he remained in Germany, but now at Marburg, to where Heidegger had transferred. In 1925, he returned to Harvard, where he was assigned the task of collecting the papers of C.S. Peirce. During the next three years, he devoted himself to this task, and, together with Paul Weiss, then a graduate student who joined him on the project in 1927, he finished and published the collected works between 1931 and 1936. Most of the work had been done when Hartshorne left Harvard to assume a position on the faculty of the University of Chicago in 1928. That same year he married the former Dorothy Cooper, a union which produced one daughter.

In 1955, Hartshorne left the faculty of Chicago to become professor of philosophy at Emory University. While yet at Chicago, he had traveled to the International Congress of Philosophy at Oxford, after which he and Mrs. Hartshorne toured Europe while he gathered material for his first book, The Philosophy and Psychology of Sensation, which was published in 1934. During the next years, he accepted several guest lectureships, including positions at Stanford University, the New School for Social Research, and Goethe University. In 1952, he was the Fulbright lecturer at the University of Melbourne. He remained at Emory for seven years, and then he joined the faculty at University of Texas.

## CHAPTER III

### THE PROCESS METAPHYSICS

It is becoming increasingly clear that what systematic theology needs is a new mode of presenting the truths of the Biblical witness. It is also clear that philosophical frameworks dating from the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and even nineteenth centuries are simply rejected by twentieth-century man, and, accordingly do not assist in the task of presenting theological truths. What appears to be necessary is a twentieth-century philosophy that fills the need of being, at least, capable of appeal to modern man and of being sympathetic to, if not compatible with, theological concerns. There are many who find that need fulfilled in process-thought.

Process is the only current option in philosophy today that deals with metaphysics and is truly a twentieth-century philosophy. Existentialism, phenomenology, and classical metaphysics are still around but they are basically products of the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Twentieth-century philosophy has concentrated primarily on linguistic analysis, positivism, and logic. Only process, together with some insights from such men as Teilhard de Chardin and the American pragmatists, is consistently concerned with world systems in this century. Accordingly, process offers, at least in its program, a new possibility for theological use.

To understand that possibility, it is necessary to understand the system and method of process-thought. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the process scheme upon which some theological notions can be

built. We shall endeavor to present, as cogently as possible, the systems and arguments of the two major proponents- Whitehead and Hartshorne- and try to discover what insights they have to offer.

#### Process According to Whitehead

Whitehead was convinced that, contrary to the scientific outlook of Newtonian physics and Cartesian philosophy, the world is not a multiplicity, but a unified whole. His purpose was, therefore, to show that unity, which led him to conceive of the world as a society made up of many but in such a way that the many were the one and the one was the many. No part of the society was excluded from the whole; all inter-worked to produce and sustain one another.

Whitehead thus presupposed three things. First, there was an element of enjoyment in experience, not only at the human level, but at all levels. Second, this enjoyment is achieved, that is, there is an aim to life. Third, there is creativity, or a self-making aspect to existence.<sup>1</sup> With these presuppositions, Whitehead intends to describe the whole of experience. Cobb remarks that three avenues were open.

First, one can understand matter as an appearance to the mind. The justification for this view is that when we consider carefully the basis of our notion of matter it turns out to be entirely a function of sense experience. . . .The second solution to the problem of dualism took . . .materiality as its clue and held that minds are functions of matter. . . .But total materialism is difficult to accept as total mentalism. . . .Hence, a third alternative commends itself; namely, to subsume the duality under some more-com-

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<sup>1</sup>Norman Pittenger, Alfred North Whitehead (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1969), pp. 14-15.

prehensive unity. This might mean that some kind of reality underlies our subjective mental states as well as that which seems objective to them; it might mean that all reality participates<sup>2</sup> in both mentality and materiality without in fact being either.

It is quite obvious that Whitehead chose the third option. It is interesting to note, however, why he rejected the other two. While the first option would allow for one of his major concerns, creativity, it does little to explain actuality. Whitehead was convinced that the world was real, not merely appearance.<sup>3</sup> The second option would have denied creativity, since it is a deterministic view of mental function. Accordingly, he had little choice but the third option.

In so choosing, and so designating his ultimate category as creativity, Whitehead then sets to establish three other categorical classes: existence, explanation, and obligation.<sup>4</sup> A lengthy quote is here needed to give the full force of what Whitehead is endeavoring to achieve.

There are eight Categories of Existence:

- (i) Actual Entities (also termed Actual Occasions), or Final Realities, or Res Verae.
- (ii) Prehensions, or Concrete Facts of Relatedness.
- (iii) Nexūs (plural of nexus), or Public Matters of Fact.
- (iv) Subjective Forms, or Private Matters of Fact.
- (v) Eternal Objects, or Pure Potentials for the Specific Determination of Fact, or Forms of Definiteness.
- (vi) Propositions, or Matters of Fact in Potential Determination, or Impure Potentials for the Specific Determination of Matters of Fact, or Theories.
- (vii) Multiplicities, or Pure Disjunctions of Diverse Entities.
- (viii) Contrasts, or Modes of Synthesis of Entities in one Prehension.

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<sup>2</sup>John B. Cobb, Jr., A Christian Natural Theology (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965), pp. 24-25.

<sup>3</sup>William A. Christian, An Interpretation of Whitehead's Metaphysics (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1959), pp. 6-7.

<sup>4</sup>PR, p. 30.

Among these eight categories of existence, actual entities and eternal objects stand out with a certain finality.

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 There are twenty-seven Categories of Explanation (of which some are):

(i) That the actual world is a process, and that the process is the becoming of actual entities. . . .

(ii) That in the becoming of an actual entity, the potential unity of many entities- actual and non-actual -acquires the real unity of the one actual entity; so that the actual entity is the real concrescence of many potentials.

(iii) That in the becoming of an actual entity, novel prehensions, nexūs, subjective forms, propositions, multiplicities, and contrasts also become; but there are no novel eternal objects.

(iv) . . .it belongs to the nature of a 'being' that it is a potential for every 'becoming.' This is the 'principle of relativity.'

(v) That no two actual entities originate from an identical universe. . . .The eternal objects are the same for all actual entities. . . .

(vi) That each entity of the universe of a given concrescence can . . . be implicated in that concrescence in one or other of many modes; but in fact it is implicated in only one mode . . . .

This indetermination, rendered determinate in the real concrescence, is the meaning of potentiality. . . .

(vii) That an eternal object can be described only in terms of its potentiality for 'ingression' into the becoming of actual entities; and that its analysis only discloses other eternal objects. . . .

(viii) That two descriptions are required for an actual entity: (a) one which is analytical of its potentiality for 'objectification' in the becoming of other actual entities, and (b) another which is analytical of the process which constitutes its own becoming. The term 'objectification' refers to the particular mode in which the potentiality of one actual entity is realized in another actual entity. . . .

(ix) That how an actual entity becomes constitutes what that actual entity is. . . .This is the 'principle of process.'

(x) That the first analysis of an actual entity . . .discloses it to be a concrescence of prehensions. . . .All further analysis is an analysis of prehensions.

(xi) That every prehension consists of three factors: (a) the 'subject' which is prehending, namely the actual entity in which the prehension is a concrete element; (b) the 'datum' which is prehended; (c) the 'subjective form' which is how that subject prehends that datum. Prehension of actual entities . . .are termed 'physical prehensions'; and prehensions of eternal objects are termed 'conceptual prehensions.'

(xii) That there are two species of prehensions: (a) 'positive prehensions' which are termed 'feelings,' and (b) 'negative prehensions,' which are said to 'eliminate from feeling.'

(xiii) That there are many species of subjective forms, such as emotions, valuations, purposes, aversions, aversions, consciousness, etc.

(xxi) An entity is actual, when it has significance for itself. By this is meant that an actual entity functions in respect to its own determination. . . .<sup>5</sup>

There are nine Categoreal Obligations: subjective unity, objective identity, objective diversity, conceptual valuation, conceptual reversion, transmutation, subjective harmony, subjective intensity, and freedom and determination.<sup>6</sup> This lengthy quote, incomplete even at that, stresses the major points of Whitehead's program. In the succeeding pages, we shall with the categories of existence quite heavily, while showing where the categories of explanation and obligation are significant.

'Actual entities,' or 'actual occasions,' "are the final real things of which the world is made up."<sup>7</sup> They are infinite in number, and encompass the entirety of reality. They are experienced things, as well as experiencing; they form and are formed by other actual entities.

As subjects, actual entities experience in 'affective' fashion.<sup>8</sup>  
Whitehead puts it

I find myself as essentially a unity of emotions, enjoyments, hopes, fears, regrets, valuations of alternatives, decisions - all of them subjective reactions to the environment as active in my nature. . . .The individual enjoyment is what I am in my role of a natural activity, as I shape the activities of the environment into a new creation, which is myself at this moment; and yet, as being myself, it is a continuation of the antecedent world. If we stress the role of the environment, this process is causation.

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 32-35. Italics original.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 39-42.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>8</sup>A.H. Johnson, Whitehead's Theory of Reality (New York: Dover Publications, 1962), p. 16.

If we stress the role of my immediate pattern of active enjoyment, this process is self-creation. If we stress the role of the conceptual anticipation of the future whose existence is a necessity in the nature of the present, this process is the teleological aim of some ideal in the future.<sup>9</sup>

Johnson notes five claims that are being made in this statement concerning the nature of a subject:

(a) The content of a subject's experience is chiefly, though not exclusively, affective; (b) it is a unity of its component parts; (c) a subject has its environment active in its nature; (d) it becomes what it is as the result of its subjective reactions to the data provided by its environment; (e) a subject selects data from its environment in accordance with a conceived ideal.<sup>10</sup>

This reaction to the environment is what is called 'prehension.' Two kinds of prehension are possible- positive and negative.<sup>11</sup> A positive prehension is the grasping of data into the life of the actual entity to produce concrescence.<sup>12</sup> Rejection of data is called a negative prehension.<sup>13</sup> When the process is completed, that is, when concrescence has been achieved, Whitehead calls this satisfaction.<sup>14</sup>

Prehensions can also be divided along another plane- conceptual and physical. Conceptual prehension is when an actual entity prehends an eternal object as something that might be applicable to it. It does

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<sup>9</sup>MT, p. 60.

<sup>10</sup>Johnson, p. 17. Italics original.

<sup>11</sup>Supra., p. 32. Category of explanation (xii).

<sup>12</sup>PR, p. 321.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 38.

not necessarily embrace the eternal object in toto; rather, it reacts to it out of its own subjective form. An example might help illustrate: When I am angry, that is a subjective feeling; it is within me; it is, to a degree, produced by me. But anger can be seen as an eternal object. Therefore, I have, in a great sense, positively and conceptually, prehended that eternal object. But my anger is different than another's. I yell, fume, fuss and expend myself quickly; my wife, on the other hand, when angry, will brood, seclude herself from others, and retain the anger for a long period of time. Both my own and my wife's subjective form readjust the prehended eternal object so that it matches what we are as actual entities. To cite a non-human example, an angry dog needs, in most cases, a physical provocation for its anger, whereas I often react angrily to verbal provocation, and very often to non-verbal feelings. Thus, by comparison between the dog and myself, we both exhibit varying subjective forms in our anger.

Subjective form has two meanings in Whitehead: in some instances, it appears to be an attitude or emotional reaction, as he cites anger, horror, disgust, enjoyment as instances of it;<sup>15</sup> elsewhere, it has a deeper meaning, the private side of the actual entity, which includes a pattern of quality and intensity.<sup>16</sup> Quality here means the components of the actual entity which make it react as it does; intensity means the relative strength with which any one quality influences the reaction.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 35, 37, 338, 479. Also, AI, pp. 236, 309.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 444.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 357-8.

These, in turn, relect on the valuation that the actual entity makes of each prehension. Qualitatively, it determines how the eternal object is to be used; intensively, it determines the importance of the use.<sup>18</sup>

Subjective form presupposes a subjective aim. Subjective aim might best be described as the overriding principle of the actual occasion. Every actual entity has a purpose which defines what it shall become in its full realization of its satisfaction.<sup>19</sup> That is to say, every actual entity has an ideal which is established for it and with which it concurs. The aim of the entity is to realize that ideal; that is its subjective aim. An illustration might prove helpful. A rabbit is an actual entity, and its aim is to become an oak tree.<sup>20</sup> It is a fact of the universe that the rabbit cannot become a tree immediately. Consequently, it must prehend certain eternal objects and other actual entities to achieve its aim. In this case, the eternal objects would appear to be such things as brownness, furriness, breathing potential (on the rabbit's existent pole) and hardness, fibrousness, greenness and height (on its potential pole). In working its way to becoming a tree, the rabbit eats a carrot, digests it through its tract, defecates unusable portions of

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<sup>18</sup>This occurs when the actual entity is faced with a complex prehension (one involving more than one eternal object). The qualitative aspect is referred to as the Category of Subjective Harmony; the intensive, the Category of Subjective Intensity. (PR, p. 41)

<sup>19</sup>Satisfaction and aim appear to be fairly synonymous in Whitehead.

<sup>20</sup>I am sure that Whitehead would rebel at such an instance being a true form of subjective aim, but this will suffice for our purpose of illustration.

the carrot which becomes fertilizer for the oak tree, the nutriments of which are absorbed through the rhizomes of the tree, and produce an acorn, which falls, is fertilized further by the same feces, and grows into an oak tree. Thus, the rabbit has physically prehended other actual occasions of carrot, tree, ground, feces and acorn to achieve its subjective aim.

Some interesting insights can be gleaned from this rather frivolous illustration. First to be brought to mind is the question of causation. From a materialistic point of view, our illustration has nothing to do with prehension, but simple cause and effect. But from the process point of view, there is no simple, one-to-one cause and effect,<sup>21</sup> but a multiplicity of causal integrations among actual entities. The second consideration brought forth from our illustration is the autonomy of actual entities.

It is to be noted that every actual entity . . . is something individual for its own sake; and thereby transcends the rest of actuality. And also it is to be noted that every actual entity . . . is a creature transcended by the creativity which it qualifies. . . it is causa sui. To be causa sui means that the process of concrecence is its own reason for the decision . . . by which any lure for feeling is admitted to efficiency.<sup>22</sup>

That is to say, from a process point of view, no actual entity so affects another so as to cause it to change without that second entity creating some subjective reaction to the change. The universe is free and creative, not dictated and mechanistic.

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<sup>21</sup>MT, p. 225.

<sup>22</sup>PR, p. 135.

Of supreme importance to be noted from our illustration is the concept of time involving actual entities. No actual entity can affect another until it has ceased as a subject, that is, it must be past for the prehending entity. In our case, this is a little hard to see. It would have been better had we said that the rabbit died and decomposed to fertilize the tree. But our illustration, as it stands, shows that past means, not as existent, but as subject. That portion of the rabbit (the feces) which became tree was no longer subject, but still actual. It had become, instead, superject. The superject phase of actual entities is that which is prehensible by other actual entities.<sup>23</sup> The subject-superject actual entity rabbit yielded an portion of its superject phase to the ground for the subject-superject tree to utilize.

This, then, appears to be the essence of actual entities: they are the real things of the universe which interact with one another to produce one another. That interaction, however, is a creative process by which each actual entity prehends another (or more) and utilized it for its own becoming, or achievement of subjective aim. They alsoprehend eternal objects, to which we turn our attention now.

The actual entities, we have seen, are essentially of the nature of passing things. . . .An actual entity is an event that happens but once and is never repeated. . . .But although an actual entity, in its concrete particularity, is not found elsewhere and at any other time away from its own place and time of occurrence, it happens under aspects of characters that are everywhere and always the same. . . .These characters are ordinarily called universals, but Whitehead calls them "eternal objects."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>24</sup>Rasvihary Das, The Philosophy of Whitehead (New York: Russell & Russell, 1964), p. 43.

Whitehead coins the term to avoid misconceptions that such equivalent terms as ideal, or universal, bring forth. Whitehead criticized Platonic idealism for absorbing actuality into possibility.<sup>25</sup> He criticized Locke for performing the opposite of absorbing possibility into actuality.<sup>26</sup> Whitehead feels that his notion of eternal objects will avoid the absorption of the one into the other in any way.

This, then, begs the question of how eternal objects are related to actual entities. It must first be reiterated that eternal objects are pure possibility in that they do not describe any particular state of affairs, actual or hypothetical. There are impure potentials, propositions, which describe a hypothetical state of affairs. Further, there is real potentiality, which is relative to some particular state of affairs or actual world.<sup>27</sup> Again it would be helpful to illustrate. Whitehead himself gives several examples of eternal objects: *sensa* (e.g. green, blue), subjective species (qualities of shape, intensity, happiness), objective species (e.g. mathematical forms), objects designated by 'any,' etc., patterns and relationships, the abstract essence of an actual entity, general principles, and forms of imperfection.<sup>28</sup> It would be better, however, were we to cite a case. One obvious eternal object of the first order would be the notion of perfection. Hartshorne's defense of perfection as a necessary existent is a prime case of proof for the re-

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<sup>25</sup>Christian, p. 197.

<sup>26</sup>PR, p. 211.

<sup>27</sup>Christian, p. 201.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 202-3.

ality (here used in a non-technical sense) of eternal objects.<sup>29</sup> Perfection, as Hartshorne shows, is not easily demonstrable; it is a prime eternal object for it does not need a particular referent to prove its potentiality. An example of an impure potential would be the case of, say, the Celtics beating the Knicks for the NBA Eastern Conference championship, although they are down in the series three games to one. Hypothetically, this is possible. But the real possibility is that the Knicks will win ~~the~~ championship.

Our concern here is with pure potentiality and how it relates to the actual entity. Primarily, eternal objects transcend actual entities, all actual entities, including God. This occurs in three ways: first, eternal objects are timeless; actual entities are temporal. This means that eternal objects neither actual become nor do they cease. Further, this means that eternal objects are unaffected by their ingression into the actual world. Second, eternal objects are indeterminate; actual entities are determinate. Third, eternal objects are abstract; actual entities are concrete.<sup>30</sup>

But, on the other hand, eternal objects are immanent to actual entities. This occurs through ingression.

I hold that each eternal object has its own proper connection with each such occasion, which I term its mode of ingression into that occasion. Thus an eternal object is to be comprehended by acquaintance with (i) its particular individuality, (ii) its general relationships to other eternal objects as apt for realisation in actu-

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<sup>29</sup>LP, p. 51.

<sup>30</sup>Christian, pp. 204-5.

al occasions, and (iii) the general principle which expresses its ingression in particular actual occasions.<sup>31</sup>

these modes of ingression are explained thus:

An eternal object can only function in the concrescence as an actual entity in one of three ways: (i) it can be an element in the definiteness of some objectified nexus, or of some single actual entity, which is the datum of a feeling; (ii) it can be an element in the definiteness of the subjective form of some feeling; or, (iii) it can be an element in the datum of a conceptual, or propositional feeling. All other modes of ingression arise from integration which presuppose these modes.<sup>32</sup>

Mode (i), dative ingression, means, as far as I understand it, that what is prehended of one actual entity by another (or of a nexus by an actual entity) is transmitted through eternal objects. They are the key for the passing on of the prehension. Mode (ii), subjective ingression, means that the prehending actual occasion has qualities (eternal objects<sup>33</sup>) which influence its prehension, in its subjective form, and these are conditioned by the ingression of other eternal objects. Mode (iii), conceptual ingression, means that in this prehension, the qualities of the prehended occasion or nexus are brought into play by the ingression of the eternal objects that qualify that occasion or nexus.

It may have been good to place at this point Whitehead's doctrine of God. However, in the interest of time and space, we shall refrain from making that presentation here, and shall work with it quite fully in the next chapter. One note ought to be made here, however. The relation-

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<sup>31</sup>PR, p. 440.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 445.

<sup>33</sup>Christian, p. 189.

ship between actual occasions and eternal objects seems to hang in the concept of the relationship between the Primordial and Consequent Natures of God. Hopefully, this unity will be clearer as the next chapter unfolds.

#### Process According to Hartshorne

Hartshorne has largely been overlooked by historians of philosophy for his unique contributions to philosophy. He has, for the most part, been considered only as a student of Whitehead, although often cited as Whitehead's best student. At times he has been shown only as a student of Peirce, whose papers and letters he collated. Hartshorne is, nonetheless, a significant philosopher in his own right. It might be said that, beyond being only a student of Whitehead, he was the finisher of Whitehead's work. Whitehead's system is based almost entirely on cosmology. He is, to large extent, an empiricist. If Whitehead is the cosmologist, Hartshorne is the ontologist. While Hartshorne works with empiricism, his major focus is on logical principles and primary statements. His is a more a priori system.

Metaphysics may be described as the study which evaluates a priori statements about existence. A priori is here used in . . . (the) sense of contradicting no conceivable observation. . . . I do not restrict the observations to those which human beings might perform. However, human beings must be able to conceive the observations. I hold that we can in principle conceive—though not imagine—experiences radically different from any we could possibly have.<sup>34</sup>

Hartshorne calls his method "neoclassical metaphysics", and perhaps it would be best to start with that term.

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<sup>34</sup>CSP, p. 19.

Classical metaphysics is said to have begun with the Greeks; it ended with Kant and Hume, who offered devastating critiques of those metaphysics. However, neither Kant nor Hume offered any alternatives. Hartshorne proposes to do just that. He offers the following definitions of metaphysics to do it:

- (a) The unrestrictive or general theory of concreteness;
- (b) The theory of experience as such;
- (c) The clarification of strictly universal conceptions;
- (d) The search for unconditionally necessary or eternal truths about existence;
- (e) The theory of objective modality;
- (f) The theory of possible world-states, or the a priori approach to cosmology;
- (g) The general theory of creativity;
- (h) The search for the common principle of structure and quality;
- (i) Ultimate or a priori axiology (theory of value in general);
- (j) The inquiry into the conceivability and existential status of infinity, perfection (unsurpassability), eternal and necessary existence;
- (k) The rational or secular approach to theology.<sup>35</sup>

Definition (a) has to do with the relationship between abstraction and concreteness. Like Whitehead, Hartshorne believes that much of the history of thought has misplaced concreteness in abstraction. To refute this, Hartshorne argues that "the concrete is greater than and includes the abstract."<sup>36</sup> This means, first of all, that abstraction is only demonstrable in concrete examples, because the concrete is real, not the abstraction. Second, this means that one might describe what concrete entities are and are like. Hartshorne states that they are real, changeless, and immortal.<sup>37</sup> They are real in that they are the stuff of experience. One

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>36</sup>Ralph E. James, The Concrete God (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1967), p. 58.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 58-62.

does not experience the abstract; the abstract is conjectured. Concrete entities are experienced as they occur and thus form the basis for reality.<sup>38</sup> The concept of changelessness does not mean that concrete entities do not change; it means, rather, that whatever change occurs in them is not strictly to be accorded on the basis of an outside influence. They are what they do, and change is an internal, self-created function of concrete entities.<sup>39</sup> Concrete entities are immortal in that once they cease in physical existence, they continue in memory.<sup>40</sup>

Definition (b) includes theories regarding memory, perception, and imagination,<sup>41</sup> concerning which Hartshorne notes

In studying memory, perception, or imagination one needs to distinguish between: (1) What is observably present in the experience; (2) what is not observably present; and (3) what is observably absent.<sup>42</sup>

In so doing, Hartshorne himself has come up with the following observations.

A person experiences, at a given moment, many things at once, objects perceived, past experiences remembered. That he perceives certain objects and remembers certain things, we can more or less explain: the objects are there, the experiences are recent and connected by associations with the objects, and so on. But an experience is not fully described in its total unitary quality merely by specifying what it perceives and remembers. There is the question

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<sup>38</sup>CSP, p. 140 ff.

<sup>39</sup>James, p. 58-62.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 61. This sounds as if Hartshorne is here reiterating the Whiteheadian notion of the consequent nature of God, but he is also including a human element to this.

<sup>41</sup>CSP, p. 75.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

of how, with just what accent, in just what perspective of relative vividness and emotional colouring, the perceiving and remembering are done.

. . . . .  
 Let me restate the basic argument: the stimuli molding an experience are many: the five or more senses are operating, memory is relating us, at least unconsciously, to thousands of incidents of the past; but all this multiplicity of influences is to provide a single unitary experience. . . . The effect is one; the causes, however, are many. . . . This vast multitude of factors must flow together to produce a single entity, the experience of the moment. The many stimuli are given, and they certainly tell us much about the response. But it is logically impossible that they should tell us all. An emergent synthesis is needed, to decide just how each item is to blend in a single complex sensory-emotional-intellectual whole, the experience.<sup>43</sup>

Definitions (c) and (d) are closely intertwined in Hartshorne. His method is to seek (d) by (c) through the process of reducing statements to absolute negation.<sup>44</sup> The process is this: given two statements (or more) about an eternal truth, one subjects them to the severest of tests which include falsifiability and expressions of possible negations. If one of the statements should yield itself to negation, it cannot be a metaphysical truth. "Metaphysical truths may be described as such that no experience can contradict them, but also that any experience must illustrate them."<sup>45</sup> "We recognize a metaphysical truth by this, that in any situation it applies directly . . . and involves exclusion of nothing (besides nonsense)."<sup>46</sup>

Definition (e) has to do with necessity and contingency. Hartshorne

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 4-5.

<sup>44</sup> Eugene Peters, Hartshorne and Neoclassical Metaphysics (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1970), pp. 15-28.

<sup>45</sup> LP, p. 285.

<sup>46</sup> Peters, Hartshorne and Neoclassical Metaphysics, p. 21.

offers many answers to these considerations and in a variety of ways. We shall consider one of these in the next chapter when we speak of the necessary existence of God. A summary statement of his position would seem to be that modality is not merely logical or linguistic, but also ontological.<sup>47</sup> His theory of objective modality includes the notions of creativity, perfection and concreteness; all these included in the class of necessary existents.

Definition (f) has to do with alternative (although not necessarily existent) modes of being- that is, could things have been other than they are? Hartshorne tends to answer this question in the negative; but he maintains that any metaphysics must offer its propositions in such a way and with such clarity that the possible alternatives conceivable (again not imaginable) are included in its categories.<sup>48</sup> This also includes the ontology inherent in cosmology, about which we shall speak momentarily.

Definition (g) is one of Hartshorne's primary concerns. With Whitehead, he is earnestly trying to develop a philosophy of creativity.

Moral freedom as we all know requires the exercise of rational reflection and decision; but what many philosophers fail to see is that this exercise of higher powers involves a creative leap beyond anything made inevitable or predictable by the causal conditions. The creative act is influenced by its conditions, and requires them, but it cannot (I wish to argue) be required or precisely determined by them. . . . This aspect of creativity is what the determinist overlooks or denies.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup>CSP, p. 29.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>49</sup>LP, p. 164

This feature of Hartshorne's thought is of primary importance because it plays such a significant role in his refutation of the critics of classical metaphysics. He maintains that such men as Kant and Hume present a deterministic view that is absurd because (1) it cannot deal with the novelty which is demonstrable even in scientific theory (the notion of the uncertainty principle of quantum physics establishes this); (2) it leads to the denial of anything really existing ("If becoming does not create new quality and quantity, new determinateness, then, we argue, it creates nothing, and nothing ever really becomes."); (3) it is essentially statistical, and not empirical (as its proponents erroneously assume); (4) it separates too exclusively randomness or chance and moral freedom; (5) it tends to confuse generality with particularity to the extent that it assumes certainty in prediction rather than probability, which is, in truth, unpredictability; (6) it confuses ignorance with the inability to predict; and (7) it confuses logical and physical determination or implication.<sup>50</sup>

Definitions (h) and (i) share a common goal of determining what is good, valuable, etc., and from whence those values come., Hartshorne's answer to these considerations is that the basic value is experiencing, which leads to beauty, goodness, and truth.<sup>51</sup>

Definition (j), closely related to (e), is a major concern for Hartshorne. He has devoted considerable time and energy to the proofs

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., pp. 165-75.

<sup>51</sup>CSP, p. 303 ff.

of perfection as existent, which may account for his including this as a separate consideration. It is very much involved with objective modality.

Definition (k) is, perhaps, where Hartshorne is most concerned to expend his metaphysical energies. It is also the point at which we are most concerned with his insights.<sup>52</sup>

If these are the tasks of metaphysical enquiry, what are the principles that govern the way in which they shall be approached? Hartshorne offers several general principles, which appear irrefutable. First, the consideration of language must be taken into account.<sup>53</sup> This includes recognizing the difference between 'ordinary language' and 'technical language.' Terms must be lucid and capable of being understood; further, because metaphysics deals with questions not ordinarily asked, and because it works with such vast generalities, it must pay more attention to extreme cases than does other language use. Second, metaphysics must take into account the fullest spectrum of experience that is available.<sup>54</sup> This would imply that metaphysics must pay close attention to other disciplines and be particularly aware of cultural differences. Thirdly, metaphysics must pay strict attention to logic.<sup>55</sup> Fourthly, the metaphysician must be amply familiar with the history of philosophy, not just in

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<sup>52</sup>Note Appendix A.

<sup>53</sup>CSP, pp. 71-75.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 75-81.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 82-85.

terms of the men involved, but with the history of thoughts and concepts.<sup>56</sup> This is important for two reasons: it gives the metaphysician a better grasp of the problem with which he is dealing, and it enables those who come to evaluate his work a better tool by which to do it.

To these rather general principles, Hartshorne adds four more specific principles. The "principle of least paradox"<sup>57</sup> argues, as its name suggests, that, where one may see paradoxical statements, that which involves the least possibility for contradiction is preferable. The "principle of inclusive contrast"<sup>58</sup> states that "ideas express contrasts," which is to say that included in such notions as reality, concreteness, subject, etc. are their opposites unreality, abstraction, object, etc. But contrasts must not be confused with dualism (e.g. concrete-abstract, subject-object, relative absolute) which would posit a third entity out of the two. Hartshorne contends that the inclusive contrast is not a duality. The "principle of generality"<sup>59</sup> argues that any concept that is qualified by a special case must be made more generally applicable before it is suitable for metaphysical use. For example, the notion of experience cannot be limited to human experience alone; it must embrace the whole of reality, including animals, rocks and toadstools. The "principle of balanced definiteness"<sup>60</sup> suggests that the use

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., pp. 85-88.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., pp. 88-89.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., pp. 89-90.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., pp. 90-92.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., pp. 92-97.

of language in metaphysics must take into account the possibility that it is one-sided in its presentation of the truth, which would suggest that it must seek to establish the other sides and round out the statement to embrace the whole truth. For example, the statement, "We call the Unmoved Mover God,"(Aquinas) must be balanced by the issues of whether or not this is in fact what men have worshipped throughout history, or is it an abstractional theory unrelated to religious practice? This does not beg the question of truth in the statement (equating the two notions), but it seeks the balance of equating this with what is commonly held.

With these principles in hand, Hartshorne's system intends to find the metaphysical truths, that is, those truths which are incapable of negating anything but nonsense. We have already shown what Hartshorne considers some of these truths to be: the fact of creativity in the universe, the notion of concreteness, the existence of perfection, and the notion of being as becoming. Some further exploration of these is in order to better understand his thinking.

We have noted the notion of creativity in Hartshorne only on the basis of what it allows him to refute. The notion, in and of itself, is worth more investigation. We will hold off here referring to the creative aspects of God, reserving that for our next chapter. What we are concerned with now is the general notion or concept of creativity. Creativity is a basic factor of all existence and reality. Hartshorne notes that this notion of creativity has never been seriously considered as a first principle, until Whitehead.<sup>61</sup> It is a first principle for Hartshorne, which

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<sup>61</sup>Ibid., p. 1.

leads him to refer to his metaphysics as being a "philosophy of shared experience." This notion of sharing has not been explored heretofore. Individuals create for themselves; that is, there is not absolute determination as each entity creates a new form out of the so-called determining factors.

Sharing of creativity is the social character of experience, its aspect of sympathy, identification with others. Moreover, even one's past is, strictly speaking, 'another'. . . .The most obvious aspect of this is memory. In memory one takes account of one's previous decisions as relevant to the present decision. One participates or shares in past experiences, with their creative decisions. One also remembers past perceptions of how others thought and felt, and what they decided. Or one perceives now what they in the approximate present think, feel, and decide.<sup>62</sup>

All nature, according to Hartshorne, is of this social crisis.

Human nature is social through and through. All our thought is some sort of conversation or dialogue or social transaction.

. . . . .  
Now, further, not simply man, but all life whatsoever, has social structure. . . .And the higher one goes on the scale, the more obviously do the social aspects assume a primary role.

. . . . .  
Logical analysis shows, according to such high authorities as Whitehead and Peirce, that the "social" in its most general sense is definable as the synthesis of all the universal categories. It is the union of absolute and relative, independent and dependent, freedom and order, individual and universal, quality and structure, and so on. A nonsocial conception is only arrived at by reducing some category to zero case.<sup>63</sup>

This social conception will play an important role in our discussion of God in the forthcoming chapter.

One short note on the modal quality of perfection. His often-criticized proof for the existence of perfection<sup>64</sup> reveals more of Hartshorne's

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<sup>62</sup>Ibid., pp. 7-8.

<sup>63</sup>DR, pp. 27-28.

<sup>64</sup>LP, pp. 50-57.

method than is first recognized. Here, we have a strict adherence to logical considerations; we have a clarification of a universal concept; there is the search for unconditionally necessary truth. Indeed, one can, in these few pages, see Hartshorne touch upon six of his eleven definitions of metaphysics (c, d, e, h, j, and k).

#### How Whitehead and Hartshorne Relate

We have noted both men's systems, and certain relationships between the two are quite obvious. No more succinct statement of the relationship is available than Hartshorne's own:

I came to Whitehead already convinced that experience is essentially participation, that any reality we can conceive must be constituted of feelings in some broad sense, that reality is creative process and the future is open even for God . . . that metaphysical freedom is real. . . . Whitehead began to influence me strongly at the same time as Charles S. Peirce . . . and it is not easy to disentangle their influences. . . . One effect of Whitehead was in making me aware of the ambiguities in the notion of predication as applied to enduring individuals or "substances."

. . . . .  
The sources of my ideas about God are in good part elsewhere, though I enormously admire Whitehead's discussions of the theistic problem.

. . . . .  
Whitehead's views on "matter," the mind-body relations, perception, and causation have influenced me greatly. It is his, and not Kant's "answer to Hume" that I have found intelligible.<sup>65</sup>

These relationships between the two are merely external. The true relationship consists in the way in which the one implements and complements the other.

We stated that Whitehead was the cosmologist, Hartshorne the onto-

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<sup>65</sup> Philosophical Interrogations, Sydney and Beatrice Rome, editors (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), pp. 323-4.

logist.<sup>66</sup> A further exploration of that theme is in order. By cosmology, we mean the attention to empirical details as a basis for philosophical discussion. Whitehead seems to fill that bill with his focus on the scientific theories of quantum physics. In this sense, Hartshorne would deny Whitehead the appellation "metaphysician," since he contends there are no empirical metaphysics.<sup>67</sup> However, Whitehead does not only deal with empirical cosmology, he deals with the ontological structure of things. It is a matter of emphasis and origination. Hartshorne is the ontologist (relatively speaking) because his appeal to cases is less frequent and his argumentation is strictly from a priori principles.

We have stated that Hartshorne was the defendant of Whitehead. This is not to imply that Hartshorne was concerned to shore up some of Whitehead's weak arguments; indeed, where Whitehead is weak, Hartshorne leaves him in search of better arguments. But Hartshorne has supplied the logical proofs for much of what Whitehead describes, and, in so doing, has made Whitehead's a better and more readily understandable position.

The differences between the two are not readily discernible. We shall see the differences in the theistic discussions at that point. Some notable differences are in terms of Whitehead's concept of eternal objects. Hartshorne remarks that he is more impressed by Nominalism or anti-Platonic arguments than was Whitehead.<sup>68</sup> Further,

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<sup>66</sup>Supra, p. p. 22.

<sup>67</sup>CSP, p. 29.

<sup>68</sup>Charles Hartshorne, "Comment," in Eugene Peters, The Creative Advance (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1966), p. 139.

Actuality is "incurably atomic" or discrete, says Whitehead, and rightly so. But possibility, in its pure or eternal form, is, as Peirce insists and Whitehead seems at times to forget, essentially continuous. Hence it is misleading to talk of "eternal objects" as though this were a definite plurality. It is a continuous matrix out of which all plurality is created.<sup>69</sup>

These points of difference aside, the thoughts of these two men present a significantly unified whole which seem, at face value, highly applicable to theological use.

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME PROCESS-THEOLOGICAL NOTIONS

It is somewhat difficult to keep a line on the theological aspects of a philosophical scheme without engaging in strict philosophy. In this chapter, we shall attempt to develop a plausible theological framework from process-thought. At points, we will simply be rehashing what the process philosophers have already said on the point. When this is the case, we shall offer a critique, not of the philosophical or metaphysical worth of those statements, but of their relationship to theologically conservative points of view. In those instances where we have developed additional tenets to those already established by Whitehead and Hartshorne, we shall so indicate and critique our own as well as their positions. In several instances, we have no statements from either man on the topic under consideration, and have had to extrapolate a position from the general process mold. In those cases, critiques are difficult; but we shall at least point out the difficulties inherent in the development, both from the point of view of process and theology.

#### The Doctrine of God ( Theology )

Trying to find a beginning point for the process concept of God is no easy task. Both Whitehead and Hartshorne have expended considerable energy on the topic, and virtually all the major points they bring forth ought to be considered. For no other reason than the fact that the question of God's existence seems of primary importance, we begin with Hartshorne's development of that point.

Hartshorne begins with one of the major contributions to classical metaphysics- Anselm's ontological argument for the existence of God. In so doing, he must attempt to reinterpret that argument in the light of his own neoclassical metaphysics. To accomplish that, he must take seriously the objections raised against the classical notion and forms of the argument.

The standard view of the argument is that Anselm is analyzing a purely mental conception and drawing the implications within it. This opens the argument to various criticisms:

1. Anselm's initial premise that the mind begins by thinking a legitimate idea is challenged. . . . Since it refers to nothing in our sensory experience, are we really able to "think" of something when we hear Anselm say, "that than which nothing greater can be conceived"?
2. Let it be granted that Anselm's phrase does convey an idea to us. This may still be what Descartes calls a "factitious" idea, wholly made up by our minds and unrelated to anything in reality.
3. Let it be granted that this is a valid idea. Still, how can Anselm expect that everyone will identify it with God? . . . He should not claim that anyone who hears his words will automatically understand what God is.
4. Let it be granted that men might identify this idea with God. . . . Any proof that claims to begin with some "idea" of God, which can readily communicate in a few words, shows by that very fact that it is not dealing with God at all.
5. Let Anselm be granted his starting point, a genuine, thinkable definable idea of God. . . . How can he prove God's existence from an idea of God which he himself has selected for this purpose? All he has done . . . is to adopt an idea that simply pre-emptly the whole question of existence. . . . This is not to prove anything, but to move in a vicious circle, where the matter is settled by fiat. God is defined in terms of an idea that closes the question of existence even before it is opened.
6. Let it be allowed that men have an idea of God and can argue from it. . . . (S)ince we must go beyond our concept of anything in order to be able to ascribe existence to it, no rational analysis of our idea of God will ever yield a knowledge of his existence. Every ontological proof is fallacious.
7. Let it be granted that we do have an idea of God and can think of his existence. All that Anselm's argument shows is not that God exists, but that our minds must think that he exists if they are to hold to this idea of him with logical consistency. . . . What

Anselm has done is simply to confuse the necessity of drawing an inference (logical necessity) with the necessity of objective existence (ontological necessity).<sup>1</sup>

Now these comprise a strong case against the ontological argument as it has been understood by its opponents. Hartshorne is convinced that, first, this form of the argument is invalid (or at least weak), and, second, that all those who have refuted Anselm have not read his full argument. Hartshorne contends that Anselm's significant contribution to theism is not this argument, but one which is largely overlooked.

This second or stronger version is: To exist necessarily is better than to exist contingently; hence the greatest conceivable being can exist only necessarily. Moreover, whatever could be necessary is necessary ("reduction principle" of modal logic); hence to say that God does not exist necessarily is to say that he could not do so, and since he also could not exist contingently, it is to say that he could not exist at all.<sup>2</sup>

Hartshorne feels that now, at least, we are dealing with Anselm at his best. What remains now is to show that this concept of God is neither contradictory nor lacking in significance. He achieves the first by his now classical (in a non-technical sense) proof, which runs:

The logical structure of the Anselmian argument, in its mature or "Second" form, may be partially formalized as follows:

'q' for '( $\exists x$ ) Px' There is a perfect being, or perfection exists

'N' for 'it is necessary (logically true) that'

' $\neg$ ' for 'it is not true that'

'v' for 'or'

' $p \rightarrow q$ ' for 'p strictly implies q' or 'N (p & q)'

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur C. McGill, "Recent Discussions of Anselm's Proof," in The Many-Faced Argument, edited by John Hick and Arthur C. McGill (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), pp. 34-36. See also Hartshorne's list of twenty objections to the proof, LP, pp. 45-47.

<sup>2</sup> Hartshorne, "What Did Anselm Discover?" in The Many-Faced Argument, p. 322. See also AD, pp. 33-34.

1. $q \rightarrow Nq$	"Anselm's Principle": perfection could not exist contingently
2. $Nq \vee \sim Nq$	Excluded Middle
3. $\sim Nq \rightarrow N\sim Nq$	Form of Becker's Postulate: modal status is always necessary
4. $Nq \vee N\sim Nq$	Inference from (2,3)
5. $N\sim Nq \rightarrow N\sim q$	Inference from (1): The necessary falsity of the consequent implies that of the antecedent (Modal form of modus tollens)
6. $Nq \vee N\sim q$	Inference from (4,5)
7. $\sim N\sim q$	Intuitive postulate (or conclusion from other theistic arguments): perfection is not impossible
8. $Nq$	Inference from (6,7)
9. $Nq \rightarrow q$	Modal axiom
10. $q$	Inference from (8,9) <sup>3</sup>

Now Hartshorne insists that this is an extremely hard argument to refute. One may reject it, especially at points (1,3 & 7), but this is not to refute it.

The argument, and the proof by Hartshorne, is based on the following assumptions that are drawn from modal logic: "(1) With the modality termed contingency, existence and non-existence are equally conceivable."<sup>4</sup> This means that, if God could be shown to be contingent (existentially so), then he could be conceived not to exist. "(2) With the modality of impossibility, existence is not (consistently) conceivable (example, round-square)."<sup>5</sup> This means that, if the concept of God is shown to be impossible, so also his existence would be impossible. "(3) With the modality of necessity- if it be admitted that there can be such a status-

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<sup>3</sup>LP, pp. 50-51.

<sup>4</sup>Hartshorne, "What Did Anselm Discover?", p. 326.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

only existence, but not nonexistence, is conceivable."<sup>6</sup> This means that, if God is shown to be a necessary being, his existence would be irrefutable. Hartshorne is convinced that his proof, which equates 'q' with 'God', demonstrates this necessary situation.<sup>7</sup>

It may have been noticed that, in speaking of contingency, we qualified it in terms of its relationship to existence. This is because Hartshorne sees that there is a sense in which God is contingent, but not as it affects his existence. The contingency of God is related to his effect on and being affected by the world. Past metaphysics have tended to ascribe to God a quality of immutability, uncausality and unsurpassability that touches not only his existence, but his concrete nature as well. To this, Hartshorne replies, "To identify God with this abstraction seems a philosophical species of idolatry."<sup>8</sup>

This notion of God's contingency, which we shall investigate more fully further on, has close ties with the Whiteheadian interpretation of God. It is important to turn to Whitehead at this point because his is the framework around which the entire process notion fits. Whitehead has posited three aspects of God: his Primordial Nature, his Consequent Nature, and his Superjective Nature.<sup>9</sup> We shall consider each separately.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Although I hardly qualify as a modal logician, I am persuaded by this demonstration. For a counter-argument, see John Hick, "A Critique of the 'Second Argument'," in The Many-Faced Argument, pp. 341-56.

<sup>8</sup>NT, p. 44.

<sup>9</sup>PR, passim.

The Primordial Nature of God Whitehead says is "the unconditioned conceptual valuation of the entire multiplicity of eternal objects."<sup>10</sup> This indicates that God, like man, has both a mental and a physical pole, he is dipolar. The Primordial Nature is this mental pole. Eternal objects, because of their nature, are extremely difficult to embrace fully at any given moment. It is within the nature of man that the full multiplicity of eternal objects is not operative; that is, man makes selections and prehends eternal objects with varying degrees of intensity. This is not the case with God; his valuation of eternal objects is complete.

"Conceptual valuation" is one of Whitehead's Categorical Obligations which states

From each physical feeling there is the derivative of a purely conceptual feeling whose datum is the eternal object determinant of the definiteness of the actual entity, or nexus, physically felt.<sup>11</sup>

For actual occasions, this is derivative from physical feeling. It would appear that, as applied to God, this notion of derivation is gone. God's conceptual valuation is timeless; it is primordial.<sup>12</sup>

Because this valuation is complete in God, it is the ordering principle for eternal objects.

This final entity is the divine element in the world, by which the barren inefficient disjunction of abstract potentialities obtains

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 39-40.

<sup>12</sup> William A. Christian, An Interpretation of Whitehead's Metaphysics (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1959), p. 289.

primordially the efficient conjunction of ideal realization. This ideal realization of potentialities in a primordial actual entity constitutes the metaphysical stability whereby the actual process exemplifies general principles of metaphysics, and attains the ends proper to specific types of emergent order. By reason of the actuality of this primordial valuation of pure potentials, each eternal object has a definite, effective relevance to each concre-  
scent process. Apart from such orderings, there would be a complete disjunction of eternal objects unrealized in the temporal world.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, the Primordial Nature of God is what keeps the prehension of eternal objects within a reasonable framework. It orders the eternal objects so that actual entities will have a configuration out of which to prehend, rather than a morass.

The Consequent Nature of God is what might be called his physical pole. This is the way in which God relates to actual entities.

God, as well as being primordial, is also consequent. He is the beginning and the end. He is not the beginning in the sense of being in the past of all members. He is the presupposed actuality of conceptual operation, in unison of becoming with every other creative act. This by reason of the relativity of all things, there is a reaction of the world on God. The completion of God's nature into a fullness of physical feeling is derived from the objectification of the world in God. He shares with every new creation its actual world; and the concre-  
scent creature is objectified in God as a novel element of God's objectification of that actual world.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, the Consequent Nature of God suggests that God not only affects the world, but is affected by it. God is, thus, like every actual entity.

The Superjective Nature of God Whitehead describes thus:

There are four creative phases in which the universe accomplishes its actuality. There is first the phase of conceptual origination, deficient in actuality, but infinite in its adjustment of valuation. Secondly, there is the temporal phase of physical origination, with its multiplicity of actualities. In this phase full actuality is attained; but there is a deficiency in the solidarity

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<sup>13</sup>PR, p. 64.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 523.

of individuals with each other. This phase derives its determinate conditions from the first phase. Thirdly, there is the phase of perfected actuality, in which the many are one everlastingly, without the qualification of any loss either of individual identity or of completeness of unity. In everlastingness, immediacy is reconciled with objective immortality. This phase derives the conditions of its being from the two antecedent phases. In the fourth phase, the creative action completes itself. For the perfected actuality passes back into the temporal world, and qualifies this world so that each temporal actuality includes it as an immediate fact of relevant experience. . . . The action of the fourth phase is the love of God for the world.<sup>15</sup>

All this means is that the world feels God's reception of it, that is, feels God as consequent, and consequently, feels the totality of the past within the divine life.<sup>16</sup>

Whitehead summarizes his three Natures thus:

The 'primordial nature' of God is the concrescence of an unity of conceptual feeling, including among their data all eternal objects. The concrescence is directed by the subjective aim, that the subjective forms of feeling shall be such as to constitute the eternal objects into relevant lures of feeling severally appropriated for all realizable basic conditions. The 'consequent nature' of God is the physical prehension by God of actualities of the evolving universe. This primordial nature direct such perspective of objectification that each novel actuality in the temporal world contributes such elements as it can to a realization in God free from inhibitions of intensity by reason of discordance. The 'superjective' nature of God is the character of the pragmatic value of his specific satisfaction qualifying the transcendent creativity in the various temporal instances.<sup>17</sup>

Now this is not the fullest way in which we can explain Whitehead's theism. To do that, we must ask some germane questions: How does God affect the world? How does the world affect God? Does Hartshorne agree

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 532.

<sup>16</sup>Eugene Peters, The Creative Advance (St. Louis: The Bethany Press, 1966), p. 75.

<sup>17</sup>PR, p. 64.

with these principles?

How does God affect the world? The simplest answer to that is that God in himself contains all eternal objects and is himself an actual entity. This means that God holds the principle of possibility for all actuality in the universe in that he is the unifying structure that gives each actual entity the capacity of prehending specific eternal objects that would be necessary for its actualization. This occurs in the subjective aim of the occasion.

It should be remembered that the subjective aim is the overriding principle of the actual occasion that determines what its full satisfaction shall be. But the subjective aim has an initial aim which is, as far as I can determine, a given from God.<sup>18</sup> Initial aim suggests that God has chosen what is the best realization for each actual entity, and so orders the eternal objects that that actual occasion can achieve that best. It supposes that the subjective aim is derived from the initial aim, but does not suppose that it is determined by it.

In the first place, the initial aim so understood determines what locus or standpoint will be occupied by each occasion. This, in turn, determines just what occasions will constitute the past of the new occasion.

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 In the second place, the initial aim also determines at what kind of satisfaction the occasion will initially aim and thereby influences, without determining, the satisfaction actually attained.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Christian, pp. 304-9. This concept of initial aim sounds very much like the Islamic doctrine of Iktisab (the notion that God predestines man completely, but man concurs, albeit unconsciously) but with the slight difference that in Islam, God is not affected in return; here he is.

<sup>19</sup>John B. Cobb, Jr., A Christian Natural Theology (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1965), pp. 152-4. See also Appendix C, Figure 1.

Thus God, in his Primordial Nature, has the function of ordering and establishing (might we even say creating?) the world. But the creativity that God brings into the world does not negate the creativity of each actual occasion. The subjective form of the occasion is autonomous, and accordingly makes creative decisions within the locus in which it finds itself. In other words, God affects the world by ordering its basic configurations; actual entities reform the patterns within those configurations.

How does the world affect God? It must be brought forth at this point that God is himself an actual entity. This means that he shares all the characteristics of all actual entities, save one. God is the only actual entity that is not also an actual occasion. This means that God is timeless (primordial) and that he does not originate from his physical pole, as do actual occasions, but from his mental pole.<sup>20</sup> But, in all other respects, God and "the most trivial puff of existence in far-off empty space"<sup>21</sup> react the same.

This means, first of all, that God reacts to other actual entities. Thus, he has physical prehensions, must be conceded to have a subjective aim, and is geared toward some satisfaction. But God is a unique actual entity in respect to all of these. His physical prehensions are all-inclusive, that is, he prehends all other actual entities simultaneously.<sup>22</sup> Further, his subjective aim is the initial aim of all other actual enti-

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<sup>20</sup>PR, p. 54.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>22</sup>Christian, pp. 305-6.

ties as they emerge.<sup>23</sup> Most importantly, his satisfaction is quite unlike that of other entities. First, his satisfaction is unified, that is, he is always satisfied at any given time.<sup>24</sup> His satisfaction is determinate, so that, unlike other actual entities which perish but do not change after they perish, God changes but does not perish.<sup>25</sup> Thirdly, God's satisfaction has a unique finality. It does not result in perishing when achieved; nor does it demand that all entities that contribute to its fullness be historically past.<sup>26</sup> The affect of the world on God, then, is to change him as each actual occasion perishes as sinks into his memory, or consequent nature.

The question of how Hartshorne would view this demands far more space than the other two. Briefly, it can be said that Hartshorne would agree with Whitehead that God is a changeable being, and, in that sense, contingent.

Classical metaphysics depreciated the contingent. Spinoza is an extreme case. But as late as Hegel, 'necessary' is a word of laudation, and 'contingent', of denigration. Metaphysics seeks to know what it is that is necessary, or 'could not be otherwise than it is'. But perhaps what is necessary is precisely and solely that a certain ultimate form of contingency should have instances. Perhaps even the 'necessary being' is not one 'without accidents', but one which is bound to have some appropriate accidents or other. It is no accident that there should be accidents; rather, there are bound to be accidents, just as it is predictable that unpredictable events will never cease to occur. In the same way the divine being whose existence is not contingent may escape contingency only be-

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<sup>23</sup>FR, pp. 134, 343, 374; AI, p. 357.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., pp. 49-50; Christian, p. 295.

<sup>25</sup>Christian, p. 296.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 297 - 300.

cause, and only in the sense that, not only are accidents bound to occur, but divine accidents are bound to be among them. It is a defensible view that God is the one being to whom accidents are always bound to happen.<sup>27</sup>

This is what Hartshorne means by a social conception of God. He argues that the old classical way of looking at God, with such terms as 'immutable,' 'perfect,' 'absolute,' is a denial of relatively understandable concepts of deity. These are abstractions from older, and previous, social conceptions of God that spoke of deity in terms of assisting, loving, or knowing.<sup>28</sup>

This social conception of God leads Hartshorne to understand the attributes of God relationally. For example, omniscience, a derived abstraction, is nothing other than a knowing relationship with everything that is known to the divine mind.<sup>29</sup> Absolute knowledge, that which suggests that God knows even the unknown, is, to Hartshorne, a ridiculous contradiction.<sup>30</sup> Again, the notion of omnipotence, which Hartshorne would call 'causal adequacy', means that God is capable of doing whatever is appropriate for the maximization of his satisfaction. It does not mean that he is capable of doing anything within his definition.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>CSP, p. 47.

<sup>28</sup>DR, pp. 25-26.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 121.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 134-8. The definition of omnipotence, as classically conceived, rules out the possibility of, say, God creating a stone so big that he could not move it. This would say that God is both omnipotent and not omnipotent at the same time (p and non-p) which is logically impossible.

Against these classical views, Hartshorne, in much the same way as Whitehead, proposes that God is contingent on the world, that is, is affected by it. He calls the the 'receptivity of God' which leads to his 'enrichment'.<sup>32</sup> All this stems from his work on Anselm's ontological argument. Anselm, thinks Hartshorne, conceived of the key phrase, "that than which nothing greater can be conceived,"<sup>33</sup> as meaning that God is unsurpassable even by himself; he could be no greater than he is. Hartshorne contends that the better, and equally derivable, contention is that God is unsurpassed by others, but capable of and surpassing himself.<sup>34</sup>

This then leads us to ask whether this God, so described by process thinking, is equatable to, or in any sense superior or inferior to, that of theological speculation and study. Hartshorne, I think, more than Whitehead, is aware that what he presents is not the object of worship.

"God" properly stands for the object of worship. Can a worshipful deity be the object of rational analysis or demonstration? Must not what we analyze be an it, rather than a thou?<sup>35</sup>

But he is insistent that the Thou includes the it, so that he feels that his enterprise can do nothing but assist the worshipper. The problem, however, is that what both are doing with the concept of God does not readily avail itself to the individual worshipper. Is this a serious drawback?

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<sup>32</sup>LP, p. 274.

<sup>33</sup>Anselm, Proslogium, IV in St. Anselm: Basic Writings, edited by S.N. Deane (LaSalle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing, 1962), pp. 9-10.

<sup>34</sup>LP, p. 35.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 3-4. Italics original.

Several men have attacked both the Whiteheadian and Hartshornian concepts of Gos. Stephen Ely's rather lengthy essay is perhaps the most thorough in its presentation.<sup>36</sup> Ely contends that, if one takes the primordial nature of God, what is presented is a misconception of God. With the addition of the consequent nature, God appears to be somewhat more available for religious purposes, but not very. Three critiques of Ely's presentation seem to be in order, one positive, the other two negative. On the positive side, Ely has asked the right question of availability, "Is God for me?" The pro me aspect is essential if God is to be considered as anything more than a benevolent puppetmaster. However, Ely has missed two key points in Whitehead that lead him to answer his question in the negative rather than the affirmative. First, he has completely forgotten the 'superjective nature' of God. This would have enabled him to more closely relate God to the human sphere in an amiable manner. Second, Ely has misunderstood the quality of the primordial nature; he assumes that it means a past event, while Whitehead insists that it is a present, as well as a past, quality.

I contend that both Whitehead and Hartshorne have presented very available Gods. They have managed, more than others, to balance transcendence with immanence so that neither overtakes the other. In so doing, they have resolved a nagging paradox that has been more of a hinderance than help to theological interpretation.

Further, Hartshorne's theistic proof, and their attendant logic, have enabled theology to express itself more cogently, without resorting

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<sup>36</sup>The Religious Availability of Whitehead's God (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1942).

to various mental gymnastics. His refutation of classical theism=continues a necessary function in theological endeavor. His alternative forge a new path that can assist in making theology more palatable to modern, secular man. Whitehead, too, because of his close association with and attention to scientific enquiry has enabled metaphysics in general, and theology in particular, to regain a respectable status in the world of thought.

### The Doctrine of Christ ( Christology )

It must be pointed out from the outset of the section that neither Whitehead nor Hartshorne intend their systems to be Christian theologies. They are theists, not theologians. Consequently, with only an occasional aside, they have not interest in the specific doctrine of Christ. Even Cobb does not qualify as a Christian process theologian because he has not dealt with the doctrine of Christ. This section, then, must rely on secondary resources for its validation.

The major concerns with which we are faced here are: Can process affirm the deity/humanity of Jesus? Is there a place in process for the atonement? Was Christ necessary? The first asks the question of the view that process has of Christ's person, the second asks about his work, and the third asks about his effectiveness.

Can process talk about the deity/humanity of Christ? To do so, process would have to come to terms with what every theology has had to deal, namely, the possibility of deity becoming humanity. Most theological answers tend to assert that the only way in which this is possible is through a disruption of the way things should be and are. Perhaps

process offers a better solution.

First, because God and man are not different in quality but only in intensity, process avoids the first problem of having to face a paradox from the outset. The concept that God is an actual entity, just as man is, helps process overcome an insoluble problem. Without this notion, the only recourse is to fiat. Second, because of the concept of God valuating all eternal objects in himself, process would avoid the mistake of overhumanifying Jesus. To consider the humanity of Jesus exclusively eliminates the most potent concept of Christ available for religious or theological purposes.

Some attempts to work with a process mold in the area of christology have failed to take these points seriously. Norman Pittenger, for example, makes the mistake of not utilizing fully the process concept of God as an actual entity.<sup>37</sup>

(We) must speak of the Divine Action and the human response, or the human action which is correlated with and serves as an instrument . . . for that Divine Action. This makes it possible for us to say . . . that the human life of Jesus was so one at will (that is to say, in the deepest intentionality of being) with God that in him the life of God was lived in man, by a man, and for men. . . . In him the image of God is emergent and manifest in full humanity. He is not an unrelated anomaly; he is the classic instance of the Divine Action in manhood.<sup>38</sup>

This concept does justice neither to the Biblical witness nor to process thinking. Peter Hamilton's entire christology is a denial of the relationship between actual occasion and God.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>God in Process (London: SCM Press, 1967), p. 25.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>39</sup>The Living God and the Modern World (Philadelphia: United Church Press, 1967), pp. 180-210.

Charles Curtis has presented a far more balanced thesis in this area, and deserves some attention:

Process theology makes the notion of potentiality basic to the understanding of the person and nature of Christ. He is the realization of the potentialities of the past (e.g. the fulfillment of the promises of God under the old covenant) and the reservoir of the potentialities of the future (the new heaven and the new earth of the new covenant). And because Christ has this relationship to potentiality, he is the key to existence -human, cosmic, and divine.<sup>40</sup>

Both emphases are here present- the humanity and the deity. The deity is found in identifying Christ with future potentiality (similar to the hold on eternal objects of the Primordial Nature of God); the humanity is to be found in asserting Christ's mental or conceptual prehension of past eternal objects (thus affirming his actualization in the way in which all actual entities come into being).

What is missing here, and perhaps Curtis considered it to go without saying, is the physical prehension of Christ of past actual entities. To fully deal with this, we need a more fully developed pneumatology.<sup>41</sup> Suffice it to say, at this point, that the Spirit would have to be considered an actual entity (and not an eternal object) for this to take place. I am, of course, leading up to a process understanding of the virgin birth.<sup>42</sup> I think process has definite room for this concept, which in itself would make this a unique theological development of the twentieth century. The process understanding of the virgin birth would in-

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<sup>40</sup>The Task of Philosophical Theology (New York: Philosophical Library, 1967), pp. 43-44.

<sup>41</sup>Infra, pp.

<sup>42</sup>Both Pittenger and Hamilton disregard or refute this notion. Supra, p. 70, notes 37 and 39.

volve several keystone ideas from process. The first is the novelty of every actual entity. Normal birth processes would be considered thus: the emerging actual entity has about it the physical poles that will determine the locus of its emergence. In common parlance, this would mean that every known actual entity of the human variety, or baby, has parents that produced it, numbering two, one female, the other male. In the case of this baby, actual entity, it prehended these physically and emerged in a pattern consistent with all other thus emerging entities. In the case of Christ, the novelty consisted in his prehending, not the normal two physical agents, but the one normal, his mother, and one unique, the Spirit. Now, in order for Christ to be fully human, it is necessary that the Spirit be an actual entity, otherwise, in contrast to other humans, Christ would have been the product of a physical and mental prehension in his existence, which would have made him quite different than human.<sup>43</sup> Christ is, then, to be considered an actual entity, as is God.

Is there a place in process for the atonement? To answer that question, we must first ascertain what we mean by the atonement. If it is assumed that the atonement was a restoration to God by a man that which was lost from God, namely his creatures, the process cannot include this. Nothing is lost in process-thought; it either is eternal, and thus within the valuation of the Primordial Nature of God, or it perishes and is included in the Consequent Nature of God. If, by atonement, we mean an

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<sup>43</sup>Whitehead argues that the entities are the result of both physical and mental prehensions. However, I think in the case of physical emergence, he would agree that it demands physical prehension alone. Conceptual prehensions seem to affect the accidents of the emerging entity rather than its very existence.

alteration of man, process could handle this as a past actual occasion, but it hardly does full justice to the theological concept.

The best meaning, and the one which seems to deal with both the process point of view and the theological concern, is that which views the atonement as that event which changes God on our behalf. Two assumptions are inherent here. First, this assumes that what is said about the beneficial relationship God and man (God pro me<sup>44</sup>) applies, from a theological point of view, to those who are called 'the people of God.' There is no doubt that this is a derivation of Whitehead's and Hartsorne's intentions, but it seems necessary. Second, this assumes that change in God means not only progressive alteration, but reversal as well.

With these assumptions, process theology would argue that what Christ did was, by his death and reurrection, to change God's mind about us; he changed the relationship between God and man. This begs the question of why Jesus Christ, and not some other man or even all men?

Why was Jesus necessary? This will involve a two-part answer; first, as to his necessity for being the only one through whom this could occur, and, second, as to the effectiveness of this being transmuted to other beings.

It could only have been Jesus because he alone was that actual entity that so valuated is conceptual prehensions and was so in tune with his initial and subjective aims that he matched God in all things. This is a process way of saying that he was like us in every way except sin.

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<sup>44</sup>Supra, p. 68.

Now, it would have been sufficient, from a process point of view, to simply assert that God established this initial aim for Jesus, and not, say, Moses, and to thus point to the necessity of Jesus being the one. But, in stating it in the way in which we have, we have fulfilled the needs of theology as well. Further, initial aim is not fully determinate; it demands the assent of the subjective aim, and the subjective form of that aim. Our thesis, here, has said that at no time in the existence of this actual entity, Jesus, did his subjective form negate his subjective aim; nor did his subjective aim at any point sway from the initial aim established for him.

The effectiveness of Jesus as the imputor of this to other actual entities is a little more involved. Succinctly put, it would state that Jesus, upon his 'perishing',<sup>45</sup> serves as so intense a physical prehension that others are conformed to him. Now this involves the understanding of what faith is. In order to serve a theologically sound purpose, we cannot allow faith to be either just intellect or just emotivism. It would appear that it is most closely linked with prehension, but that would demand of it that it be a very special form of prehension. This is viable, assuming we can postulate a workable hypothesis for the Spirit and his guidance. That hypothesis would have to involve the Spirit, not only as actual entity, but also as eternal object which is so prehend- ed that it excludes other prehensions contrary to it. The 'prehensive' faith then would be that prehension which, governed by the overriding prehension of the Spirit, feels Jesus to the extent that other prehen-

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<sup>45</sup>We are not referring here to his death, but his passage from historical time.

sions, presumably and hopefully prehensions of sin, evil, etc., are negated.<sup>46</sup>

### The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit ( Pneumatology )

We have already given some indications of what process thought would do with this notion. Here we shall attempt to codify that. We have stated that, for the rest of our theology, it is necessary that the Spirit be both an actual entity and an eternal object. This would make the Spirit the most unique case in the process scheme. It is, I think, on this point that our entire theological endeavor shall hinge. If we cannot satisfactorily accomplish the amalgamation of entity and object here, then our christology, ethics, ecclesiology and eschatology will be seriously jeopardized.

Whitehead would argue that there is no actual entity that is an eternal object and the converse. This is mandatory for his system since, to allow this instance, he would have to combine actuality with possibility, or misplace the concrete.<sup>47</sup> We shall overcome that concept, not by eradicating it, but by talking in terms of reference. That is to say, we shall not equate the Spirit with either actual entity or eternal object, but shall refer to the sense in which he might be viewed as either. We can do this because the Spirit functions both as a subject and as a predicate.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>See Appendix C, Figure 2.

<sup>47</sup>Christian, p. 263.

<sup>48</sup>Category of Explanation (xv). PR, pp. 35-36.

As subject, the Spirit is the moving force behind prehension in faith. He is the mover to faith. This is accomplished by his intensity for the given actual occasion; an intensity that is of such magnitude that it makes other prehended elements negative. This would suggest that, beyond being a single actual entity, the Spirit is more along the lines of a nexus. To dub him so is not to deny his aspect as actual. Thus, the Spirit, as subject of prehension, is that which moves to faith.

This understanding of the Spirit does not solve any of the logical difficulties that ordinary theological conceptions of him contain. Those difficulties include the how of faith coming to an individual, the why of particular individuals being so graced, and the question of special gifts and their distribution. The first asks in what way the Spirit brings men to faith. To affirm that the individual seizes the Spirit for faith is to attribute to man participation in his salvation; it also begs the question of faith, for the very seizure is an act of faith. To affirm that the Spirit dispenses faith indiscriminately involves one in a battle about the love of God for the whole of humanity. The second has to do with why certain individuals come to faith and not others. This is based on the first question and is closely related to it. The third, which has become a thorny issue of late, asks why certain individuals seem to have a greater dispensation of the Spirit than do others. While it will not solve the other two issues, process can offer a clue to that last issue. It is, as are so many points in the process scheme, tied up with the notion of creativity. Since no entity is so causally conditioned that it cannot become other than the sum of the influences around it, that is, is creative, the gift(s) of the Spirit can be seen as such a creative act. This would suggest that the Spirit, as a nexus, carries

several available prehensions of lower intensity than the nexus as a whole conveys. Certain individuals, either because their subjective form is so ordered or because other conditions permit, are enabled to apprehend these lower-intensity options. Others are not so enabled.

As predicate, the Spirit become an integral part of the multiplicity of eternal objects. That is, he reacts, as do eternal objects, upon each actual entity but is not included within their actuality. No man becomes the Spirit, and the Spirit does not become man. He remains always Spirit. Whitehead speaks of eternal objects in much this way. This further would mean that the Spirit 'jumps' in and out of prehension as do eternal objects. Its manifestations are such that they appear constant throughout all time in their effects.

Thus, we would call the Spirit an 'eternal entity,' a name which would combine the two aspects. Now, it can, and probably should, be argued that we have, in no sense, proved that the Spirit is both eternal object and actual entity. All we have done is to indicate the possibility of this being so. Acceptance of this, at this point, must be based on intuitive feeling that this is the case, although I feel that this is yet capable of logical demonstration.

#### The Doctrine of Man ( Anthropology )

Once again, we have come to a concept to which both Whitehead and Hartshorne address themselves, so our ground will be less shaky. We will concern ourselves here with the basic considerations that the two men have to offer in telling us about man, after which we shall raise what, for theology, is a most pertinent question: Is the process anthropology

basically optimistic or pessimistic?

Our discussion of the process view of man will center around the three traditional concepts that surround the theological concept of man: man as mind, man as self, and man as soul. Whitehead will serve as our primary source, with indications from Hartshorne forming a frame of reference for additional insights.

Whitehead was convinced that the mind was an important part of man. But he was equally convinced that thought was not limited to man. Every actual entity has, in some sense, the ability to think. This is obvious from Whitehead's insistence on every actual entity prehending, which is not a materialistic function. It is, qualifiedly, a mental activity. One of the functions of the mind is experience, the forms of which are memory, feeling and imagination.<sup>49</sup>

The concept of self has to do with personal identity. This is closely tied up with the experience of memory, for I remember myself more concretely than any other entity. It is this memory which enables me to recognize myself even in the face of the fact that every hour I am uniquely different than before. The concept of self enables me to better apprehend my personal past as well as that of other entities. Whitehead speculated that memory was to be found in the interstices between brain cells. The question of location is unimportant; it remains that the concept of a memory assists me to relate more concretely with the totality of reality around me.

The most time is spent on the soul. Whitehead seems to relate the

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<sup>49</sup>CSP, pp. 75-82.

soul and man as identical, although he insists that man is not the only creature with a soul. The human soul, for Whitehead, is not an individual entity, but a society.<sup>50</sup> The body is the environment of this society, which is a part of the society's experience.<sup>51</sup> Because it is a society, the soul has the capability of many experiences simultaneously. For example, it is capable for the human actual entity to both partake of food and carry on a serious discussion of high mental content. This would be an example of an intense physical and mental prehension occurring at once.

There is a way in which the human soul is distinctive from other souls.

One way of distinguishing among souls is according to the significance to the individual dominant occasions of their serial connectedness with each other.

. . . . .  
We may also distinguish between souls according to the relative importance of fresh organic stimuli and past experiences.

. . . . .  
The . . . more important basis for comparing men and other animals has to do with the quality of the occasions constituting their souls.

. . . . .  
When we ask specifically what distinguishes man from other animals, the single clear answer is language.<sup>52</sup>

Thus man holds a rather special position in process thought, as would be expected of a system that is trying to describe the entirety of reality.

The concepts of the self and the soul would intimate that man is, beyond other actual entities, more aware of his self than others. And

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<sup>50</sup>Cobb, p. 47.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 57-59.

this is a defensible position in a process framework.

The self is . . . always defined in terms of its values. If the values be transient, so is the self. If the values are intransient, so is the self. If the values be dispersed and incoherent, so is the self. If they are organized and integrated, so is the self. In the former case the person is analyzable, with little or no loss, into small and disorganized values which comprise his life. He lends himself to a deterministic theory of human nature, and the psychoanalyst rightly presumes him to be the product of his past. In the latter case, the exact converse holds. The unified self, by definition cannot be understood in terms of his constituent parts as dissected away from one another. Instead of his being understood exclusively as the outcome of his environment, the environment can only be understood in terms of him. His very capacity to organize what might otherwise be discordant values puts him in a position of causal primacy.<sup>53</sup>

This means that, there is a sense in which man is more self-identifying than other actual entities, but it is not necessarily so. Each human actual entity must employ his valuation to the extent that he does prehend consciously what other entities and eternal objects are influencing him and how they are doing it for this to happen. This question of valuation, and the organization of it, plays a particularly strong role in the ethics of process, as we shall see.

This leads us, then, to our question about optimism and/or pessimism of the process anthropology. Here we must make allowance for what process thinkers actually have done in this regard and what the system is capable of doing. It is quite obvious that both Hartshorne and Whitehead hold highly optimistic views of man. This does not mean that our anthropology must necessarily do so.

It is difficult to cite particular references in either Whitehead or Hartshorne to demonstrate this assertion. It is more a feeling that

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<sup>53</sup>Nathaniel Lawrence, "Time, Value and the Self," in The Relevance of Whitehead, edited by Ivor Leclerc (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1961), p. 159.

pervades their attitude. The whole notion of creativity suggests this. While it is admitted that creativity can result in negative forms, the entire prospect is that what the human actual entity self-creates is beneficial. Now it must be stressed that one of the purposes for this doctrine of creativity is to wrest the issue of evil away from any implication of God's role in it. Now, we are here talking about moral, and not aesthetic, bad; the first implies choice and action, the second, influence and being acted upon. In the sense of aesthetic evil, God is affected.<sup>54</sup> But God cannot be implicated in moral evil.

Moral evil comes as a result of man's creativity (and in some sense, the creative action of all other actual entities).

With a multiplicity of creative agents, some risk of conflict and suffering is inevitable. The source of evil is precisely this multiplicity. But it is equally the source of good. . . . (C)reatures determine worldly particulars, good and evil.<sup>55</sup>

This is repeated often in both Whitehead and Hartshorne. But it begs the question of what evil is, its nature.

Essentially, evil is a negative, not a positive, fact. "The nature of evil is that the character of things are mutually obstructive."<sup>56</sup> That is to say, evil is a misworking of the process. It would appear to be like this: given the actual entities of the past and the eternal objects for each emerging actual entity, there is the best possible result, which would be the amalgamation of the subjective and initial aims pre-  
hending these so that the motion is constantly toward the initial aim.

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<sup>54</sup>MVG, pp. 195-7.

<sup>55</sup>CSP, pp. 238-40.

<sup>56</sup>PR, p. 517.

The creative power of man is such, however, that he may apprehend positively that which would distract from the initial aim, and thus set himself away from it. This avoids placing God in charge of evil and locates it in the actual entity; and it explains what obstruction is.

The question is, then, do Whitehead and Hartshorne see this obstructive element as consistently making itself influential. In other words, do men frequently apprehend these elements positively? It would appear not, for both are agreed that the general flow of actual entities is toward positive prehension of that which concurs with the initial aims for them.

Do their views, optimistic as they are, negate the possibility of a pessimistic view of man? Not necessarily. But, in order to posit such a view, it will be necessary to take two questions into consideration. First, will not a pessimistic view of man result in an evil God? Second, does a pessimistic view relegate man to a lower status than other actual entities?

Will not a pessimistic view of man result in an evil God? This question takes seriously the Consequent Nature of God, to wit, that, since the consequent nature is the multiplicity of actual occasions, will not the total effect of evil actual entities so constituting this nature make that nature a derived evil? The answer is no, at least not in essence. The reason for this is that God relates evil events to others in such a way that some positive value result.<sup>57</sup> That is a way of saying that God turns evil into good, to the extent that, what sways

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<sup>57</sup>Norbert O. Schedler, "The Development of Process Theology," unpublished lecture given at Concordia Senior College, Ft. Wayne, Indiana Spring, 1969, p. 9. (mimeographed)

from initial aim in the actual entity apart from God, does not do so in God, because God's subjective aim and initial aim are coincidental.

Does a pessimistic view of man relegate man to a lower status than other actual entities? Not necessarily, since man is not the only actual entity capable of misprehending elements. But this is not a sufficient answer. In a sense, the issue is a specious one, for it presupposes that man must be, to be man, superior in all respects to other creatures. One of the prime tenets of process is that this superiority is merely one of value, not of quality. What is truly at stake here is the question of whether or not the human actual entity will be of a different modal status than all other actual entities. If so, are they truly actual entities?

The answer to this would have to be in the affirmative. The relationship between human actual entities and other actual entities has to do with the use, not availability, of prehensions. Animals, for example, are not considered to be sinful primarily because they do not, with frequency, employ any conscious prehensions (thus, they are regarded as determined by their instincts), while man is so regarded because of the frequency of his conscious employment of them. Thus, man is, in terms of frequency, a more, in fact, the most, creative being. It is this creativity that leads to moral evil, and man is more inclined toward it than other entities.

This last statement is, of course, a theological judgement and not necessarily derived from process concepts. It is a pessimistic view which is demanded so that our Christology might have more effect in the total scheme. Without such a pessimistic view, no matter what the system,

Christ must be seen as little more than a good example or assistant to man in his drive for subjective/initial aim fusion.

This view does not, however, explain the concept of original sin, or why man consistently makes these 'bad' prehensions. Process could not maintain that original sin is merely the result of other actual entities about the individual (thereby avoiding Pelagianism); nor would it maintain that original sin is just the result of Satan (which would absolve man of responsibility if he were forced into sinfulness). Rather, it would maintain that such sinfulness is both the result of the influences around man and man's own choice to accept those influences.

How this state becomes a part of every man is quite easily explained by process: it is handed on from individual to individual through biological transmission and historical circumstance. That is to say, because a man is the product of biological factors (physically), he shares the characteristics of those from whom he was produced. But he is also capable of prehending the past history to which he responds, in some sense, positively or negatively. It is this response that is the problem. For man consistently says "yes" to those things to which he ought to say "no".

This pessimistic doctrine of man would allow the Christology to function more fully; it has much to say about the function of the Spirit; it will have much to say about the whole question of ethics; and it will, eventually, shape the entire theology. It reflects an understanding that is essential for theology; for without man's denigration, in some sense, God's glorification is lessened. Process optimism does not allow so sharp a distinction between creature and Creator as theology prefers.

## The Doctrine of the Church ( Ecclesiology )

For the Christian individual, there is no lone state in which he exists because theology consistently addresses itself to the doctrine of the Church. In this section, we will examine both what the Church is and what it does, which shall also bring us to a discussion of worship and the sacraments. There is nothing in Whitehead or Hartshorne which will tell us what they thought of the Church, per se, but several of their insights into the nature of reality can be of help.

Most simply put, the Church would have to be considered a nexus.

If the group be considered merely in respect to . . .(a) basic property of mutual immanence, however otherwise lacking in common relevance, then -conceived as exemplifying this general connectedness- the group is termed a Nexus.<sup>58</sup>

A nexus is, thus, a group of occasions that have some sort of related function. The nexus, then, becomes quite like an actual entity itself, for it is prehended as a whole.<sup>59</sup>

This view of the Church as a nexus accomplishes several things at once. First, it explains how a variety of individuals can be seen as a whole. Second, it explains the continuity of purpose in the Church. Third, it does justice to the concept of variety within the Church.

It has long been a concept about the Church that it has a unity that encompasses its purpose and its teachings. The concept of nexus retains that concept of the Church. It would have been tempting to equate

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<sup>58</sup>AI, p. 258.

<sup>59</sup>The holistic view of the nexus does not so amalgamate the occasions comprising it that those individuals lose their identity; they are still prehended as themselves.

the Church's teaching with an eternal object, because of its lasting nature. The concept of nexus, or society, encompasses the teaching while doing it greater justice, for it allows for greater variance within the society than would an eternal object. Eternal objects are not, per se, objects of historical investigation; the Church's history and teaching are. Thus, as nexus, we could say that the Church is that society which embodies a teaching which is transmitted with little variation within the constituent entities of the nexus. Further, the Church, as nexus, can be seen as that group of occasions that prehend the intense figure of the actual occasion, Christ, with what amounts to a singular prehension.

This leads us to the purpose of the Church, which the nexus appraisal can explain. It would appear that one of the purposes of the Church is the transmission of its prehensions. That is, it must keep its view of Christ intact. This, of course, is embodied in the teaching to which we have referred. This is carried on by the individual occasions of the nexus which, as contemporaries, prehend with singularity, and, as past prehensible occasions, transmit with intensity to those occasions which prehend them. The total effect of the intense occasion of Christ, coupled with the intense occasion of the Spirit, and the intense occasion of the past of the nexus, is a maintained continuity within that nexus.

A second purpose of the Church is conversion, to which the sum effect of all this intensity lends its impact as well. We have stated that the prehension of Christ was so intense that it is practically unavoidable. The presupposition behind this was that this applied to those in whom the Spirit was already working faith. We now focus on those in

whom faith is not already rendered. While it is the Spirit that effects this conversion, it is done through the Church. Part of the prehensibility of the Church is its message and, while it is impossible for a non-converted person to apprehend Christ immediately, he can do so mediately through the Church's teaching.

A third purpose of the Church is reinstatement and maintenance of its continuation; that is to say, it must engage in forgiveness. In this purpose, the whole topic of the sacraments plays an important role. We have stated that sin is basically a distortion of subjective aims with their respective initial aims. This means that forgiveness must be viewed as a reestablishment of those two aims whenever particular breaches occur.

Baptism would be considered as the initiation into the state of grace, but not fully. It is understood that, the moment conversion has occurred, that is, once an occasion has apprehended the actual occasion Christ, he is to be considered as being in the nexus of the Church. However, this does not allow the rest of those occasions that compose the nexus to realize this. Consequently, baptism is that event which gives them this realization. The term 'realization' is used with particular stress, for in no way do contemporaries apprehend one another.<sup>60</sup>

The Sacrament of the Altar presents an interesting study in process-thought. We shall not focus on the question of the elements and their change, or lack of same.<sup>61</sup> We are concerned with its effect. That

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<sup>60</sup>Curtis, pp. 32-36.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., pp. 99-101.

effect is centered around forgiveness. The first way in which the Lord's Supper affects forgiveness is to be found in the fact that the occasions apprehend restoration of their subjective aims to their initial aims. Another facet of this is that the individual occasions recognize that the nexus, which was in danger of being disrupted, is now intact once again. This means that they are forgiving one another in the action of the meal. The action of the communion is a recognition of one another as possible disruptors of the nexus (and thus the nexus' existence being gone), and yet, as occasions determined to continue the nexus. Therefore, they do not form new nexūs, but retain the present one by resetting its original configuration. This occurs in the reaffirmation in the action of the meal that is a restatement of the teachings of the past.

Forgiveness occurs on this lower level outside the sacraments as well, as the mutual prehension constantly reaffirms the members of the nexus. This means that the individual occasions continually transmit their prehensions to one another, which enables the subjective aims of each to remain within the confines of the initial aims of each. This is called a 'lower level' of forgiveness because it has to do with human occasions dealing with other human occasions. We shall deal with God's forgiveness in the last section of the chapter.

The notion of the nexus allows for an explanation of the diversity within the unity evidenced by the Church. Because the nexus is composed of individual actual occasions which do not lose their distinctiveness, it cannot be considered as a static unity. Each actual entity within the nexus has its own peculiar prehensions besides the basic prehension that every member of the nexus shares. Thus, each member has a different reac-

tion to the world as it prehends it, and this means that there is a diversity of approach to the world with the Christian faith.

### The Doctrine of the Last Things ( Eschatology )

The concept of eschatology involves two major considerations. The first of these is whether or not process has a notion that things will come to an end. The other concern is with the notions of heaven and hell as they can be drawn from process-thought. On the first, a short answer will suffice. More time needs to be spent on the other issue.

As to whether or not there is a notion of the end of things, two things must be taken into account. First, it is obvious that eternal objects, by their nature, will never cease. The question then revolves around actual entities. It is true that individual actual entities do perish; but, with that perishing, they are assumed into the Consequent Nature of God. Were all occasions to cease, would this not affect the Consequent Nature of God? In a sense, yes, because that Nature would cease to expend. But, in another sense, the Consequent Nature would remain, although in a static state. The notion of a static world, however, is completely alien to process understanding. It would appear, then, that, while there is room with the thought for a notion of the end of all things, that notion would be very tenuous from the point of view of the process-thinkers themselves.

The issues of heaven and hell have found some attention in the two major figures, especially Hartshorne. To understand his view, we must see the way in which death is viewed.

Either individuals are eternal realities -items in a complex of events . . . which as a whole came to be and cannot cease to be

but simply is- or else individuals are not eternal, since there are new ones from time to time, but yet, once in the total reality, no individuals can pass from this total. An individual becomes, he does not de-become or unbecome; he is created, he is not destroyed or decreated.

. . . . .  
 Death is the last page of the chapter of the book of one's life, as birth is the first page of the first chapter. Without a first page there is no book. But given the first page there is, so far, a book. The question of death then is, How rich and how complete is the book to be? It is not a question of reality.<sup>62</sup>

The view of death, then, is that death is not sheer destruction, for, even though the book is completed, it remains a book, it exists. This would give us the clue to immortality that would be necessary for any talk about life after death, or even eternal death.

But Hartshorne comes up short of any interpretation that might intimate any form of physical (or quasi-physical) existence after the last page of the book.<sup>63</sup> The problem is that religion has focused so much on these notions of heaven and hell that it has missed the main point about reality, namely, that it is here and now.

The trouble with organized religion has been that the conceptions of heaven and hell were such as to imply the insignificance even of major wrongs in society. A man needed only to preserve his piety to win an infinity of blessedness in return for a handful of terrestrial joys. But the theistic doctrine does not itself imply any such heaven or the corresponding idea of hell.<sup>64</sup>

Further, the ideas of heaven and hell are viewed in what might be called an historical sense. The life will lived is for the future, but reaps present enjoyment.

It is natural to find inspiration in the thought that another will

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<sup>62</sup>LP, p. 250.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid., p. 254.

<sup>64</sup>BH, p. 76.

live more richly because I have lived, and in this thought one may find a reward for courageous and generous actions. But this regard is now, while I am performing the actions, I aim at a future result, namely, good to another who survives my death, but this aiming is my present joy.<sup>65</sup>

This conception of heaven, the converse of which would be meaningless living now that has no aim toward the future, or hell, is hardly what traditional theology has in mind when it talks about heaven. It is to be conceded that, too often, religious people have so used the traditional understanding to negate focus on the present problems. But this comes from a static view of what is meant by heaven and hell.

Process can more easily entertain the dynamic theological idea of heaven as total unity with God and hell as total separation. Process would find the first especially implied in its framework, since the notion of the Consequent Nature of God already states this. Total separation from God would mean an entity's total negation of its being or having been. To do so, would have effects on the whole notion of becoming, for a negation of existence would imply that nothing was prehended, nothing became, and, therefore, nothing ever was. Thus, in process, we are faced with only one alternative- heaven.

#### Ethics

The whole question of ethics, in any scheme, is one that tends to comprise the entire framework of the system. Therefore, we have left this discussion to the last in order that we might take advantage of what has preceded it. Ethics asks so many questions that it is impos-

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<sup>65</sup>LP, p. 256. Italics original.

sible for us to deal with them all here. We cannot handle, fully, the process theory of value, or axiology; nor can we discuss at any length its understanding of morality. Our focus will have to be on how it is that God becomes involved in day-to-day living and how that applies to the Christian understanding of ethics.

It has been pointed out that God is involved with man in setting his initial aim, to which, then, hopefully, man will merge his subjective aim. Now, obviously, with man's creative capabilities, he is not determined to act in any strict fashion. However, process does operate with a soft determinism; that is, it limits determinism but does not completely eradicate it.

The setting is this: a man is given a range of possibilities. This comes from the insight that only God prehends all eternal objects. Within that range of possibilities, he canprehend what best suits the amalgamation of his subjective and initial aims. Any choice that is made is made freely, within the limitations of the situation. But the prehensions that go into any choice, prehensions which are past, vary in such a way that the individual may negativelyprehend what he ought toprehend positively, or mayprehend as important that which is trivial.

For example: I am faced with the question of whether or not to take my car out on the highway. The problem is that the brakes on the car are woefully inadequate. It is, for all intents and purposes, a dangerous prospect. However, I must be at work within the next half-hour, at a place which is located ten miles away, or lose my job. Now these are the facts to be considered. My responsibility to my employer and my family demands that I get to work. My responsibility to other drivers of my

city demands that I not drive my car in its present condition. Now, which of these is the most intense? Both appear equally so; but add the factor of my having just enough cash to take a taxi to work, and that lessens the familial factor considerably. I can still retain my responsible attitude toward my family by getting to work. However, had the additional factor been a friend's advice that everyone drives cars in bad shape from time to time, the responsibility to the other drivers may have been lessened in intensity.

Now, prehensions work something like that in daily behavior. They set patterns for focus for the actual occasion to ascertain the realities open to it. They also establish the future; for what one prehends in the past will establish what possibilities lie open for it in the future.

The future is not prehensible in the strict sense. It can only give a basic configuration to the pattern of things.

The future is immanent in the present by reason of the fact that the present bears in its own essence the relationships which it will have to the future. It thereby includes in its essence the necessities to which the future must conform. The future is there in the present, as a general fact belonging to the nature of things. . . . Thus the future is to the present as an object for a subject. It has an objective existence in the present. But the objective existence of the future in the present differs from the objective existence of the past in the present. The various particular occasions of the past are in existence, and are severally functioning as objects for prehension in the present. . . . But there are no actual occasions in the future, already constituted. Thus there are no actual occasions in the future to exercise efficient causation in the present. What is objective in the present is the necessity of a future of actual occasions, and the necessity that these future occasions conform to the conditions inherent in the essence of the present occasion.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>AI, pp. 250-1. Italics added.

The future is, in essence, pure potentiality, which, of course, alligns it very closely with the Primordial Nature of God.

If the future is a part of the Primordial Nature of God, it means that God has a latch on the future. This is not the same as the classical view of an omniscient God who knows all that is to happen. That notion is quite apart from process thinking. If God is an actual entity, he cannot prehend the future any more than any other actual entity. But it does mean to say that he has a better picture of the future possibilities based on the past than all other actual entities because he has a better prehension of all eternal objects.

God transcends actual occasions. His experience is infinite in scope. It is true that, relative to some standpoint, God has not then experienced those actualities which will come into being in the future. But he eternally experiences all pure potentials, including those specially relevant to the future becomings.<sup>67</sup>

This is what is meant by God being the one who establishes the initial aims for each emergent actual occasion.

In his awareness of the future, God is able to see what will and what will not harmonize the subjective and initial aims. In this sense, he is somewhat like a statistical computer (although the imagery hardly fits this philosophical scheme) that predicts on the basis of known facts. As he sees the merging or divergence of these aims, he can note which possibilities do, in fact, become real possibilities for each occasion. In so seeing, he can influence the eternal objects that will appear as the past to the present and thus order the future for each occasion. This ordering of the future by God is primarily the point at which the

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<sup>67</sup>Christian, p. 373. Italics original.

question of ethics becomes involved.

If each actual occasion is faced with an ordered future, in what sense does its own creativity play a part? The future is ordered, not determined. This means that there is a limited range of selection. And not every selection will be equally beneficial to the occasion. The creativity of the occasion has a part in ordering the future as well, because every occasion has an influence on God. The pattern runs like this: the occasion has potentials in the past that will make it become something other than it is, depending on the prehension that the occasion makes of the past. Now, to be sure, God has a hand in ordering that past, but only in offering a limit; the occasion can still negativelyprehend that which God would envision as the best possible positive prehension. Because of what was ordered in the past, the future is also ordered by God, but it is limited also and also based on the prehensions the the occasion actually makes. Thus, at each point of decision and prehension by the occasion, the past and the future are reordered, depending on the prehension.<sup>68</sup>

In each possible future, there is contained a best possible direction for the occasion that is based on a best possible prehension of the past. 'Best', here, means that which will lead to the unification of the aims. From a Christian context, that best would have to include the direction of the occasion toward acts of love, forgiveness, helping, etc., based on the best prehension of the past, namely Christ. Thus the Christian is always trying toprehend Christ, and thus be guided by his ex-

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<sup>68</sup>See Appendix C, Figure 3.

ample, and to apprehend that which apprehends Christ best, the Spirit, and be guided by that Spirit. When this fails to occur, when Christ is not the intensive apprehension, it is called sin, or moral evil. But, as soon as that event is past, God reorders the future and past to allow the best to recur in the next situation.

Now, a consideration has to be made as to whether this form of ethics is the best form, in the Christian view. It is my contention that Christian ethics must be rule deontological,<sup>69</sup> that is, it must be based on a set of injunctions. At the very least, it must be act deontological, that is, governed by specific 'approved' actions. It cannot be teleological, that is, based on the results it produces. Process seems to fall either in the realm of teleology or act deontology, it is somewhat hard to assess. It has the characteristics of teleology in the sense that the actions produce the results that are the basis for evaluation. But it bears a stronger resemblance to act deontology in the sense that it is concerned so heavily with the act of apprehension. In any event, at its best, it is act deontology, which would suggest that it is not the best form of ethics for a Christian interpretation.

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<sup>69</sup>For a better look at the definitions of these three categories of ethics, see William K. Frankena, Ethics (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 13-16, or, Richard T. Garner and Bernard Rosen, Moral Philosophy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), pp. 83-113.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

We have presented the system of process-thought, centering on the two major figures of Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. Any evaluation of how well that presentation has been made is not germane to these concluding remarks, since, if it could have been done differently, it would have been. It should be noted, however, that space and time did not permit as extensive a presentation as has been done by others. Any lacks in the presentation shall have to be attributed to this lack of time and space.

The doctrines presented, based on this system, comprise but an outline of the theology that appears possible from this scheme. In no sense did this thesis intend to fully examine and draw out every point possible in each doctrine. Such an endeavor would have, at least, trebled the volume of this work. In each case and point of doctrine, the philosophy of process was regarded sympathetically, and every effort was made to give its ideas fair hearing. In some cases, the system was bent to allow it to better conform to traditional theological notions.

We have argued that Hartshorne's evaluation and use of the ontological argument for God's existence is quite valid and offers substantial viability for the future of theology. Further, concerning the process understanding of God, we have argued that it is not a non-religious notion, but very available for religious and theological purposes.

Concerning the doctrine of Christ, we have said that process has a place for both the humanity and the deity of Christ. Further, we have

suggested that, in regard to the humanity of Christ, there is even room for a notion of the Virgin Birth. Moreover, process understands the atonement in a sense of changing God and his relationship to man, if the process notion of a good God is assumed to be in relation to those of faith. The understanding of the importance of Christ has been shown to be in the fact of his availability for prehension by other actual entities that will enable the merging of their subjective and initial aims.

We have pointed out that the pneumatology of this system is the weak link in the chain. The problem of reconciling the aspects of the Spirit that resemble both actual entities and eternal objects is a formidable one, and we were not sufficiently successful in doing it.

Concerning the anthropology, we have pointed out that process holds a view of man that makes him essentially creative. This led us to consider the optimism or pessimism of process concerning man, which we said was essentially optimistic but could be shown to have a pessimistic side that is in keeping with the theological evaluation of man.

Our brief ecclesiology has shown that the Church should be considered as a nexus. There is some indication in Whitehead that a nexus and a society have some variance in attributes. We have assumed that the two terms are interchangeable and essentially equal. As a nexus, it was argued that the Church's unity, continuity and varity could all be explained.

The eschatology argued that the process notion of eternity did not include a notion of hell, but had a dynamic view of heaven. It was also shown to what extent death should be considered as an end to things, at which point we concluded that it is not the destruction of existence, but the cessation of change within any existent entity.

The ethics presented here argued that God is the ordering factor of the universe, and, when there is unity of aims, the ordering principle of man's behavior. We have also shown that man's creativity allows him to be indeterminate in his actions, within a limited scope and range of possibilities. We have also argued that the process ethic was essentially act deontological, with some indication of teleology, and that this was a problem for the Christian point of view.

This outline would suggest what work must be done to better enable process-thought to present a fuller theology. A resolution to the problem of the pneumatology must be found, since on it the ecclesiology, ethics and Christology hang. A further investigation of the Christology would be helpful for a better look at the work and accomplishments of Christ. Certainly, a more expansive ecclesiology would be in order. The whole issue of ethics, broad as it is, demands that, not only must more principles be worked out from the process mold, but also it would be helpful to see some process answers to particular ethical issues that are currently besetting us.

## APPENDIX A

### NATURAL THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY AND REVELATION

Ever since the relationship between philosophy and theology has been anything but assumed identification, the issues have revolved around natural theology, and its precedent metaphysics, and revealed theology as answers to the intellectual and worshipful demands of faithful people. Historically, this has evolved into one of two issues: either revealed theology is the superior discipline and metaphysics and resultant natural theology is subservient (philosophy is the handmaid of theology); or, metaphysics is the superior discipline and revealed theology must subsume and/or omit whatever is contradictory to or incompatible with it (theology is the handmaid of philosophy). The question appears to be an either/or proposition. However, it is possible that both are correct and usable.

The first posture has several variables to it that need to be explored. It presupposes that what is revealed is necessarily true, while what is investigatively or logically induced or deduced is only contingently so. While it remains true that (given the a priori assumption that revelation reveals nothing that is false or misleading) revelation reveals necessary truths, this does not deny that metaphysical truths are also necessary. But, given the necessary truths that revelation brings forth, revelation has its limitations.

The limitations on revelation often have to do with its intellectual formulation. Because of the very nature of revelation, it is not a systematic proposition. Every known theology that is based on revelation

has a need to be systematized. Christianity, Islam, Judaism all need some form of sorting-out of the truths that are revealed. And because the revelation is not systematic, it contains, or there are derived from it, paradoxes or logical inconsistencies. Left on their own, the inconsistencies will pose problems for human intelligence which seeks to harmonize any such problems.

The advantages of revealed theology are that it offers a vision of God which does not stop merely at his existence (here we are speaking from a Christian context). It presents a picture of God that allows man to see God's benevolence, passion, love, justice and grace. Apart from telling man that God is, revelation proposes to tell man what God is. It accomplishes this task very well.

Natural theology is lacking precisely at this point. We are here speaking about empirical natural theology which offers proofs of God from a posteriori evidence. It is limited to showing, and at that inconclusively, that God is a reasonable supposition in the world. It can, with limited success, establish the fact of a creative God, but anything else that would attempt to describe the nature of God is without its scope.

Philosophical theology, or what has often been called metaphysics, has the advantage over natural theology in that it works with a priori principles. Further, metaphysics can, again with limitations, provide far more certain clues to the nature of God. Its proofs for God's existence are far more convincing and logical than are those of natural theology; its presuppositions far less assailable. Metaphysics has the disadvantage of trying to do away with all forms of paradox and mystery, which presents no problem for the intellegentia, but will distract from the

common worshipper.

The relationship among all three of these postures is such that they can mutually benefit from each other's strengths to shore up their own weaknesses. Philosophical theology can be used to logically present the truths or revelation; revelation can provide what natural theology cannot; natural theology can provide an alternative proof for philosophical theology. These relationships are not, in the strict sense, those that have been historically attached to them- the either/or of subservience. The relationship is more like mutual inclusiveness than mutual exclusiveness.

The problem, historically, has been that the relationship between revelation and philosophical theology has been misconstrued. It has been proposed that, if one arrives at a point where the two seem to diverge, a choice must be made of one over the other. This is not necessarily so. This problem is more basic than mere accidental divergence. The problem has been that revelation has been too dependent on philosophical theology for its validation. The entire substance-accidents thesis of classical metaphysics has led to this. Because humans are inclined to accept an explanation rather than a mystery, they have consistently opted for the philosophical answer over the revealed. In this sense, theology has been relegated to the position of handmaid to philosophy.

To restore the equilibrium, it is necessary that revelation be restored to a position of logical consistency. In the past, where classical metaphysics has failed to explain satisfactorily various problems, one of two options has been taken. The philosopher has sided with his discipline; the theologian has exercised a logical jump that proves to be intellectu-

ally disastrous. A significant example is the Christian conception of the Incarnation. Based on the substance-accidents thesis, it is impossible for the transcendent God to become immanent without completely distorting the philosophical framework within which the thesis is to be presented. Consequently, one finds theologians dismissing the problem by the leap of faith which avoids the dilemma.

Such practices benefit neither the intellect nor the faith of individuals. Too often, such leaps are taken much too far in advance of plausible explanation. All the possibilities are not explored, and this is why theology, in academic circles and elsewhere, has failed to enjoy a very noble position- it simply does not make use of it claims is the God-given intellect of man.

This would suggest that theology, for the sake of presenting its insights and truths, must employ more conscientiously the insights that metaphysics can offer. It must make use of the logical bases upon which philosophical investigation is based. This is not to say that theology must become the handmaid of philosophy; it is to say that, when theology wishes to say something of importance to man, it must do so in terms that man understands and will not reject out of hand.

## APPENDIX B

### A LUTHERAN EVALUATION OF PROCESS

It is quite obvious that every attempt has been made within the text to bring process theology into accord with the presuppositions of this writer, namely, into a Lutheran perspective. It is also obvious that this has not been completely successful. The following offers a brief Lutheran critique of the process theology as we have developed it. No evaluation of other process theologies is here supposed.

First, two general observations seem in order:

Process is not Biblically based. This, in itself, is not a damaging critique, given the task of philosophical theology. It does point out, however, that process cannot be the norm of future theologizing. At best, it can serve to assist in the proclamation of that theology.

Process is basically rationalistic. This carries with it the notion that man's intellectual ability does not allow him to fully understand the nature of God. Process has done much in helping us to better picture what we already know, and to do so logically and consistently. However, it supposes that it has achieved a full understanding of the nature of God, which is impossible.

These general critiques offers some clues to more specific critiques of doctrine that we should examine. First, as aforementioned, the process notion of God is such that it supposes that it has answered all questions concerning his nature. One is tempted here to agree with Tillich's notion that the God of worship and faith is the God beyond the God of theism. Certainly, the Confessions work with a God that is not fully

knowable, but retains many mysteries.

Second, the neoclassical metaphysics of Hartshorne is not the metaphysics of the Confessions. The Confessions are based on the classical mode. This would suggest that Lutherans who wish to remain true to the Confessions must seriously examine at which points the neoclassical scheme is problematic. Some points to notice are the conception of contingency in God, the understanding of God's immanence, and the concept of God as actual occasion.

Further, it would seem that Lutherans would have difficulty with the process ethics, since it is not rule deontological. The lack of this rule deontology would do away with the whole area of the Decalogue and, in a sense, do harm to the Law/Gospel distinction of Lutheranism.

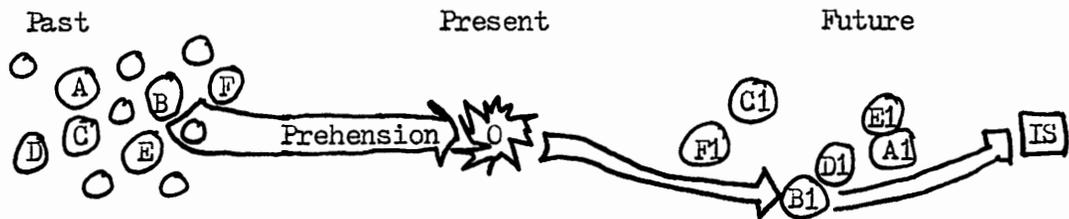
Process light also come under the criticism of Gospel reductionism in a very strong sense, since it lacks, as far as we have presented it, any clear notion of Law. In attempting to overcome the problem of attributing evil to God, process has also done grave harm to His justice and verdict on man.

Finally, it would appear that Lutherans would have a problem with the notion of Christ, since it focuses more on what Christ was than what he accomplished. Little attention and stress is placed on the death and resurrection of Christ, more on what kind of person he was. This is a serious lack since, without a strong idea of the benefit of Christ's work, the ethics and notion of salvation are strongly defective.

## APPENDIX C

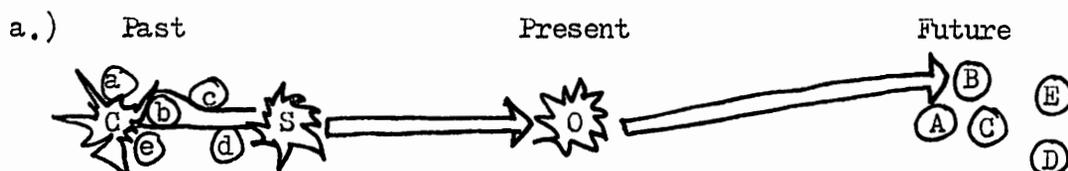
The following figures have been drawn up to better enable the reader to visualize what has been said in the body of this thesis. References to these figures have been made in the text, which will set the context for their presentation. The verbal descriptions accompanying these figures are to better explain what is depicted.

Figure 1:

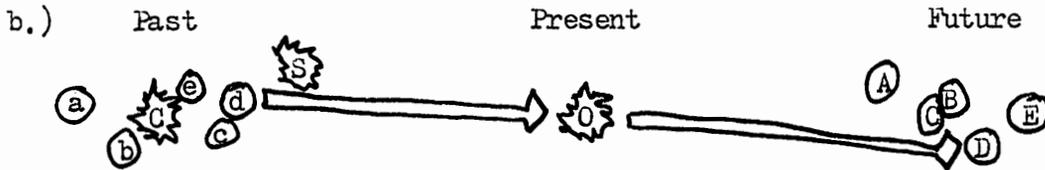


The components of the left-hand side of the figure are the actual entities (A, B, C, D, etc.) that are available for the actual occasion's (O) prehension. It is to be noted that there are other entities about, but they are not prehensible by this occasion. This is what is meant by God ordering the past. Point (I) is the result of this prehension, as envisioned, or the initial aim of the occasion. In this case, the subjective aim (S) is compatible with the initial aim. Note that the future is also ordered (A1, B1, C1, etc.) in relation to the past. Thus, if the occasion in the present prehends B, B1 is the future that awaits him.

Figure 2:

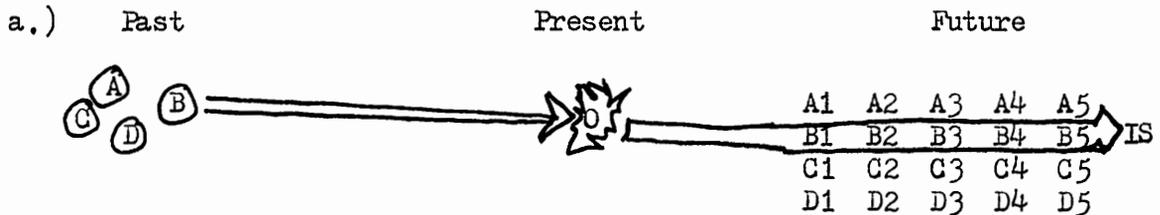


Here we see the prehension of the intense actual occasion, Christ, as it prehended through the intense actual occasion of the Spirit (C & S on the left). Note that this prehension also includes (b) which leads to the future (B).



Note that in this case the intense occasion of the Spirit had diminished in intensity, which allowed the occasion (O) to miss the intensity of Christ (C). Accordingly, instead of prehending the good choice of (b), it prehended the less beneficial occasion (d).

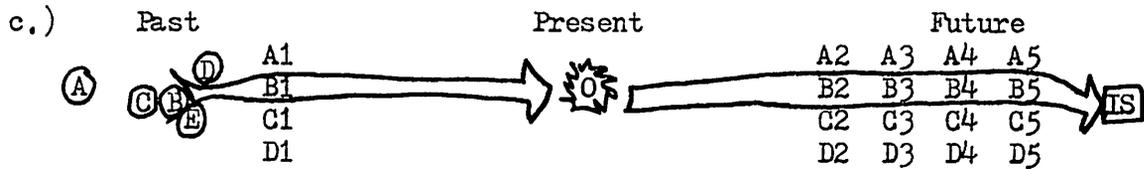
Figure 3:



Here we see the occasion in the present with past occasions ready for its prehension. The grid at the right represents the ordering of the futures based on those prehensions. In this case, when the occasion prehends (B), it is the best choice, and thus leads to a unified subjective and initial aims.



Here we see what happens when the occasion chooses other than the best possible choice ( B being the best, D the lesser). The future remains structured as it was, but the divergence between the initial and subjective aims has begun.



Using the same set-up as (3b.), we can see what happens after the choice has been made. In this case, that which was future is now past, and available for prehension. Having now seen where choice (D) will take it, the occasion now reviews the past, and reselects, this time choosing the best, which reunites his subjective and initial aims.

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