

VALUE THEORY IN THE WHITEHEADIAN PERSPECTIVE: PROLEGOMENON FOR AN AESTHETIC ETHIC OF PERSUASION

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There is one point as to which you—and everyone—misconstrue me—obviously my usual faults of exposition are to blame. I mean my doctrine of eternal objects. It is a first endeavor to get beyond the absurd simplemindedness of the traditional treatments of Universals.

The point to notice: (i) eternal objects are the carriers of potentiality into realization; (ii) that they thereby carry mentality into matter-of-fact; and (iii) that no eternal object in any finite realization can exhibit the full potentialities of its nature. It has an individual essence whereby it is the same eternal object on diverse occasions, it has a relational essence whereby it has an infinitude of modes of entry into realization. But realization introduces finitude with the extension of the infinitude of incompatibles in the relational essence; and (iv) eternal objects are relational with all other eternal objects. They are not isolated.

—FROM A LETTER BY WHITEHEAD TO HARTSHORNE

General Introduction

Within the American context of contemporary philosophical and theological thought, the creative works of Alfred North Whitehead have sparked spirited interest. The focus upon *process* rather than substance, *becoming* rather than being can be directly related to the direction given by the Whiteheadian perspective. In the blessed flux of contemporary theology, a “process school” has already emerged. The interest in, and the influence of, process philosophy upon the American scene of higher learning is significant. Let us hope that this new enjoyment of process thought does not reduce itself to the level of triviality. Rather, let us hope that such novelty will enable us all to see more vividly and distinctly that ‘greatness incarnate in the passage of temporal fact.’

Although much has been written concerning the philosophy of Whitehead, little has been realized regarding the ethical implications of his work. As one surveys the secondary sources of articles and books

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about Whitehead and his organismic philosophy, one discovers that the predominant interest is expositional in character. Certainly the need for such serious and evaluative study is apparent. The important work, *A Key To Whitehead's Process And Reality* by Donald W. Sherburne is a primary example of the excellent and creative study now being accomplished. However, it seems remarkable that so little attention is being given to the place of value theory within the Whiteheadian perspective.

To be sure, the philosophy of organism does not easily lend itself to the formulation of an ethical system. Whitehead's insistence upon process and the relativity of temporal fact seems to make such an endeavor foolish at best if not impossible in fact to accomplish. And yet, a careful reading of his work clearly indicates his profound interest in the importance of value theory.

In the autumn of 1919 at Trinity College, Whitehead noted in his introductory lecture: "The values of nature are perhaps the key to the metaphysical synthesis of existence."¹ Some years later in 1936 following the developing maturation of his cosmological perspective, he stated: "My own belief is that at the present, the most fruitful, because the most neglected, starting point is that section of value-theory which we term aesthetics."² Though Whitehead did not clearly make such a beginning, it can be said that such a starting point is implicit within the tapestry of his philosophy. In a series of six lectures delivered at Wellesley College during the 1937-38 session, he began the most significant "assemblage" of what I believe to be his value theory by considering the notion of "importance." Furthermore, his last two public lectures, *Mathematics and the Good* and *Immortality*, deal most vividly with the notion of value. In his "Explanatory Note" to Paul Arthur Schilpp, Whitehead wrote concerning those two essays: "They summarize basic ideas from which my philosophical thought has developed, and which became more clear in the course of that development."³ Finally, in his "Autobiographical Notes, he writes in a warm and revealing way of his wife's influence upon the development of his thought: "Her vivid life has taught me that beauty, moral and aesthetic, is the aim of existence; and that kindness, and love, and artistic satisfaction are among its modes of attainment."⁴

¹A. N. Whitehead, *Concept of Nature*, (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1920), p.5.

²A. N. Whitehead, *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, "Analysis of Meaning," (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948), p. 138.

³Paul A. Schilpp. *The Philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead*, "Explanatory Note," (New York: Tudor Publishing Company, 1951), p. 664-665.

⁴Whitehead, *E.S.P.*, p. 15.

Upon further investigation into the matrix of his writings, there can be little doubt that value theory occupies a major position in his philosophical thought. In *Science And The Modern World* amid his critique of 'scientific materialism', Whitehead states:

The literature of the nineteenth century, especially its English poetic literature, is a witness to the discord between the aesthetic intuitions of mankind and the mechanism of science. . . Both Shelley and Wordsworth emphatically bear witness that nature cannot be divorced from its aesthetic values; and that these values arise from the cumulation, in some sense, of the brooding presence of the whole on to its various parts. Thus we gain from the poets the doctrine that a philosophy of nature must concern itself at least with these six notions: change, value, eternal objects, endurance, organism, interfusion.⁵

In the *Adventure of Ideas*, a variety of particular valuations is developed—the humanitarian ideal, freedom, truth, beauty, religion, morality, and aesthetics. Whitehead concludes his essay on beauty:

Art at its highest exemplifies the metaphysical doctrine of the interweaving of absoluteness upon relativity. In the work of art the relativity becomes the harmony of the composition, and the absoluteness is the claim for separate individuality advanced by component factors. . . The importance of . . . individuality lies in its claim to attention.⁶

When defining the notion of an 'actual entity' in *Process and Reality*, Whitehead suggests that the basic meaning of value is in the realization of 'actuality'; that actual entities have intrinsic value. He writes:

Actual entities—also termed 'actual occasions'—are the final real things of which the world is made up. . . They differ among themselves. . . But, though there are gradations of importance, and diversity of function, . . . all are on the same level.⁷

As an actual entity, God's existence is also founded upon value as is made clear in this statement from his essay on "Immortality": "Thus, God, whose existence is founded on value, is to be conceived as per-

⁵A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1925), pp. 87-88.

⁶A. N. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933), p. 264.

⁷A. N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), p. 23.

⁸Schilpp, *A.N.W.*, p.

suasive toward ideal coordination.”⁸ Finally, in his essay on *The Function of Reason*, Whitehead sets forth his famous trilogy regarding the art of living:

The higher forms of life are actively engaged in modifying their environment. In the case of mankind this active attack on the environment is the most prominent fact in his existence. (T)he explanation of this active attack. . . is a three-fold urge: (i) to live, (ii) to live well, (iii) to live better. In fact the art of life is *first* to be alive, *secondly* to be alive in a satisfactory way, and *thirdly* to acquire an increase in satisfaction.⁹

Thus, it can be seen from this brief perusal, value theory lies at the heart of the philosophy of organism. No adequate exposition of Whitehead’s thought can be developed without serious attention to the notion of value and its centrality to the whole perspective.

The purpose of the present study is to develop foundational notions necessary for the general development of value theory within a Whiteheadian perspective. The intention is to clarify in a more systematic way the Whiteheadian “assemblage” of value theory. Primarily, the aim of this study will focus upon “mankind” and the experience of being “human.” This is fundamental if we are to move toward the ethical formulations of aesthetic persuasion and the “style” which attends such an ethic. The potential for such an ethical style is vast. Its meaning for the Christian community and its ethical conduct is equally broad. However, *how* such an ethic will be finally realized is in process. This study is prolegomenon *for* not *of* an aesthetic ethic of persuasion.

FOUNDATIONAL NOTIONS FOR VALUE THEORY

The present study evolves from an intense reading of *Modes of Thought* (MT). Though other essays within the corpus of Whitehead’s works deal with particular notions of value, it is my contention that MT best sets forth his general form of value theory. The familiar themes which characterize his speculative philosophy are to be re-discovered anew therein. Consistent with his previous works, the style and frequency with which these primary notions surface is varied and complex. Like the impressionists of his day, Whitehead wove a tapestry which is best perceived when viewed as a whole. To become overly concerned with particular details and moments within the rhythm of the design is to sacrifice the beauty of the whole. And yet,

⁹A. N. Whitehead, *The Function of Reason*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1929), p. 8.

such detailed attention is fundamental to any critical and systematic expression. Thus, we shall be lifting up to consciousness three seminal notions which are basic to the Whiteheadian perspective. These three themes are: The Ultimate Process of Creativity; The Dualistic Structure of the Whole, and The Foundational Concept of Organism. *MT* will be utilized as the basic text for this hermeneutical event.

THE ULTIMATE PROCESS OF CREATIVITY

Process is the fundamental fact of experience. It is the one inexorable fact of our experience. All is in process. All infects process. All becomes through process. The blessed flux of change and activity is the foundational notion of Whitehead's philosophy of organism. No-thing would realize its potentialities for expression and novelty were it not for process. Indeed, no-thing would become what it uniquely is as one among many were it not for process. Thus, existence is creatively derived from process.

This radical and conscious celebration of process may first appear to be overly dynamic. Our usual, common-sense perception of "the-way-things-are" would seem to negate such a vision. We might protest: "All is not flux; there is structure, permanence and order to Life. Things do *exist*—they do 'stand-out'" To this kind of protestation, Whitehead would agree. It is by virtue of process that things do actually come to *be* what they *are*. However, he would not agree that a thing 'exists' apart from the 'pulsating rhythms' of process. No fact merely exists; no fact is an island unto itself. Every fact is interwoven within and interrelated to the Whole of which it is a dynamic part.

Lest we exaggerate, we must shift our discussion to a consideration of form or pattern. Process without form would be meaningless to us. In his refutation of the "misplaced concreteness" of science, Whitehead notes that such a static, spatio-temporal perspective is interesting only because it vaguely affirms the importance of form. "There is a rhythm of process whereby creation produces natural pulsation forming a natural unit of historical fact."¹⁰ Thus, the data of any 'natural unit of *historical* fact' is, by definition, shaped, affected, and influenced by previous pulsations. We have a real past. Likewise, each pulsation of historical datum is shaping, affecting, and influencing future pulsations. We have a real future. In the degree that a nexus of historical fact is free, it can accomodate and assimilate past pulsations within the creative now of present actuality for the

¹⁰A. N. Whitehead, *Modes of Thought*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938), p. 88.

subjective aim toward future potentialities yet unrealized. This is the process of self-determination. It is at the heart of existence.

Process and individuality presuppose each other. The form of process is shaped by each 'natural unit of historical fact', i.e. by each actual entity or group of entities. Each actual entity is important in the transition toward the future. Each actual entity affects the subjective aim toward a realized satisfaction. Out of the infinite wealth of varied potentiality, an ideal is selected and focused upon. The ideal goal is aimed at, affecting the process of pulsations toward the actualization of that limited potentiality. When grasping this notion of process, we can also realize that the character of the individual entities forming the process of future are themselves the realizations of the process of past. Their uniqueness is understood, therefore, in relationship to the process within which they are implicated.

Thus, we can conclude this brief section on the notion of process by noting with Whitehead: "Process... is a fundamental fact in our experience. We are in the present; the present is always shifting; it is derived from the past; it is shaping the future; it is passing into the future. This is process."¹²

THE DUALISTIC STRUCTURE OF COSMOLOGY

Fundamentally, Whitehead's philosophy evolves in a "dualistic" or di-polar fashion. The term "dualistic" is used in its most general sense, for in fact Whitehead's thought is far more dynamic than the terms di-polar or dualistic allow. However, they are functional terms which do help identify the dominant forms which characterize his organismic philosophy.

In our discussion of process, we have already made implicit dimensions of the di-polar form of Whitehead's speculations. The World of Fact evolves from the World of Value. Yet the World of Fact affects the aim toward the realizations of the World of Value. The World of Fact is the world of actual occasions. The World of Value is the world of pure potentiality. The manner by which these two "worlds" get interconnected and interwoven is the essence of process.

It will be recalled that in *Process and Reality*, Whitehead defined an "actual entity" as the foundational unit of reality. There is nothing more basic in nature. God is an actual entity just as is a "puff of dust." It will also be recalled from that same work that God is not 'the ultimate' of philosophical theory. In the philosophy of organism, 'creativity' is the ultimate and God is its "primordial, non-temporal

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 97.

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 52-53.

accident.” This sets up the dualistic scheme; God is both the ‘primordial, non-temporal accident’ *and* the ‘consequent, temporal actuality.’ The following diagram may help us see more vividly the pattern inherent within the philosophy itself.

CREATIVITY

I	II	III
Eternal Objects	Prehension	Actual Entity
God: Primordial Nature	Superjective Lure	God: Consequent Nature
Infinite World of Value	Importance	Finite World of Value
Pure Potential	Subjective Aim	Realized Datum
The Many	Concrescence	One/many

(Imagine a web of interconnecting arrows relating columns I and III through the dynamic processes identified in column II. Both I and III are not only externally related to each other, they are also internally related as well. The entire web is conjoined into a unified whole by *creativity* itself.)

As I have tried to indicate, it matters little where one begins. It is as Whitehead suggests “a matter of emphasis.” However, as Whitehead quickly and emphatically maintains, it matters greatly *what* one finally gives one’s full attention to and *how*. This is to say that the subjective aim of the organism is most fully satisfied when informed by and aimed at the vision of greatness which is incarnate within the historical pulsations of process yet is the transcendent lure of all; which is the most real of all actual facts yet the most infinite possibility; which is in process of becoming yet is fully complete. Through the philosophy of organism, Whitehead intends that we grasp the dipolar notion of that Reality which humankind has dared to name—God.

In so doing, we can’t help butprehend the wondrous togetherness of all; the profound interconnectedness and interdependence in all; the amazing potentiality inherently real through all, and the exciting flux of novel satisfactions by all. In the degree that we do grasp these notions of process, we can come to a more ‘clear and distinct’ perspective of value.

THE FOUNDATION CONCEPT OF ORGANISM

Within the dynamic ‘dualism’ which characterizes the process of creativity, the concept of organism is foundational. It provides us with the basic notion of unity within diversity, limitation within activity, individuality within community. The concept of organism ex-

presses the grand nexus of all—the dynamic interconnectedness of all things. Whitehead's meaning is conveyed in this statement:

The notion of 'organism' is combined with that of 'process' in a twofold manner. The community of actual things is an organism; but it is not a static organism. It is an incompleteness in process of production. Thus, the expansion of the universe with respect to actual things is the first meaning of 'process;' and the universe in any stage of its expansion is the first meaning of 'organism.'

Secondly, each actual entity is itself only descriptively as an organic process. It repeats in microcosm what the universe is in macrocosm. It is a process proceeding from phase to phase, each phase being the real basis from which its successor proceeds toward the completion of the thing in question.¹³

Thus the two notions of process and organism come together as foundational and interrelated ideas within the Whiteheadian perspective. It is significant, therefore, to note that 'each actual entity is itself describable (understood) as an *organic process*' reflective of the Whole. It is a microcosm of the macrocosmic Whole in the process of creative advance.

The organic process is one of *novel expression and enjoyment* within the limitations of perspective. "Wherever there is a region of nature which is itself the primary field of the expressions issuing from each of its parts, that region is alive."¹⁴ The human body, for example, is the 'primary field' of human expression. It is a concrescence of actuality which has acquired a definable form. And yet, "...the body is part of the external world, continuous with it...(W)e are *fussily exact*, we cannot define where a body begins and where external nature ends."¹⁵ The macrocosmic vision is one of organismic Wholeness. So too is the microcosmic view. To be human is therefore to be an organismic expression of novel enjoyment within the finite, primary field of human feeling.

Such a view of organism and the cellular theory of micro-macrocosmic process is foundational to the notion of value theory. For in the consciousness which clarifies primary fields of expression, selective and judgemental valuations can and do occur. In the "matter-of-fact" world of mere existence, there are definite "regions of aliveness" which can be *identified*. Each actual nexus of existence involves the notion of other existences—past and present, more and less. To these pre-

¹³H. H. Potthoff, "Theological Uses of Process Philosophy," An academic paper presented at the Iliff School of Theology, Spring Quarter, 1975, pp. 11-12.

¹⁴Whitehead, *M. T.*, p. 22.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 21.

hensions, future potentialities are added. The forms which characterize these primary fields of expression, and the endurance of each 'occasion' sustaining the image of the forms, all contribute to novel individuality within community. The notions of finitude, predictability, freedom, determination, aim, selectivity, and uniqueness are derivative ideas from the primary, organismic notion of one among many. With these thoughts before us, we are brought now to the place of value theory within the philosophical perspective of organism.

In setting forth these three foundational notions for value theory, i.e. 'the ultimate process of creativity,' 'the dualistic structure of cosmology,' and 'the foundational concept of organism,' we have intended to prepare the fields of process thought. It is our hope that such preparations will enable a fruitful discussion of value theory within this perspective. As a way of summarizing this section taken from Whitehead's last major work, *Essays In Science And Philosophy*:

The notion of the prehension of the past means that the past is an element which perishes and thereby remains an element in the state beyond and thus is objectified. That is the whole notion. If you get a general notion of what is meant by perishing, you will have accomplished an apprehension of what you mean by memory and causality; what you mean when you feel that what we are is of infinite importance because we perish we are immortal. That is the one key around which the whole development of Process and Reality is woven. . . . (p. 117)

MANKIND AND THE NOTION OF VALUE THEORY

In Abraham J. Heschel's probing book *Who Is Man*, the hypothesis is set forth that man not only is, but that he is in relationship to the images and ideals he has of himself as both perceiver and prescriber. Heschel further asserts that whenever man adopts a new image of himself, he becomes a new creation; he discovers himself anew. The image of self as "self" is a vital determinate of his total being. "Unlike a theory of things which seeks merely to know its subject, a theory of man shapes and affects its subject. . . We not only describe the 'nature' of man, we fashion it. We become what we think of ourselves."¹⁶ Thus, in so far as man perceives and prescribes himself in his existence, man is responsible for who and what he is. The field of ethics evolves from such a notion.

Within the Whiteheadian perspective, mankind is distinctively

¹⁶Abraham J. Heschel, *Who Is Man*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 7.

unique from other nexus in that its central activity is one of novelty. The horizons are exploded in the creative celebration of novel realizations of unexpressed possibilities. "(T)he life of a human being receives its worth, its importance, from the way in which unrealized ideals shape its purposes and tinge its actions."¹⁷ Humankind actively participates in the creative advance shaping the realizations of the Whole. Morality and religion arise as aspects of this human aim toward novel expressions of creativity. As subordinate species of the generic notion of "importance," morality and religion function to define the limitations for creative advance. Morality involves attention to detailed occasions such that importance is maximized. "Morality is always the aim at that union of harmony, intensity, and vividness which involves the perfection of importance for that occasion."¹⁸ Religion is the unitary vision of greatness which informs the subjective aim of morality. In a creative moment of poetic truth, Whitehead defined the religious vision:

The religious insight is the grasp of this truth: That the order of the world, the depth of reality of the world, the value of the world in its whole and in its parts, the beauty of the world, the zest of life, the peace of life, and the mastery of evil, are all bound together—not accidentally, but by reason of this truth: that the universe exhibits a creativity with infinite freedom, and a realm of forms with infinite possibilities; but that this creativity and these forms are together impotent to achieve actuality apart from the completed ideal harmony, which is God.¹⁹

In the novel creativity which characterizes that creature called "man," religion and morality play an obviously important role in the process of self-determination. As both the perceiver of ideal goals and the prescriber of forms for their realization, man is engaged in moral activity of ethical interest. To be sure, there are varied "styles" of ethical and moral activity. One style can best be described as "man-the-citizen" who comes to "self-awareness...in the midst of *mores*, of commandments and rules, *Thou shalt*s and *Thou shalt not*s, of directions and permissions."²⁰ Another style finds its closest analogy in the model of engineering. It involves a static plan which deterministically defines a goal to be achieved. "Man-the-maker" is the image

¹⁷Whitehead, *MT*, p. 27

¹⁸*Ibid*, p. 13

¹⁹A. N. Whitehead, *Religion In The Making*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 115

²⁰H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 52

of a builder "who constructs things according to an ideal and for the sake of an end."²¹ A third style can be called "man-the-answerer." This is the way of response. It is, as Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition* has so precisely articulated, much more distinctively human than the other two models. For the way of response involves *dialogue* and *suffering*. From this perspective, "we think of all our actions as having a pattern of what we do when we answer another who addresses us."²² Whitehead suggests that the pattern of response is both inward as well as external. The focus of response is upon actual occasions of value within the limitations which are real. It involves an aesthetic sensitivity to the processes immersed in the creative advance of future realizations amidst the perishing dynamics of present actualities.

In man's quest for understanding of himself as moral agent, the two images of "citizen" and "builder" have created obvious problems. From a Whiteheadian perspective, both of them tend to be much too static in character. The ethical style of 'man-the-maker' subordinates the giving of laws to the work of construction of the final good. Laws are useful only as they contribute to realizing the final end. The image of 'man-the-citizen' reverses the orientation of moral activity. The good is subordinate to right conduct. There is no future good to be realized. The ultimate good is limited to the epoch presently understood. It is obvious that these two ethical "styles" are (i) inadequate to the dynamic, interdependent processive Whole within which moral activity happens, and (ii) inappropriate in light of the vision of greatness and the human prehender of that vision and the infinite potentiality of human satisfaction.

The conflict of these two theories has practical significance in personal and social life. In the face of profoundly painful and demoralizing problems, we ask the questions: "What shall I do?" or "What shall we do?" The teleological perspective answers by asking an *a priori* question: "What is my goal, ideal, or telos?" The deontological perspective tries to answer the question by asking: "What is the Law and what is the first Law of Life?" Both of these theoretical conceptualizations have difficulty answering our existential questions of meaning, morale, and motivation. They may deny, evade, or consider only a portion of our condition. "(Suffering) cannot be brought adequately within the spheres of teleological ethics, the ethics of man-the-maker, or man-the-citizen."²³

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 48.

²²*Ibid.*, p. 56.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 60.

In a world which is best perceived as dynamic, relational, and becoming, static or linear images of man as moral agent will not do. Man is a creature immersed in process. He is an *interactional* occasion. Therefore, we need an ethical style which is itself dynamic in character and processive in actuality.

The way of response suggests such an image. It affirms the foundational notions of process. It fashions an image of man as responsive moral agent; it perceives man to be interactively involved in the creative advance of novel potentialities aimed at and realized. It is an ethical style which functions to grasp the contextual occasion, its past, present, and future; toprehend the interdependent and interrelational nexus of the occasion; and to aesthetically respond.

If the way-of-response sets forth the ethical style of aesthetical persuasion, then what are the moral foundations which make such an ethic reasonable? Within the Whiteheadian perspective, the question of value theory involves the notions of process and importance. Both notions require each other. Both notions raise to consciousness the ideas of expression and finitude, freedom and selectivity. They also set forth the value notions of subjective aim and satisfaction. In the following section, we shall consider briefly these notions of importance and their relationship to value theory.

THE NOTION OF IMPORTANCE

"Existence is activity ever merging in to the future."²⁴ Every actual occasion is a limitation imposed upon possibility. Value emerges by virtue of that actual limitation. Within the process of creativity, the determination of a subjective aim toward the realization of some distant present *perished* to become some distant past forming a novel present. Such is the reality of process.

Process is a dynamic negation of the myth of isolation. Importance is the realization of that negation. It underlies all experience. In the World of Fact, importance functions to enable the selectivity of, gradations in, and perspectives for valuations of wholeness—the making real the World of Value. Thus, within the multiplicity of actual occasions of infinite potentialities and intrinsic value, importance functions to define *this* valuation from *that*; to establish gradations of feeling; and to impose formed perspective upon the infinite process of creativity.

Already the implications for value theory are vivid. The process of exclusion whereby the infinite horizon of potentialities is limited to *this* rather than *that* is foundational to mankind as moral agent involved in the shaping of environmental destiny. Man is distinctively

²⁴Whitehead, *M.T.*, p. 169.

unique in that he expresses an active enjoyment in the process of shaping the welter of datum into a consistent pattern of feeling. Such a shaping process is the role of "self-creation" and "teleological aim." This process of determination is complex in fact, though simple in abstraction. It can be stated: self-determination involves the entertainment of alternatives, which involves the growth of consciousness, which involves the development of emphasis, which involves the realization of solitariness, which involves the vision of unity. As can be realized, this is a *very* involving process! But such is the way of response. For it is a celebration of the agony and ecstasy of becoming and being human within a finite world.

Whitehead affirms the profound import of the fact of finitude. It is fundamental to the process of creativity and equally basic to value theory. By virtue of the fact of finitude, limitations are realized within the infinite welter of possibility. Value emerges from such limitations. In light of the reality of finitude, valuations of "time" and "space" become more clear and distinct. Ethics evolves from such valuations. From the perspective of finitude, the realization of redemptive "immortality" and the 'brooding presence' of the Holy One within our midst becomes more vivid. Religion flows from such feelings of enjoyment.

In the above passage, we are celebrating the interdependence of beauty and finitude. Relationally, religion, morality, and ethics emerge as 'species' of the genus 'beauty.' Because of the fact of finitude, each can realize its unique individuality. Morality is concerned with "the control of process so as to maximize importance." Ethics defines the gradations of importance within the scope of experience. And religion focuses the realization of importance in light of the vision of greatness. Together they all shape the rhythmic pulsations of human expression 'upwards and downwards'. "They are the *disrupting and energizing forces* of civilization. When their vigor abates, a slow mild decay ensues."²⁵ But all is not lost, nor is the future left without hope. No actual occasion, nor any genus or species of such occasions can ultimately thwart the creative advance of process. Thus, though morality, ethics, and religion are of less importance within the matrix of an epochal moment of civilization, new ideals and potentialities arise upon the horizon of human consciousness—indeed, upon the Whole process itself—to *lure* mankind toward the realization of novel valuations. This persuasive lure toward the realization of new ideals within the finitude of temporal fact is the actual influence of God upon all.

The creative lure of God immanent in the passage of temporal

²⁵*Ibid.*, p. 19.

fact is not coercive or totalitarian. Indeed, such a conceptual image of God would be a fundamental negation of the value of creativity itself. The emergence of an actual entity is a valuation fundamental to the theory of value and creativity. Whitehead states that no further justification needs to be given; an actual entity is of intrinsic value in its own novelty. The urge toward self-creation by the actual entity and the limitations of 'aim' defined by the actual occasion toward the realization of novel satisfactions of intensity are also profoundly important to the notion of value and creativity. In both instances of value, the importance of *freedom* toward the satisfactions of subjective aims makes the concept of God as 'the ruthless moralist' inadequate to God and the process of creativity. Also, such a conceptualization serves to negate the uniqueness of man and the responsibilities which attend that uniqueness of feeling.

The concept of persuasion includes "incitement towards" and "deterrence from" a manifold possibility. Ultimately, the concept of persuasion is toward the realizations of Beauty. For Beauty, both moral and aesthetic, 'is the aim of existence.' There is a deep down urge toward harmony rather than discord, pattern rather than chaos, community rather than isolation, success rather than error. The subjective aim of each society of occasions is in truth toward the perfection of Beauty. Hence, within the nature-of-things there is an urge toward goodness and a deterrence from evil.

Aesthetic persuasion, then, becomes the art of living. It is born within the vision of greatness; it is realized through the aim at greatness; and it is satisfied through the celebrations of enjoyment. It functions to encourage responsible forms of behavior which 'control process so as to maximize value.' It ennobles life toward the realizations of novel ideals of perfection. It forces life 'upwards' rather than 'down-wards.'

"In aesthetics, there is a totality disclosing its component parts. . . each with its own value enhanced; and the parts lead up to a Whole which is beyond themselves and yet not destructive of themselves."²⁶

Such is the adventure of living. It is the summons to setting priorities within the limitations which are real; making decisions which are creatively and imaginatively consistent with the beautiful urge toward Wholeness; and satisfying ideals of perfection which are realizable within the 'natural pulsations' of temporal, historic fact. Its grounding is rooted in Whitehead's central thesis: God is the "intangible fact" at the heart of all finite existence; God's existence is founded in value. This is the adventure of aesthetics. This is the guiding hope for an ethic of persuasion in our time.

²⁶Ibid., p. 62.

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