

EMORY UNIVERSITY  
ATLANTA 22. GEORGIA

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Jan. 31, 1962

Dear Professor Mora,

This is so complicated it may not be at all what you want. My philosophy has I think intuitive coherence, but there is no simple and clear way of reducing this to an epigram or a couple of slogans. My attempt has been to deal with technical problems, taking account of the two thousand years of controversy.

I could say that my view is that reality is emergent social process, which necessarily <sup>(and not merely in fact)</sup> has two levels, divine and ordinary. But does that convey very much? And between this and the two pp. I have given, it is hard for me to see what to say.

, or at least in <sup>I happen to think</sup> my metaphysics, that there is more content in my philosophy/that has really been thought through from the ground up than in that of any living philosopher, at least in the English-speaking world. This could be wrong, but it is my honest opinion. Anyone ~~whh~~ finds conceit in this is welcome to make the most of it.

Probably <sup>the enclosed</sup> ~~this~~ is the best I can do, and it will have to rest with your experienced wisdom what to <sup>do with it</sup> ~~make of it~~ for your purpose. However, if you think of anything else I should do let me know.

Sincerely,

Charles Hartshorne

Answered February 20 (?), 1962.

Charles Hartshorne  
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3. "Santayana's Doctrine of Essence." In The Philosophy of George Santayana: The Library of Living Philosophers, Vol. II. Evanston and Chicago: Northwestern University, 1940. Pp. 135-182.
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8. "Strict and Genetic Identity: An Illustration of the Relations of Logic to Metaphysics." In Structure, Method, and Meaning: Essays in Honor of Henry M. Sheffer. New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1951. Pp. 242-254.
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16. "Metaphysics and the Modality of Existential Judgments." Ibid., pp. 107-121.
17. "God's Existence: A Conceptual Problem." No. 26 in Religious Experience and Truth: A Symposium, ed. by Sidney Hook. New York: N.Y. University Press, 1961. Pp. 211-219.
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A Bibliography of  
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Hartshorne, Charles. June 5, 1897, Kittaning, Pa. Estudios en Haverford, ~~Freiburgo~~ y  
Marburgo. Titulos univs. AB, AM, PhD (1923) de Harvard. Profesó en Harvard y Chicago.  
*Full prof. desde 1948* en otros lugares — *Terry lecturer en Yale, 1947*  
Actualmente en Chicago (a menos q. encuentre/otro dato) / Obras: The philopphy and psycholo-  
gy of sensation, Chic. 1934. The collected papers of Ch S Peirce, ed. Cambridge Mass 1931-  
35, 6 vols. Beyond humanism, Chic. 1937. Luego una serie de artículos bastante larga.

Charles Hartshorne. Born in Pennsylvania, 1897; served in Hospital Corps of U.S. Army 1917-1919; studied at Haverford and Harvard Colleges; degrees from Harvard, A.B. 1921, Ph.D. 1923; studied at Freiburg and Marburg, Germany 1923-25; instructor and editor of the writings of Charles S. Peirce, Harvard, 1925-28; taught at the University of Chicago 1928-1955; since then professor in Department of Philosophy at Emory University, Atlanta; visiting professor at Stanford 1937; The New School for Social Research 1941-42; Frankfurt, Germany 1948-49; Melbourne 1952 (Fulbright); The University of Washington 1958; Kyoto 1958 Fulbright).

President of the Western Division, American Philosophical Association 1948-49; Vice-President of the Eastern Division, 1961; has been President of the Charles S. Peirce Society, and of The Metaphysical Society of America. Member of various ornithological societies.

As a student, chiefly influenced by Plato, Royce, James, Lewis, W.E. Hocking, R.B. Perry, Husserl; during his teaching career (beginning 1925), especially by Peirce and Whitehead. Chief subjects metaphysics, philosophy of religion, and aesthetics (apart from some studies of animal behavior, chiefly songbirds).

#### Principal doctrines:

1. Synchism (Peirce) — that quantitative and qualitative possibilities are continuous, and "the continuum is not a multitude", so that the sole "eternal object", apart from mathematico-logical-metaphysical categories, is the primordial continuum of possibility;
2. "The affective continuum" — that sensation and feeling are essentially the same, and that there are only relative discontinuities between sense qualities of diverse modes, and that these are all qualities of feeling (Peirce, Whitehead);
3. Epistemological realism — that every experience, sensory or affective, is partly constituted by something ("the given") which is itself independent of the fact of being given to this experience;
4. Metaphysical idealism or psychicalism — that every concrete given object of experience is itself a prior experience or group of experiences (often radically non-human), and that while nothing depends for its reality upon being given to a particular experience, everything concrete or abstract possesses permanent reality only by being always object for some experience or other;
5. "Process philosophy" — that becoming is the concrete or inclusive mode of reality, and that "reality", "the universe", or "the truth" are "token-reflexive" terms, with partly new denotations each moment;
6. Epochal theory of process — that process is in unit-steps, events without actual internal succession (Whitehead's "actual entities"), and that "substances" are analyzeable without remainder into sequences of such unit-events;
7. Creationism or emergent synthesis — that all events are causally influenced by antecedent causal conditions, but none fully determined by them;
8. Asymmetry of time, internal and external relations — that an event's relations to its predecessors are intrinsic or constitutive, to its

- contemporaries and successors, extrinsic or non-constitutive, so that only the past is fully determinate;
9. Neoclassical rationalism — that metaphysical truths, such as those given above, are a priori or necessary, but not for the human mind obvious, certain or wholly self-evident; that among their criteria are, their not excluding any positive assertions, their being abstract or non-specific, and their forming a "coherent system" in which every such truth requires every other for its full intelligibility;
  10. Neopragmatism — that all rational ideas are somehow conceivably expressible in appropriate and reasonable behavior, and that metaphysical ideas are expressible in behavior appropriate to any conceivable universe, by which universal appropriateness they are also shown to be true a priori;
  11. The principle of ultimate contrast — that metaphysical terms involve contraries which are reducible only in the sense expressed by the next principle;
  12. Overlapping contrast or non-dualism — that in every pair of metaphysical contraries, one pole expresses the total reality, the other a constituent — thus relative reality includes reality as absolute, what is contingent includes what is necessary, the complex includes the simple, wholes include parts, subjects include their objects (hence God the world), and the concrete includes the abstract;
  13. Neoclassical theism — that the supreme level of experience or creativity has an infinite, absolute, necessary aspect, which is included in a finite, relative, and contingent aspect, both connoted by the description, "not conceivably surpassed, except by itself," and implying a life or sequence of experiences which though unique or individual, has strictly universal functions, and though not the Hegelian "concrete universal" is in a sense both concrete and universal;
  14. Probabilistic teleology — that though there is a supreme purpose, there are also (by 4) many lesser purposes which (by 7) make their own decisions, so that the control of the supreme purpose is probabilistic only, maximizing not good as against evil but chances of good (opportunities) as against chances of evil (risks), and thus chance and providence are correlative and alike all-pervasive, and God is ideally powerful (as power is defined in this philosophy) and yet not "omnipotent" or necessarily responsible for evils;
  15. Neoanselmianism — that there is a valid point in Anselm's ontological proof, which was partly misconceived both by him and by his critics, and that the whole of metaphysical truth can be derived by choosing doctrines congruent with the proof in a corrected form.

(1) and (15), and to a lesser extent (13), are the chief differences between my philosophy and Whitehead's; (6) and (13) are perhaps my chief differences with Peirce; (2) in numerous details, (13), and (15) are probably my most original contributions. (9) is non-Whiteheadian as some (Christian) interpret Whitehead; but as I interpret him, this constitutes rather a development and clarification of his method. Even (1) and (15) might be looked at in this way. But certain ambiguities or inconsistencies in Whitehead must be recognized and boldly remedied to yield this result.

Most of the foregoing doctrines were arrived at in crude form prior to the study of Peirce or Whitehead; the chief exception being (6), which is my most definite plagiarism from Whitehead. It is now very important to me, But I also find it in Buddhism.

*(Another, older summary, but I still hold these views.)*

## Metaphysics

Charles Hartshorne

(1) Contrast: Every nonrestrictive or metaphysical concept expresses a real contrast, a distinction between contrary notions, both universally illustrated in reality, in any possible state of existence. Thus in any such state there will be something necessary and something contingent or accidental, something relative and something nonrelative or absolute, something which is subject and something which is object, something which is abstract and something which is concrete. The terms "something," or "reality," escapes the principle of contrast only because in their case the application of the principle is transferred to the "metalanguage" (the language about language, signs about signs); thus there are terms or concepts which are said to refer to nothing, to the unreal; but terms which refer to nothing do not really refer. For "nothing" is not an entity, is not something, though the word "nothing" is an entity. "Unreality" or "appearance" is not a special low degree of reality, but a mistaken belief about reality in the ordinary sense. The belief is itself real, not "mere appearance" and the deceptive mirror reflections, eg., do exist. Mistaken beliefs are multiple and changing, hence, multiplicity and change are real. The theory to the contrary is a misuse of the term "unreal," which means "what an erroneous (but real) belief appears to itself to be about," though in fact it is about something else. All belief is about the real, and is itself real, no matter how mistaken. Apart from bare "something" (or "reality" or "existence"), all nonrestrictive terms have contraries, and both the contrasting terms in each contrast must have application to reality.

(2) Overlapping Contrast or Synthesis (rejection of dualisms): There can be no mere "and" connecting ultimate contraries (for example, "subjects" and "objects," "being" and "what becomes," "relative" and "absolute"); the total reality must be either a subject or not a subject, it must either become or not become, and be either relative or not relative. One of each pair of contraries must, in every case, express the togetherness or totality of the real as coming under the contrast; one contrary always "overlaps" or includes the other. This is a basic asymmetry in thought and reality.

(3) Consistent or Nondialectical Synthesis: The overlapping contrary, when properly conceived, includes the other member of the pair without contradiction or incurable paradox; the overlapping concept is that one which can consistently apply to the whole containing the opposite contrary. (Hegelian and Marxian dialectics arise partly from violating this rule.)

(4) Abstract-in-the-Concrete: In the contrast, abstract-concrete, the latter is the overlapping concept; universals or "forms" are in concrete particular realities, and there are no merely "separate" or independent forms (vs. "platonism"). Proof: The concrete is richer in determinations than the abstract, and the whole reality must have at least all the definiteness of its parts. Not all forms need be actualized in instances of the form; but every real form must be contained in the concrete, either as instance, or as content in the consciousness or thought of some actual subject. There are no forms neither embodied in examples nor conceived by any mind. ((Metaphysical forms, by (1) are all embodied in examples.))

(5) Necessary-in-the-Contingent: By (1) there must be something necessary, as well as something contingent; by (2), either the contingent contains the necessary, or vice versa; but since the necessary is what is so "no matter what," or in any possible circumstances, the necessary is merely the common factor of all contingent conceptions or things, and thus it is contained in the contingent. A necessary proposition is one "implied by any entity whatever"; therefore it is the contingent which contains or overlaps, and the necessary which is contained. Again, the contingent is the concrete, for if reality in its full determinateness were necessary, everything would be necessary (in violation of 1); but by (4) the concrete contains the abstract, hence the contingent

contains the necessary. This principle is embodied in the axiom of modal logic that the conjunction of a necessary and a contingent proposition is a contingent proposition. Thus contingency overlaps or includes its contrary. Also, for similar reasons, becoming overlaps being; if X is without becoming, and Y becomes, then the totality which includes X and Y obviously also becomes; so that "process" can and must include mere "being," or the ungenerated and uncreated. Principle of process.

(6) Priority of the Positive: In the contrast, positive-negative, the former overlaps; thus truth includes falsity, not vice versa, and good includes evil or the merely neutral. "Proposition p is true and proposition q is false," this entire statement, if true, sums up the status of both p and q; but if we merely know that the total or conjunct statement is false, we do not know the status of p and q, since both may be true, or both false, or p false and q true. If a part is good and a part neutral, the whole is good; if a part or aspect is good and another is bad, the whole is good. The negative is at most a part or aspect; life is not a flight from evil, but a pursuit of good (to escape evil, not living would suffice; but those who do not live can affirm no philosophical doctrine). This principle may be called "the optimistic principle." Corellary: there can be no merely negative truth (e.g., "nothing exists" could not be true, for it has no positive meaning. (( Note that "relation" and "relativity," also "becomes," are positive: so is "concrete" or "fully determinate" and "has possible alternatives" or "is contingent"; hence (4,5) are cases of (6).))

(7) Incompatibility, or Positive Exclusion Among Contingent Things: The contingent actualization of possibilities must, by (5,6), have positive alternative in every case, since a merely negative alternative is meaningless; hence every contingent truth excludes some otherwise possible positive truths. In no state of affairs could one always "have his cake and eat it too"; any achievement or actualization necessarily involves renunciation, not simply of evil but of good. Actuality is always competitive, if this is actualized, that cannot be. Principle of the "incompatibility of values."

(8) Relativity: The actual or concrete is relative, which means it varies with varying relations, or is dependent upon and partly constituted by relations which might not have obtained. The concrete is the definite, and this definiteness includes determinateness of relationships; also the concrete is contingent (5), and hence these determinate relationships might not have obtained.

(9) Absolute-in-the-Relative: Since, by (4) the concrete is all-inclusive, relativity (8) is the overlapping principle; the purely nonrelative or absolute can only be real as something included in the relative or concrete; to be wholly independent of varying relationships or circumstances is to be the same "in any and all circumstances, and this is to be necessary; but, by (5) the necessary is an abstract common factor in all the alternative possible concrete actualities. "The absolute" is merely an abstract constituent or phase of the relative, which is itself the universal principle. (( The relative is the same as the internally related, and the absolute as the externally related; hence it is the internally related which is all-inclusive. Wholes are internally related to parts, parts externally related (except in "organic wholes," which are not the ultimate type of the wholes). ))

(10) Absolute as the Pure Form of Relativity Itself: Since relativity is the universal or overlapping concept, embodied in every total state of reality, relativity itself, as a universal form, is wholly independent of or neutral to alternative possibilities of actualization. Thus relativity as an abstract principle is the absolute. Relativity is not relatively, but absolutely, final or inclusive. Only its instances or concrete cases are relative, not itself as a universal form.



- (11) Objects in Subjects, or the Ultimacy of Mind or Experience: In the relation, experience-reality, or awareness and that of which it is aware, the subject is the relative or dependent term and the object the absolute or independent term; hence, by (9), the object is contained in the subject, and objects are abstractions from the concrete reality of subjects. (Not that an object O ever depends on a particular subject S for which it is object; the abstract has to be in some concrete thing, but not in just this or that thing.))
- (12) Objects Either Universals or Other Subjects: There is no "merely physical" object; all levels of concrete physical reality are constituted by experiences, at least in the form of feelings; it is denied that there is a positive conceivable alternative to "panpsychism." This is a generalization of (11), together with (8,9).
- (13) The Subject-object Relation as Participation or Sympathy: This results from (12), in so far as the object is concrete or particular; if it is a universal, then, by (4), be aware of it as an abstract aspect of participation.
- (14) Creative Synthesis: The subject transcends its objects by free or emergent synthesis: A plurality of objects, of which a subject is to be aware, is a many to be contained in a one; it is logically impossible that the many should strictly imply the one which is to contain them, for the one, together with the many must constitute a new multiplicity; "the many become one and are increased by one" (Whitehead). The additional unit cannot be logically contained in the original many, hence it has to be created. Subjects create, not their objects, but themselves as emergent wholes containing the objects. Self-creation is the primary mode of creation. (Lequier, Berdyaev, Whitehead).
- (15) Creation of Other Activities: By adding itself as a new object, a new unit of reality to be experienced by subsequent subjects, self-creation helps to constitute or create these later subjects; but essentially they create themselves, using prior subjects as materials, or as "data," as entites "given" for awareness. Thus the secondary form of creation is; offering oneself to subsequent subjects for their enjoyment.
- (16) Causal Conditioning: This is due to the inclusion of prior subjects as objects for new subjects, for every actuality is a subject, taking account of prior actual subjects, as data, and is thus influenced by them in its own self-creation. The transmission of "influence" through time is essentially participation in antecedent feelings (13). Being influenced is "feeling of (others') feeling."
- (17) The "Relative Absolute": Besides the pure absolute, which is universal relativity as such, there is the partial absolute, that which is independent of some but not all relations. Every actuality is independent of actualities subsequent to it in time, and in this regard is an absolute. Subjects become objects for further subjects.
- (18) Causa' Order: This is due to the aesthetic value of pattern or partial repetition, unity in diversity; all such order is relative not absolute, it is approximate and statistical, as in current physics, not strict as in Newtonian physics. By (14), order could not be absolute, since it springs from the multiple free acts of self-creation. No power could coerce these into absolute harmony, for they must severally determine themselves.
- (19) God as Ground of Order: Every subject must strive for order, for it cannot exist as an aesthetic unity of feeling without it; but the success of this striving requires explanation, which can only be found in the self-creative action of God inspiring all other self-creation into relative, though not absolute accord. The many are ordered by one, they all lean in the same direction in so far as they all lean toward the same supreme object, the de facto divine act.

(20) Two Levels of Relativity: Ordinary relative things are imperfectly and incompletely relative, their nature reflects that of other things to which they are related, but not "transparently" and without loss of value and excluding things subsequent to them in time; the transcendentally relative (God) reflects all things transparently (omnisciently), and nothing is wholly subsequent to it in time. Transcendental Relativity, as such, in its abstractness, is "the absolute," the eternal necessary divine essence; but it is not God, for God is the individual actuality which is transcendentally relative, which concretely actualizes the merely abstract universal, "transcendental relativity." (Not that any other individual could do this, but that God could do it otherwise.)

(21) Two Levels of Relative Absoluteness: God, qua actual, and not merely qua existing individual, or God in his actual experiences, rather than in his mere eternally existing essence, is relatively absolute, for he is relative to the antecedent states of himself and the world but absolute with respect to subsequent states; ordinary individuals are also relative and absolute in the two directions of earlier and later. But the two levels are radically distinguished by the lack of transparency in the ordinary or non-divine cases. Also, only God is in the past of every other individual, and only he will be future to every individual. Only he precedes and outlasts all other individuals. His transparent relativity is the measure of reality.

(22) The Ordering Influence of God Not All Determining: It does not fully determine, but only influences, the world; for the only means of influence in this philosophy is transmission of feeling and thought as datum offered for participation; and participation is self-creative or emergent in principle. Thus there can be no contradiction between divine power and creaturely freedom.

(23) Real Chance: Since (7) there are incompatible values, and there is universal self-determination, it is mere chance or good luck, if conflict, choice of incompatible goods, and hence suffering, are entirely avoided in a given case.

(24) Providence: Its function is not the judicious choice of goods and evils for the world, but only of judicious risks of evil as the price of opportunities for good. Risk, opportunity, chance "luck," are real and ineradicable, not because God is less than ideally powerful, but because "power" means either capacity for self-creation, or capacity to influence the self-creation of others, by offering the results of one's own self-activity as datum for the free or emergent synthesis of others. To suppress the freedom of others would not mean influencing them very powerfully, but merely, destroying them. God "cannot" eradicate all evil because this could not be done, as it implies a "total determining of the self-determinations of others"---a contradiction. Evils are not determined by God, or entirely determined by any single agent, but always by many agents, none of whom could have deliberately chosen the particular good or evil result. Chance, as the partial absence both of necessity and intention, is real. No detail of the world process is ultimately either necessary or intended; it simply happens. To accept life is to agree to submit to the accidental, as providentially restrained, and confined to certain channels of possibility and probability.

(25) Asymmetry or One-way Relativity: Relations which are convertible, such as A equals B, are definable through non-convertible relations, such as "greater than." If we have a principle of directional order, e.g., "later than", we can always treat two-way order, e.g., "contemporary", as the special case in which the one-way separation becomes zero. Symmetry is the limiting special case, non-symmetry, or direction, the general principle or variable. The metaphysical implication is that directionless concepts, like space, are derivative from directional concepts, like time: being is the limiting or special case of becoming, interaction of action, mutual dependence or independence of one-way dependence, coordination of subordination, mere conservation (or equality between cause and effect) of creative enhancement through cumulative synthesis, deterministic causality of indeterministic, classical of statistical laws, positional of partitive relations. Neoclassical metaphysics is based throughout on asymmetries:

abstract included in concrete, data or objects included in subjects, causes included in effects; absolutes included in relatives, coordination of things in the world due to common subordination of all to God, inclusion of all things in the divine knowledge. Classical metaphysics was a melange of symmetries and asymmetries without a clear principle. There was a one-way relativity of the world to God, but yet God knew the world, and knowledge in all other cases was admitted to be a one-way relativity of the knower to the known. Thus the relativity inherent in knowledge was merely turned upside down in the "analogy of being." But how can supreme knowledge be the mere reverse of knowledge? Also, the concrete was relative to the abstract, and contained it, yet God was non-relative thought not abstract. Also all truths were eternal, and thus symmetrically interrelated by co-subsistence in the timeless divine knowledge, instead of being in process of successive creation through emergent synthesis, which is the ultimate principle of directional order. Neoclassical metaphysics removes these discrepancies. It is the first form of philosophy to be based throughout on directional relativity.