2. Philosophy – Sections & Papers

2.1 Process Philosophy

Section Head: Leemon McHenry

Wednesday, July 5, afternoon
Room: HS 102

Session 1

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Experience All the Way Down: the Reinterpretation of Leibniz in James Ward and Alfred North Whitehead

Abstract: In the preface to Process and Reality (1929) Whitehead indicates the following among the "contemporary school of though" and authors to which he believes that his own attempt to develop a metaphysical theory of reality is indebted: English and American realism (Nunn), process philosophy and pragmatism (Bergson, James, Dewey), British absolute idealism (Bradley). No mention is made of the Cambridge philosopher James Ward (1843-1925), author among others of two significant series of Gifford Lectures entitled Naturalism and Agnosticism (1899) and The Realm of Ends: Pluralism and Theism (1911). Focussing mainly on this latter work, the paper examines some rather striking similarities in the philosophies of the two thinkers, arguing that some of Whitehead’s conceptual breakthroughs are already anticipated by Ward’s attempt to develop a revised version of Leibniz’s monadism as a pluralistic yet spiritualistic alternative to Bradley’s absolute idealism. From a philosophical point of view, the aim of the paper is to evaluate the motivations leading both philosophers towards a panpsychic conception of the ultimate nature of reality.

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Whitehead’s Philosophy of Time

Abstract: Presumably, process philosophy takes time seriously. Curiously, however, the word "time" does not occur in any of the categories in Whitehead's categorial scheme in Process and Reality. Nonetheless, a conception of time is implicit in his categorial scheme, one that is interrelated with his Platonic conception of becoming and his Cartesian conception of subjectivity. For time is relational, and temporal relations
stem from the processes of becoming of actual occasions. Furthermore, from the subjective standpoint of an actual occasion during its process of becoming, it experiences the temporal relations in its actual world as real. Through some comparisons with Kantian apriorist anti-realism about temporal relations, this talk focuses on Whitehead's experiential realism.

3

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Richard Rorty and Process Philosophy

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to explore the relationship between the thought of Richard Rorty, on the one hand, and that of Whitehead and especially Hartshorne (Rorty's former teacher), on the other. There are important similarities among these thinkers, but the differences between Rorty and process thought are more readily apparent, especially in terms of the battle between poetry (as Rorty conceives it) and process metaphysics. The latter is defended against Rorty.

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Whitehead and the Problem of the Connection between the Physical and the Mathematical

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to argue the need for the philosophy of nature in our time. This need was clearly seen already by Whitehead. (True, his own philosophy of nature has been criticised by some philosophers of science for its "ontological" character.) My main argument is based on the problem of the status of the mathematical and its connection with the physical. This problem arose with the birth of mathematical natural science three hundred years ago and has remained open up to the present. Galileo, Newton and others replaced the Aristotelian conception of cosmos (Aristotle considered the cosmos as a big living organism to which also the humans belong) with the conception of the universe as a mathematical structure. The universe was considered as a quantitative, exact world subordinated to mathematics. It was like a machine where there was no place for humans. It was Galileo and after him Descartes who identified the mathematical and the physical. For Descartes the physical universe was res extensa: in its essence, a 'thing' with geometrical extiveness. The mental counterpart of the physical universe was res cogitans: in ideal, a mathematically thinking 'thing'. To overcome the problem of the connection between the physical and the mathematical, Newton separated the mathematical entirely from the physical. But then the problem was: how can there be mathematical knowledge of the physical, if the physical is entirely separated from the mathematical? Kant conceived mathematics as a mental construction. By the discovery of non-Euclidean geometries, Kant's position became dominant. But
the problem remains unsolved. To restore the close relationship between the physical and the mathematical, Whitehead, being himself a mathematician, saw the necessity to elaborate the philosophy of nature, which he opposed to "scientific materialism" that did not acknowledge any feelings, qualitative values and goals in matter, or stuff. Nicholas Maxwell, Ilya Prigogine, Isabelle Stengers and others developed later the philosophy of nature, in its positive meaning. New efforts in this elaboration have to be done.

Thursday, July 6, morning
Room: HS 102

Session 2

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Whitehead and Scotus on Individuality

Abstract: This paper explores the most adequate medieval account of individuality, namely that of Duns Scotus, and compares it with Whitheadian notions of individuality. A central construct, which unites both Whitehead and Scotus is shown to be identity, and the analogical working of this construct within the thought of two apparently so diverse thinkers is explored. The ultimate purpose of this attempt is to rescue the salient elements of the highly flexible Scotistic ontological schema for process thought, and thereby to attempt to begin some kind of reconciliation between these two, heretofore apparently irreconcilable, ways of looking at the world.

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Actual Entity and Energeia

Abstract: Whitehead differentiated becoming from changing. That is to say, actual entities become and perish but do not change. The substratum of change is a society. In short, ‘change’ means the diversities among the actual entities which belong to some one society of a definite type. An actual entity is a process of becoming itself. The process is through the course that many prehensions with incomplete subjective unity terminate in a completed unity of prehension. An actual entity is self-creative and, by functioning in respect to itself, plays diverse roles in self-formation without losing its self-identity. Thus ‘becoming’ is the transformation of
incoherence into coherence. It is the immediacy of the actual entity. An actual entity is the subject of its own immediacy. The activity of the subject corresponds to ‘energeia’ in Aristotle’s metaphysics but does not correspond to ‘kinesis’. However, actual entities and ‘energeia’ are not the same. Each actual entity is essentially bipolar, physical and mental, and the physical inheritance is essentially accompanied by a conceptual reaction. But Aristotle’s ‘energeia’ means pure mental activity. Whitehead’s God is an actual entity but not a society; therefore He becomes but does not change. Moreover God does not perish unlike the temporal actual entities because He is the presupposed actuality of conceptual operation in unison of becoming with every other creative act. Furthermore, the becoming of God means the activity as ‘energeia’. God is the supreme energiea who mediates between eternity and history, and by His activity is more and more conscious of the primordial nature. For all that, God still preserves His immutability.

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God as One of Others

Abstract: In Whiteheadean cosmology, the concept of God is problematic. It has expanded ‘Process Theology’. And in this paper, we return God in Whiteheadean cosmology. Especially, we take the point of view from the occasion (including us).
Firstly, we must discriminate between God and God from the point of view of occasions. God is atemporal, but from the point of view of the occasion, God appears in the occasion’s process, and it is temporal. We can’t understand God’s process itself and for Whitehead it is anthithesis. But for the occasion (including us) God appears in time process. So we can compare God’s three natures for the occasion to three genera of other occasions, that is, past, present and future. We may study primordial nature analogues to past, superjective nature analogues to present, consequent nature analogues to future. So we can understand the Whiteheadean concept of God more consistently and more easily.
Lastly, the occasion (including us) experiences God as same as other occasions. Although God is a primordial creature in Whiteheadean cosmology, this ‘primordial’ means ‘together with all creations of all occasions.’ Because the processes of their creations are temporal, this ‘together with’ means past, present and future. So the occasion experiences God as analogues to past occasions, present occasions and future occasions. Here the occasion (including us) experiences God as one of others.

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Existence as a Process: Wholes and Time
Abstract: This paper defends two claims. The former is that the notion of existence is coextensive with the notion of producing effects. The latter is that a whole exists if and only if produces effects. Both claims share a temporal perspective on existence. The notion of existence – as traditionally conceived – is an abstraction. I present a process view to the problem of the relation between wholes and parts. Traditionally existence is conceived in a timeless domain. In such a domain, wholes are nothing but their parts. However wholes belong to the universe we live in. I propose to adopt a process based view. Among the almost infinite number of possible wholes only a few actually take place. These are embedded or, better, identical with processes - processes spanning both time and space.

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A Nontheistic Whiteheadian Cosmology

Abstract: The three metaphysical functions justifying the inclusion of a nontemporal actual entity in Whitehead’s cosmology are (1) as a receptacle for the set of all the possibilities there could possibly be, (2) as the source of novelty in the initial aims of actual occasions, and (3) as the preserver of whatever value those actual occasions manage to create before perishing. Unfortunately, all three functions undermine the primacy of time, for all three are trans-temporal in nature. (1) God’s primordial nature is unchanging, undergoing neither becoming nor perishing: eternal objects are eternal. (3) God’s consequent nature is everlasting, open to change but not to its disruptive consequences: it comes to be but does not perish. (2) God’s creativity robs actual occasions of the capacity to solve on their own the challenges of becoming and perishing: there are temporal achievements only because of a nontemporal influence. For a process philosophy to take time seriously, it cannot take trans-temporality seriously. Whitehead’s system provides ample resources for a thoroughly temporal and radically nontheistic metaphysical naturalism. (1) Possibilities can be understood as functions of actual systems, as artifacts of ordered structures of enduring objects, some possibilities perishing and new ones emerging as those systems change. The birth and death of eternal objects, their contingency as possibilities, fully respects the ontological principle by locating the possible in the reservoir of values embedded in past achievement. (2) Creativity can be vested in the capacity of nascent actual occasions to abstract elements from their immediate inheritance and to transform them in adaptive ways to suit their unique needs. The category of Creativity is sufficient to stimulate the inventiveness by which actual occasions can fashion novel determinate harmonies. (3) Becoming something definite, achieving a concrete result, is an intrinsic value, that is, value enhanced because it need not have occurred. The conditions for success in value actualizing are also the conditions for that actualized value’s brevity: to be is to be finite, and the price of finitude is that it cannot be sustained but necessarily perishes. Endurance is not the greatest good.
Towards a Unified Theory of Process

Abstract: Whitehead’s Ultimate category will be connected with the idea of the Substantial Activity of Realization he introduces in Science and the Modern World. These two ideas will be the starting point for elaborating the idea of the Pure Activity. On one hand, the Creative One-Many is a principle that determines the fundamental rhythm of the universe. On the other hand, the Substantial Activity of Realization is a world substrate-like factor and each of its elements is a mode of this substrate. The Pure Activity manifests through its inhomogeneities. What is an inhomogeneity as such? It is something that is determined, something that can be created from substrate and by substrate. We cannot know the range of these possibilities, so we can assume that they outline an indefinite space of pure potentialities. The following metaphysical question arises: What are the simplest manifestations of the Pure Activity? The parallel (but ontological in nature) question pertains to objects belonging to the “space” of pure potentialities. The manifestation or so called modes are: space-like form of activity, stream-like form of activity and atom-like form of activity. They will be presented and their relation to well known from history of philosophy three categories, existence, act and monad, will be showed.

Subject and Activity in Whitehead’s Metaphysics

Abstract: The notion of a final cause was investigated and introduced by Aristotle as a technical notion of philosophy. After playing a prominent role in scholastics it has been banned from modern metaphysics by Bacon and Descartes. Whitehead tried hard to restore its position of utmost importance in philosophy. According to the doctrine of substantialism – a cornerstone of Aristotelian metaphysics – nothing can aim at its own becoming, being at the same time a subject and an object of striving. However, Whitehead definitely rejected the doctrine of substance. Hence our problem arises: can he retain FINAL CAUSES WITHOUT SUBSTANCES in his metaphysics?
Open Questions in Whitehead's Ontology

Abstract: Pluralism is generally seen as a particularly democratic mode of thought. The pluralisms of James and Whitehead are mainly centred on subjectivity and perception. Now, it is a far cry from perceiving and evaluating subjects to genuine intersubjectivity. Communication, conflict and transactions are the hallmarks of intersubjectivity, as we all know from experience. Interaction between individuals is more than the sum of individual occurrences. The whole of interacting subjects is what makes up society which assumes qualities that differ markedly from those of individuals or the sum of them. It is far from clear how Whitehead's metaphysical scheme could do justice to interactive processes between contemporary actualities. To begin, Whitehead is set in a broader philosophical context. Then, we try to construct a Whiteheadian argument in favour of communication and conflict. This will bring us to the problem of the present moment known from James and Bergson. Mead avoids such problems by making the constitution of the self dependent on communication. Interaction takes place in the here and now. In this sense social psychology restores society and tempers metaphysical individualism.

Acceptance and the Desire for More: Whitehead and Nietzsche on Tragedy

Abstract: In this essay, I compare Whitehead and Nietzsche on the topic of tragedy—a theme deeply woven within their respective worldviews. Along with briefly showing this to be the case, my main interest is to compare and assess the manner in which both thinkers describe the possibility of affirming the tragic nature of reality. Nietzsche and Whitehead come together in a rejection of Plato's insistence that real value exists only in the eternal and ahistorical. By means of this rejection, Nietzsche and Whitehead subscribe to a correlation between finitude or fragility and value. For both, tragedy is this correlation. Within their respective affirmations of a tragic world there is a sort of paradox wherein there is both an acceptance of reality as it is and also a pang of desire for something more.

Two Perspectives on Metaphysical Perspectivism: Nietzsche and Whitehead
Abstract: I propose a paper on the metaphysical perspectivism of Nietzsche and Whitehead. I draw critically on the thought of the two thinkers, and on three particularly relevant secondary sources: Stephen David Ross's PERSPECTIVE IN WHITHEAD'S METAPHYSICS, Steven D. Hales and Rex Welshon's NIETZSCHE'S PERSPECTIVISM and Welshon's THE PHILOSOPHY OF NIETZSCHE. The outcome of my paper is a defense of metaphysical perspectivism, i.e., the view that all being is perspectival. This means that the world is made up of perspectives upon perspectives and perspectives within perspectives. There is nothing more ultimate or fundamental about it than these perspectives and their constituents, in their intersections and differences. The perspectives are not mere irreducible minima but can range over many degrees of complexity, integration, or difference. Given the necessary aspects of incommensurability among these perspectives, not only is there no absolute standpoint from which the world can be comprehended as a totality, there is no such thing as an all-encompassing totality or unity of the world. Even the notion of "world" or "a world" expresses a perspective, as do notions of "worlds." In fact, for the perspectivist, there is some considerable truth in claiming that there are as many worlds as there are perspectives. Or, at least, the world exhibits pervasive disunity as well as unity in its perspectival character. Nietzsche and Whitehead have much to contribute to this vision, but there are also some important criticisms of their ideas I develop. For example, I believe (with Ross) that at least some of Whitehead's ideas about God are inconsistent with his metaphysical perspectivism and should either be jettisoned or revised in keeping with that perspectivism. And Nietzsche's perspectivism lacks the systematic role Whitehead rightly assigns to novelty in its intricate connections to causal continuity. Some such role is required, I contend, if we are to make sense of the world (or worlds) in which we live. My recent book NOVELTY discusses and defends this point in detail. Of course, there are important technical differences between the metaphysical perspectivisms of the two thinkers, just as there are striking and generally unrecognized similarities. I highlight some of each.

2.2 Whitehead and Science & Theology

Section heads: Palmyre Oomen
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Tuesday, July 4, morning
Room: HS 106

Session 1

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The Place of the Human Being in the Cosmos. Asking the How-Question and Looking for the Meaning of it All.

Abstract: Galileo made a famous distinction between “how the heavens go” and “how to go to heaven”. Thanks to contemporary sciences we can peer back in time and in space. Contemporary anthropogenesis (and evolutionary theory) and Cosmo-genesis give us a satisfying picture about how this universe (or this cosmic epoch) came about. All problems are not solved, that goes without saying. But “mainline” science is looking for a “gapless story” and reacts fiercely against any attempt to suggesting that contemporary scientific theory is in principle not able to account for the
coming into being of this galaxy, this planet and life upon it. That makes the so called “creationism” totally unacceptable for every serious scientist.

As an example of a contemporary scientist who has seriously reflected about all that we know about the origin of life I would like to point to Christian de Duve (a Noble Prize winner who has extensively and successfully published about life). See his A l’écoute du vivant, Paris, Odile Jacobs 2002. de Duve asserts together with most of his colleagues that life is the result of chemical laws, and that given the presence of these laws and given a planet as ours and enough time to allow evolution to “evolve” through random mutation and selection, life in his many forms is essentially foreseeable, and hence governed by natural (mainly chemical) laws. Whereas many scientists tend to conclude from this insight that the existence of the human being is a side issue, that can be explained by “Chance and Necessity” (J. Monod), de Duve feels that the coming into being of the emergence of the human being is the most significant event in the cosmic history. The fact that there emerges a being capable to seek the truth, to be open to wonder and that is sensitive to goodness is an event which may have profound implications about the meaning of it all. Those insights allow to overcome the opposition between science and religion, without suggesting that science is lacking in explanatory power. It is not a new version of NOMA (non overlapping magisterial) either. It is rather an attempt to relate “facts” and “meaning” in such a way that the language game of science does not suggest that religious and philosophical issues concerning the presence of humans on life have become obsolete, and that religion and philosophy do not claim that something is “lacking” in the way the sciences account for the presence of life on earth.

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Reinterpreting the Relationship between Science and Religion from a Perspective of Process Philosophy.

Abstract: It is well-known that one of the important achievements of the Renaissance is the separation of science from religion. On the one hand, this separation is an independent manifesto of science and results in the emergence of modern science in the West. On the other hand, this separation also brought out many crises of modernity, to number four of them: (1) Body-mind dualism; (2) the deviation of science from humanities; (3) the loss of science for humanity; and (4) gulf between western civilization and eastern civilization. All this results in the tragedies occurred in the twentieth century in both East and West.

In his philosophy of process, Whitehead made use of his theory of value to unite science and religion. In this unification, science and religion are merely different forms of value modality, instead separate research fields for human cognition. Eventually, they both are synthesized in aesthetic experience. In this synthesis, Whitehead tried to eliminate the conflict between science and religion, and thus saved human reason from scientific obsession.
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Water Metaphors in Process Thought

Abstract: Both Whitehead’s and Zhū Xi ‘s process thinking rest on two
metaphysical/religious ultimates: creativity and God vs. chí and li. These
basic issues allow the view that all occasions of natural experience are
created in a process shaped by the past, their own self-determination, and
the initial aims of God.

Process philosophising frequently employ metaphors based upon the
properties of liquid water. Even when asking questions which science does
not or cannot address, metaphoric thinking can provide new realities and
value experiences which are not accessible by solely scientific
investigation.

Whereas the single water molecule has no special properties apart from
being very small, it is the liquid that has a large number of anomalous, if
not unique, features. These properties will be briefly discussed. Many of
them are crucial for maintaining life processes on this planet. In fact, we
cannot imagine life in the absence of water. Actually, every instant in the
history of a living being is a tribute to the exceptional nature of liquid
water.

An attempt will be made to illustrate how relevant modern and detailed
insights into the structure and properties of water are for enjoying and
understanding the aesthetic experiences that can be obtained by recognising
that Nature is a unified macroprocess originating from the amazing
orderliness of its constituting microprocesses.

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Today, Chapter Twelve, not Chapter Eleven, Prevents Possible Bankruptcy of
the Whitehead Business

Abstract: Science and the Modern World (SMW) consists of Whitehead’s 1925
Lowell Lectures, supplemented with four additional chapters, among which:
the eleventh chapter on ‘God,’ and the twelfth chapter on ‘Religion and
Science.’ The eleventh chapter introduces God as a necessary principle to
complete Whitehead’s construction of a postmodern cosmology: it functions
as Chapter Eleven to prevent Whitehead’s metaphysical business to collapse.
But SMW is not only a prelude to the metaphysics of Process and Reality.
The book also embodies Whitehead’s philosophy of civilization, hence
foreshadowing Adventures of Ideas and Modes of Thought. The business of
cultural philosophy is twofold. Its first purpose is to render explicit the
different presuppositions and the abstract nature of all cosmologies
underlying divergent cultural currents. Its second purpose is what
civilization is all about: the continual effort to harmonise differences
and to transcend abstractions. The twelfth chapter of SMW treats
theological worldviews, and scientific, esthetical, and moral cosmologies
on the same footing: they are all finite contributions to the never ending development of human civilization. Yet, in this chapter, Whitehead also puts the religious vision at the centre of the cultural quest – being the one element which persistently shows an upward trend – and he even identifies the religious vision with the unreachable aim of the global adventure of civilization, with its Holy Grail. With the notion of ‘religious vision’ – being both the motive force and the final destination of the cultural evolution – Whitehead reintroduces God, not as the tailpiece of his metaphysical system, but as the foundation of our belief in the human adventure. So: Chapter Twelve prevents Whitehead’s cultural business to go bankrupt. In our age – proclaiming the end of metaphysics, and installing tolerance as the main value of the civilized world – Chapter Twelve might prove to be a more important gateway to Whitehead’s thinking than Chapter Eleven, and a better guarantee for its survival.

Tuesday, July 4, afternoon
Room: HS 106

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Whitehead, Complexity Theory, and Divine Action

Abstract: Complexity theory reveals that relatively simple forms of order emerge from the functioning of complex dynamic systems (Stuart Kauffman, Brian Goodwin). The mathematical analysis in complexity theory (and chaos theory as well) employs the terms “attractors” and “basins of attraction” to describe how the actual development of complex dynamic systems tends to evolve toward particular sets of ordered possibilities. This paper suggests that Whitehead’s analysis of possibility and his understanding of the role of the Primordial Nature of God cast much light on the ultimate origins of such order. The apparent facts that possibilities exhibit an ordered structure and that they can “attract” physical systems that are entirely unconscious were anticipated in Whitehead’s metaphysics and formed the basis for his understanding of what he called God’s “primary action” on the universe (PR 345). The paper argues that Whitehead’s analysis has much relevance for the discussion of divine action in the contemporary science-religion dialogue.

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The possible significance of the notion fitness function in self-organizing systems for a discourse about God and world

Abstract: Exploration of the possible significance of the idea of self-organization as recently developed in science for the theological formulation of the relation between God and the world. More specifically, examination whether and how the notion of attractiveness or preference — as it plays a role in self-organizing systems in the form of a mathematical ‘fitness function’— may be connected with philosophical and theological notions of Alfred North Whitehead, as elaborated in his philosophical concept of God’s primordial nature.

In many mathematical models of self-organizing processes an important role is played by an ‘orientation function’ (technically called a ‘fitness function’). This function may be seen as a mathematical representation of freedom and direction: it is a mapping rule that basically assigns a direction (attractiveness, preference) to a set of eligible possibilities, thereby enabling a process to organize itself in an adaptive way.

In the view of Whitehead, God is said to have two sides or natures signified respectively by the expressions ‘God’s primordial nature,’ and ‘God’s consequent nature.’ Whitehead characterizes God’s primordial nature as both the immutable source of new possibilities and the atemporal valuation of all possibilities. As such, God’s primordial nature is an orientating instance that constitutes the worldly events by providing them with an initial preferred direction — even though this divine nature works immanently, and in no way imposes a purpose from without.

I will argue for a certain similarity between the role of the ‘fitness function’ in self-organizing systems as it has been formulated in recent adaptive dynamics and the role of ‘God’s primordial nature’ with respect to the world as formulated in Whitehead’s metaphysics. And explore some philosophical-theological consequences of this suggested similarity.

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Rethinking the Second Law: Cosmology from an Engineering Perspective

Abstract: In Part One (Rethinking the Second Law: Carnot’s Epiphany and the Concept of Work) I argued that Carnot’s framework is primary and the two, complementary Boltzmann frameworks, corresponding to classical and statistical mechanics, are idealized, special, limiting cases. Carnot’s Epiphany is that ‘energy-transfer’ bifurcates into a linear and a non-linear components (viz. work always has a heat loss). In Carnot’s sense ‘work’ cannot occur in a mechanical system where continuity of type is preserved. Carnot’s classical thermodynamics is in direct conflict with mechanics. If Carnot’s engineering program is not reducible to Boltzmann’s mechanical program, then the generally accepted (scientific) definition of the concept of work must be re-examined.

The aim of this essay is to characterize more fully the engineering framework, its concept of work and the corresponding model of the universe. C.S. Peirce argued for a similar resolution of necessity (First) and chance (Second) in a Third metaphysical framework encompassing the others. Similarly, accepting the irreconcilability of the Parmenidean and Heraclitean metaphysical frameworks, Plato, in his dialogue, Timaeus, offers an engineering-based (viz. the Master Craftsman) view of the universe. The Timaeus can also be understood as Plato’s theory of Intelligent Design.
Engineering is defined in terms of the problem of design. ‘Work’ in engineering is problem solving. The question, ‘How should we live?’ is the core expression of the problem of design. How should we design the irrigation of our fields? How should we design our houses? Our neighborhoods? Our cities? How should we design our economy? How should we design a political system that will preserve and develop our economy? How should we treat each other?

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The Philosophy of an Infinite, Open and Integrated Universe

Abstract: This paper will discuss a development of Whitehead’s cosmology in general and the theory of Cosmic Epochs in particular. The role and relevance of the concept of infinity in Whitehead’s cosmology and ontology will be discussed in respect to both the magnitude of the universe and qualitative variety among atomic occasions. A Whiteheadian cosmology will be offered as counterpoint to prevailing Big Bang mythology. The central concepts of causal orderliness, potentialities for causal efficacy and the unification of reality in a non-reductionistic, process and organic philosophy will be elaborated. A new ontological conjecture will be offered in contradistinction to reductionistic ontologies, including that of String Theory.

The role of God in respect to fundamental contingencies manifest in an infinite and eternal universe will be discussed. God’s Primordial Nature and God’s Consequential Nature will be considered in relationship to the axiomatic systems of Principia Mathematica and Process and Reality, the former being subsumed within the latter.

The role of 1) causal potentialities as derivative from causal orderliness, 2) the emergence and perishing of events and 3) the concurrent realization and frustration of co-present causal potentials within all events will be discussed in relation to both the foundation for teleological phenomena and God’s Consequential Nature within the infinite flux of events and the creative advance of the universe.

9
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Modern Physics and Metaphysics

Abstract: Continuing development of the descriptive content of physical theories over the past 100 years has steadily enhanced the applicability of an event metaphysics like that of Whitehead’s. This evolution in physics has occurred with little change in the implicit metaphysics often applied to its standard interpretations. Several key interpretive problems (e.g., consistency between quantum and relativity theory, quantum measurement, cosmological models) are partially created by this continuation of
classical metaphysics into the era of modern physics. Recent developments, however, indicate that a new metaphysics is emerging.
2.3 Thinking with Whitehead and Stengers

Section Heads: Mariam Fraser
Keith Robinson

Tuesday, July 4, morning
Room: HS 103

Session 1

1

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The Always Already Post-Whiteheadian Whitehead: Reading Whitehead with Stengers

Abstract: The present talk starts from an observation I made during a recent conference on 'Whitehead Today' (see http://www.jhfc.duke.edu/jenkins/whitehead/index.html), that Whitehead did not envision Whiteheadians, either among his contemporaries or at some later date. This quite characteristic feature of his thought sets him apart from most other Western philosophers, and accounts at once for his appeal and the failure of his appeal: producing both sympathetic readers and mystified, often hostile ones. As Isabelle Stengers makes abundantly clear in PENSER AVEC WHITEHEAD (2002), Whitehead was not himself a Whiteheadian, in the sense that he always felt comfortable revising himself, sometimes to the point of apparent contradiction, paying no heed to the systematizer’s insistence on “onsistency, above all!” One of the truly engaging aspects of Stengers’ ongoing practice of thinking-with is the way she models a reader of Whitehead who does not thereby become a Whiteheadian herself: no more than Whitehead, his own first reader, did. I will present a few examples of how she accomplishes this “examples that often serve to demonstrate how Whitehead did it too” and then conclude by comparing the Stengers/Whitehead model of reading-Whitehead with readings proposed by Herb Greene, in PAINTING THE MENTAL CONTINUUM: PERCEPTION AND MEANING IN THE MAKING (2003), and Ralph Pred, in ON FLOW: DYNAMICS OF CONSCIOUSNESS AND EXPERIENCE (2005). Unsurprisingly, I will suggest they too model ways of thinking with Whitehead “of becoming-Whiteheadian” without in the process actually becoming Whiteheadians.

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Reclaiming Experience: 'thinking with' as an Affair of Active Experimentation
**Abstract:** Faced with the 'benumbing repression of commonsense', the professionalised stupidity of 'thinking in grooves' and the need for philosophy to find a way of connecting once again to 'naïve experience', Whitehead's philosophical project accepts the considerable challenge which the contemporary epoch poses to thought.

For Isabelle Stengers, to respond to this challenge is to essay a constructive process of reclaiming experience. The aim is to make Whitehead's speculative metaphysics - a kind of thinking marginalised by the imperious successes of critical rationality - resonate with other practices marginalised and even destroyed by the machinery of neo-capitalism, in order, as she puts it with Philippe Pignarre in *La sorcellerie capitaliste*, "to inhabit once again the devastated zones of experience". The mode of thought appropriate to this engagement is 'thinking with', a mode of thought which eschews the ironic posture of the commentary, and requires instead the humour of an active experimentation with the possibilities which Whitehead's work affords.

This paper explores Stengers's project of thinking with Whitehead as an experimental process. 'Experimentation' is a key term in Stengers’s reading, one which has a key role in articulating the stakes of 'thinking with'. By looking at the diverse registers across which the notion of experimentation plays in *Penser avec Whitehead* and the new kinds of questions which her 'constructive engagement' with Alfred North Whitehead makes possible, this paper draws attention to the conceptual politics of 'thinking with'. It argues for a conceptual politics which aims philosophically to reclaim experience from the temptations of critical judgement and practically to intensify its susceptibility to act in the transformation of the problems of the epoch.

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**On Whitehead’s Recurrent Themes and Consistent Style**

**Abstract:** In her book, *Penser avec Whitehead*, Isabelle Stengers portrays Whitehead the philosopher-mathematician in his occupation of busily creating the concepts of his philosophy with all the dramatic suspense and excitement of an adventure story. She properly dramatises the development of Whitehead’s philosophy in such a way as to let the reader feel the real importance of the conceptual mutations taking place, with reference especially to our common habits of thought and thereby insinuating, with all the force of a great writer and all the perspicacity and conviction of a great philosopher, the transformations that she explicitly wishes to take place in her readers. This leads me to characterise her book as a masterful pedagogy of Whitehead’s concepts. I take inspiration here from Deleuze’s idea of the pedagogy of concepts, which deals with the way the philosopher creates his concepts in response to problems to which they are designed to provide solutions. In the process, Stengers portrays Whitehead primarily as a philosopher with the habits of a mathematician and a constructivist, in the sense that the description of the elements of the problem engages the philosopher making the description as somebody for whom there is some particular felt importance at stake, an importance for the future of which he is ready to make a bid.

The excitement and power of Stengers’s approach led me to choose to concentrate my paper on something that, by contrast, is quiet and banal. It has nothing of the eventfulness of Stengers’s free and wild conceptual creativity; it is simply the observation that there are some themes in Whitehead’s work that traverse it from beginning to end without occasioning anything newsworthy in the rigorous business of making concepts. The themes do not correspond to any demands or requirements put on the concepts to be...
created by virtue of the problem at hand, nor to anything that has to be taken into account as something that should not be allowed to be “explained away” by the resulting scheme. To give a few examples of such themes: the idea of process, or activity, or creative activity, by contrast with any static, or fully determinable, representation of the objects of knowledge or of experience; related to this idea, the idea that any determination is a mode, or an aspect, or a perspective, of the thing it determines, by contrast with any kind of definite description; and of course the ever-recurring contrast formed by the coupling of fact with ideas, or of concreteness with generality, or of practical utility with theoretical interest, etc., which theme is the privileged example taken up in the paper. Returning to Deleuze’s wording, I suggest in this paper that Stengers, in her book, emphasised to great profit the way in which Whitehead went about creating his concepts in response to certain badly articulated problems of our modern times, while she did not (or chose not to, who knows?) emphasise the way in which he at the same time and correlatively outlined a consistent thematic field distributing once and for all, and again and again, the two dimensions, forming a single plane, of the various intuitions that led him, or forced him, to think, and to think again. Let me quote a passage of Deleuze’s (in *Proust et les signes*) that may suggest to you the contrast between the subject-matter of a work of philosophy occupied with the business of problem-solving and the silently constructed themes that traverse it and that provide for a non-logical, non-technical unity of the concepts created – in brief, for a certain style of philosophy:

“The true theme of a work of art is not its subject-matter, the conscious and deliberate subject-matter coinciding with that which is designated by the words, but the unconscious themes, the involuntary archetypes where words, but also colours and sounds, take on meaning and life.”

As Deleuze explains elsewhere, it is these abstract intuitions, these recurrent themes not directly involved in the philosophical work of constructing problems and solutions, that provide for the community and peculiar unity of style of the concepts created among them. Although Deleuze speaks of an independence of themes, themes and concepts are not entirely disconnected features of a work of philosophy. The concepts are animated and made to resonate with ever-increasing complexity, while the themes are indefinitely renewed as they espouse the contours of a changing landscape of problems.

It is the purpose of this paper to investigate the significance of themes in philosophy, taking Whitehead’s theme of practice and theory as an example. Deleuze’s idea of a “pre-philosophical” plane working immanently in the business of conceptual creation is taken as inspiration, and Stengers’s application of this idea to Whitehead’s notions of organism in *Science and the Modern World* and creativity in *Process and Reality* is commented upon. The following questions are asked: Can themes be said to have any role, or function, in philosophy, given that they do not intervene as specific elements in concept-building? What is the virtue of the feathered, transversal kind of unity brought to a philosophy through the recurrent themes that join its various adventures into one great Endeavour?
Session 2

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Philosophy of Life and « Culture of Interstices ».

Abstract: There is in Penser avec Whitehead one insistant proposition: a “culture of interstices” has become necessary. It echoes Whitehead’s proposition according to which: “Life lurks in the interstices of each living cell, and in the interstices of the brain” (PR, p. 106). What is at stake in this proposition? Firstly, it has a critical dimension. It aims at refusing any bifurcations that has been defined by the philosophies of life such as: life and representation, novelty and habit, instinct and intelligence. In Bergson’s philosophy one can find the construction of a set of bifurcations that have determined the history of the philosophy of life. Stengers’ proposition of “culture of interstices” produces a rupture of this tradition. Life in this dimension no longer requires immanent and immediate description. It rather becomes an invention of “techniques”, a construction of abstractions whose functions are: to express the possibilities of life.

FRANÇAIS: On trouve dans Penser avec Whitehead une proposition insistant : une « culture des interstices » est devenue nécessaire. Elle fait échos à la proposition de Whitehead selon laquelle : “Life lurks in the interstices of each living cell, and in the interstices of the brain” (PR, p. 106). Quel est l’enjeu de cette proposition ? Tout d’abord, elle a une dimension critique. Elle vise à refuser les bifurcations qui auront défini les philosophies de la vie : vie et représentation, nouveauté et habitude, instinct et intelligence. On trouve chez Bergson, la mise en place de cet ensemble de bifurcations qui vont déterminer une histoire de la pensée de la vie par rapport à laquelle l’appel à une « culture des interstices » fait rupture. Ensuite, elle a une dimension qu’Isabelle Stengers appelle constructiviste. Ici, la « culture » ne peut plus être pensée comme un rapport immédiat et immanent à la vie. Elle devient invention de « techniques », mise en place d’abstractions qui répondent à une fonction : exprimer ce dont est capable le vivant.

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Constructing ‘humanity’: Thinking with Stengers and Whitehead about Medical Humanities.
Abstract: The emergence of medical humanities is a phenomenon of increasing proportions in the context of medical education, primarily in the United States but also in the UK. To the extent that it may be taken as a whole, the project of medical humanities may be described as a political imagination that centres on reclaiming the abstraction of ‘humanity’, for medical purposes, from the monopoly of scientific discourse. In this paper I propose to outline a mode of approach to this phenomenon, based on thinking with Isabelle Stengers and Alfred North Whitehead about the problem of ‘humanity’. Stengers’ critique of the abstraction of humanity in Milgram’s experiments and her rendering of Whitehead’s constructivism will form the starting point and context of my discussion.

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Reply to the presenters
2.4 Analytical Philosophy

Section head: Randy Ramal
George Shields

Wednesday, July 5, morning
Room: HS 109

Session 1

1

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How Firm a Possible Foundation? Modality and Hartshorne's Dipolar Theism

Abstract: Central to Charles Hartshorne's dipolar theism is his theory of modality as grounded in the temporal structure of process. Jay Wesley Richards argues in The Untamed God (2003) that Hartshorne's modal theory abandons the elementary principle "ab esse ad posse," that it makes nonsense of our counter-factual discourse, and that it can only be expressed by Lewis' S4, although for certain purposes Hartshorne needs the stronger S5. Richards fails to realize that Hartshorne's theory involves two concepts of necessity--necessity as what is common to every possible world-state and necessity as it pertains to the unalterability of the past. Richards also uncritically accepts the concept of possible worlds as a basis of his critique, but Hartshorne's arguments cast doubt on the coherence of this idea. While questions remain about Hartshorne's modal theory, Richards' arguments against it are unsuccessful.

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The Grammar of 'Good Metaphysics'

Abstract: In response to various criticisms of metaphysics from analytic philosophers who take the analysis of language as the primary method of philosophical inquiry, some proponents of Whitehead's metaphysics make a distinction between what they call "good" versus "bad" metaphysics. Charles Hartshorne, D.W. Gotshalk, Kevin Schilbrack, Lyman Lundeen, Robert Clark, and Robert Kruschwitz find merit in the analytic critique of metaphysics but limit it to what they call "bad metaphysics," namely the kind of philosophy one finds in dualistic and reductionistic accounts of reality. Whitehead's metaphysics, they argue, transcends these forms of bad metaphysics because it does not over-generalize or go beyond experience, and it admits not only the role of language in mediating all knowledge of reality but also a variety of criteria of rationality. I argue that these defenses of Whitehead's metaphysics actually do it a disservice and that a better approach to understanding the true nature of
his metaphysics is gained by paying attention to its epistemological and explanatory nature.

3

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Like Tears in Rain: A Process Challenge

Abstract: In his book The Problem of Evil and the Problem of God, D. Z. Phillips presents a number of criticisms of the theodicies and defenses offered in response to the problem of evil by traditional, analytic philosophers such as John Hick, Richard Swinburne, Alvin Plantinga, and Stephen Davis. I believe that process theists would agree with at least most of them. Then he argues that it is a mistake to conceive of God as an agent or as a non-bodied person or consciousness. The extent to which these alleged mistakes apply to process theism is far from clear, but I will argue that his reasons for claiming that these are mistakes do not apply. Finally, I will argue that his denial that God is a non-bodied person or consciousness seems not to cohere with an important claim with which he ends his book: "even if the stories of the afflicted were forgotten by the whole world, God does not forget. Nearer than anyone, God listens" (273). He says that believers who say this are saying "something very real for them." But Phillips does not tell us what this "very real something" can mean if God is not conscious. That God listens, that God does not forget—these are important claims in the lives of many people of faith, as Phillips himself acknowledges. If they are not true, then the stories of the afflicted are like tears in rain—bits of unique and important experience that lose their distinctiveness in the waters of the historical process. Process theism can and does affirm these claims. It remains to be seen whether Phillips can give to them any sense that would comfort believers for whom they say "something very real."

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Like Tears in the Rain?

Abstract: James Keller raises questions about my understanding of how God could be said to know and remember things that happen in the world, an issue that has implications for the problem of evil. Keller believes that one can only speak of "God remembering," for example, if one attributes consciousness to God. But instead of arguing from "consciousness" to what one can say about God, one should begin with what we do say about God; with religious expressions in their natural settings. I argue that these settings should not be approached as though the grammar of "God" is like the grammar of "human beings" with holes in it. It is only by thinking otherwise that important religious beliefs about what is remembered by "God" come to seem like "Tears in the Rain."

22
Russell, Whitehead, and Wittgenstein on the Concept of 'World'

Abstract: This paper is an exploration of the development of the concept of 'world' in Russell, Whitehead, and Wittgenstein, from their shared background in mathematics through their different conclusions concerning metaphysics. Consideration is first given to the PRINCIPIA MATHEMATICA and the implications of reducing arithmetic to logic for a concept of 'world'. More specifically, the paper initially addresses the question of whether the world is a large class of classes. Wittgenstein's concept of 'world' in the TRACTATUS is then added to the discussion. And the subsequent works of all three philosophers are compared and contrasted with specific attention given to their use of the term 'world'. The general thesis of the paper is that the understanding of world in the subsequent writings of these thinkers is intricately linked to their early reactions to the notion that the world is a universal class.

Whitehead, Neuroscience, and Recent Analytic Philosophy of Mind

Abstract: Developments in neuroscience, in particular the emergence of neuroplastic phenomena (the ability of afferent/cognitive input to alter brain metabolism), represent stark challenges for both Cartesian dualist and reductionist-materialist accounts of the mind-brain relation. Whitehead's panexperientialist-physicalist account of the mind-brain relation better accommodates neuroplastic phenomena, while fitting neatly with a quantum mechanical account of neural activity, and with the so-called Quantum Zeno Effect. Some recent analytic philosophers of mind (Jaegwon Kim, D. Dennett, and J. Searle) are still advocating varieties of physicalism that can't admit libertarian agency or "top-down" causation with ultimate control as embodied in occasions of intentional consciousness ("regnant occasions" of consciousness in Whitehead's vocabulary). At the very least, Whitehead's theory wins any contest that concerns "theoretical pasimony."
2.5 Phenomenology

Section Head: André Cloots
William Hamrick

Monday, July 3, morning
Room: HS 106

Session 1

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Husserl and Whitehead, Mathematicians, on Intentionality

Abstract: The concept of intentionality, which is explicitly defined as such by Husserl, and implicitly present in Whitehead's philosophy, seems very foreign to the mathematical world, with which however both of them are completely at home. It seems to be necessary to examine this paradox, according to both perspectives.

We know how much Husserl at the same time appreciates Brentano, who had been his professor in Vienna (1884-1886), for his concept of what is intentionally lived, and refuses nevertheless, unlike Brentano, to call this intentionally lived neither a psychic (inside) phenomenon, nor a physical phenomenon, which would imply externality. According to Husserl, there exists only one form of activity in order to make some reality present.

The distinction between the two kinds of phenomena, physical vs. psychic, would certainly have been characterized by Whitehead as a revival of dualism, a conception which he absolutely refuses. But we find nevertheless in Whitehead's writings a similar distinction with the so-called reformed subjectivist principle. No doubt this principle abolishes the classical dualism of object vs. subject. But it maintains the idea of a double functioning of objects: objective, defining some 'given', and subjective, defining an activity of prehension of this given (PR, 290-291). We can thus say that Whitehead, like Brentano, is claiming a physical basis for a primary intentionality.

On the contrary, the phenomenological method fundamentally consists in admitting from the outset that all the phenomena belong to one and the same species, in and through the intentionally lived. It is nevertheless at that precise point that Husserl's phenomenology meets the first intuition of Whitehead's philosophy, such as it may be inferred from Process and Reality, or even Adventures of Ideas, or Modes of Thought. The thought could be defined as an activity which integrates some objects in one and the same process of actualization. The eternal objects of the "objective" species only become "real" in and by their ingestion in an activity of subjectification, according to the "subjective" species.

To conclude: The profound convergence between Husserl and Whitehead appears to result from their common mathematical background. Mathematical thought aims at objects which have their own structure, this very structure being altogether constructed by this very mathematical activity. It is even this activity of aiming at any mathematical object which guarantees the universality of mathematical demonstrations.
Enzo Paci and Whitehead

Abstract: This paper deals with Enzo Paci, the prominent Italian philosopher, and his reading of Whitehead’s philosophy. I briefly sketch the way in which Paci comes to Whitehead from his previous existentialist philosophy. I then analyze the role and the relevance of Whitehead’s concepts of time and of relation for Paci. I conclude by hinting at the meaning of the relationship instituted by Paci between Whitehead and Husserlian phenomenology.

Conceptual Knowledge and the Immediacy of Experience

Abstract: Descriptive phenomenology grounds itself in the immediacy of experience which, it acknowledges, can never be recaptured reflectively as it has been lived. Certain phenomenologists, such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty, basing their thought on Schelling and Bergson, among others, have been concerned with this problem in terms of preserving our indissolubility from Nature. Reflection in the form of conceptual thinking has been variously interpreted by all three thinkers as disruptive of this indissolubility and as something that prevents the philosopher’s return to the immediacy of experience. This essay will attempt to show how Whitehead’s process metaphysics can explain how conceptual thinking need not lead to either result.


Abstract: In “Philosophy of the Will” (1950) Ricoeur writes that where Merleau-Ponty chose perception as the focus of his philosophy, his own
choice is to be action. The field of action develops throughout his life’s work. From the beginning this interest is connected to history. “History and Truth” of 1955 presents intersubjectivity as “in process”, and before his death in 2005 Ricoeur wishes the English title of his last book “Parcours de la reconnaissance” to be “The Process of Recognition” - a significant desire if not the publisher's final choice. While Merleau-Ponty’s thought can be compared fairly directly with Whitehead’s because of their common interest in perception, nature and ontology, is it possible to see Ricoeur's phenomenology too as interacting with process thinking, given its focus on experience and action and its special focus in history? This paper opens an unusual field of investigation, and explores differences between Whitehead and Ricoeur as well as possible points of intersection and dialogue.

Thinking the Event: Whitehead and Contemporary (Post-) Phenomenological French Thought.

Abstract: That the notion of ‘event’ gets a central place is not specific for process thought. Actually this is a characteristic of many strands of contemporary phenomenological and post-phenomenological thinking as well, and even of most contemporary French thought in general. Only in Deleuze this is developed into a metaphysics of the event, just like in Whitehead. In a sense, Deleuze goes even further than Whitehead, by thinking the thinking of the event itself in terms of 'event' (inspired in this by Heidegger). That’s why a Deleuzian reading of Whitehead’s notion of philosophy is such an ‘adventurous’ experience. On the other hand, while for Deleuze the event is thought first of all in terms of ‘e-venire’ (complication, im-lication, ex-plication …), from a contemporary phenomenological perspective it is conceived first of all as an ‘ad-venire’ (Romano, Marion …), and thus rather in terms of alterity, epiphany and intrusion. Not in the least under the influence of Levinas.

Monday, July 3, afternoon
Room: HS 106
Session 2

Fusing the Horizon between Whitehead and Gadamer

Abstract: The hermeneutical philosophy of Hans-Georg Gadamer and the process cosmology of Alfred North Whitehead have much in common and invite simultaneous examination in terms of elucidating comparisons between both
philosophers. This paper performs, in Gadamer’s terms, a “fusion of horizons” between Gadamer and Whitehead. This fusion of horizons consists in a series of correlations and comparisons that will make the philosophies of Gadamer and Whitehead approximately congruent with one another. In this fusion of horizons, the understanding of both philosophers is enhanced because of comparisons made between them.

In Gadamer’s hermeneutical project, philosophy is a conversation that invites and welcomes such an undertaking. Whitehead’s philosophy is a relational and anthropological cosmology, and is congenial to the making of comparisons and to interaction with other thinkers. The fusion of horizons presented in this article is a series of events of understanding in which comparisons are made between focal notions in the work of Gadamer and corresponding notions in the work of Whitehead. What emerges out of this conversation based on several comparisons is a unified whole in which a cosmological basis is given to Gadamer’s hermeneutics, and phenomenological and hermeneutical applications are furnished for Whitehead’s cosmology.

Some of the comparisons or correlations made in this paper are: that actual entities are events of understanding and are like closely woven texts, and that prejudices are a kind of prehension. Tradition is like creativity in that both have an original energy and initiative. Gadamer’s horizons are like Whitehead’s actual worlds. The hermeneutic circle bears close comparison with the part-whole relationship of prehensions and actual entities, and with the mutual precedence of the phases of concrescence in Whitehead. Historically effective consciousness in Gadamer is like the consequent nature of God in Whitehead. Application in Gadamer resembles anticipation in Whitehead. The actual entity as superject is a transmitter of tradition.

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Whitehead and Santayana on the Data of Intuition

Abstract: The relation between the philosophical stances of Whitehead and Santayana has only recently been subject to several direct treatments. Some of these studies contribute little more than a general discussion of similarities and differences between the metaphysical “systems” or “schemes” of the two philosophers (Sprigge 1999), while others deal with more specific issues like “their embrace of the eternal” (Shade 2004) or “the ontology of the past” (Mc Henry 2000). In this paper, I will be even more specific and discuss what seems (at least directly to Whitehead and by implication to Santayana) to be the crucial point of diversion between Whitehead’s organic philosophy and Santayana.

In Process and Reality, Whitehead argues that “the exact point where Santayana differs from the organic philosophy is his implicit assumption that ‘intuitions themselves’ cannot be among the ‘data of intuition,’ that is to say, the data of other intuitions.” (PR 142) However, I will argue that this claim, although true in one sense, is misleading in another. Whitehead’s claim is true in the sense that, for Santayana, only an essence can be a datum of intuition, while intuitions themselves belong to the realm of existence. But Santayana’s argument is not that ‘the essence of intuition’ (if there is such an essence) cannot be a datum of intuition, but simply that, given an essence and an act of intuition which delivers that essence, the description of that act of intuition should not be involved in the description of that essence, even if the essence of the act becomes a datum for some other act of intuition. Santayana makes this point clear in his critique of Husserlian phenomenology (RB 167-170). Thus the
point of difference does not lie in the mere assertion or denial of the possibility of intuitions’ being among the data of intuition, but in somewhere deeper: How different are the notions of ‘intuition’ and ‘data of intuition’ in Whitehead and Santayana.

8

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Abstract: The title of my paper proposes an analysis of the notion of Ego aiming at disclosing its place in the philosophical systems of Sartre, Whitehead and one of the Buddhist philosophical schools, Abhidhamma.

In the first part, I would like to sketch an interpretation of the notion of Ego in Whitehead's philosophy, relating the term to such notions as consciousness, mind and subject.

In the second part I would like to show that in process philosophy the notion of Ego has a certain "transcendent" character that can be described in the terms Sartre used in his work, Transcendence of the Ego. The analysis, on the other hand, should go beyond the limitations of each system, i.e. I will try to develop a conceptual framework that comprises Whitehead's and Sartre's intuitions as well.

The third part tries to show that there are certain features in Sartre's and Whitehead's analysis of human experience that can also be related to a Buddhist (Abhidhamma) description of how conscious experience unfolds. Momentariness is one of the key parallels between Whitehead and Abhidhamma philosophy, while the Sartrean transcendence of the Ego can be interpreted both in Whiteheadian and Buddhist terms. The differences in these two interpretations should also be pointed out.
2.6 Post-Structuralism

Section Heads: Cathrine Keller
Roland Faber

Thursday, July 6, morning
Room: HS 106

Session 1

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Surrationality: A More Deleuzeian View of Whitehead

Abstract: Instead of viewing Whitehead as a rationalist, I attempt to think
of Whitehead more with Deleuze as a philosopher of the chaosmos of Life,
based on both of their relation to Bergson. If we understand Whitehead's
rationalism as "rationalization of mysticism" (MT), we might be able to
read it back into the mysticism it comes from. In doing so, we will avoid a
new "anti-intellectualism," but instead, taken as a metaphor from
"Surrealism," we may find a "surrationality" at the heart of Whitehead's
thought.

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Whitehead and Deleuze on the Value of Values

Abstract: The subject of this paper is ethical pluralism. The problem
addressed is the articulation of a non-relativistic pluralism, where all
particular values, whatever they may be, can be affirmed together while
retaining the idea that not all things are as good as each other.
The ways in which Whitehead and Deleuze provide a solution to this problem
are strikingly similar in substance. Either philosopher’s conceptual scheme
implies that the ethical question concerns our becoming, and that our
becoming is a matter of the way in which we appreciate our world (and not
so much of the particular values we put into effect to express this
appreciation). For either philosopher, the ethical question is therefore a
question of how we choose to function in the world, rather than a question
of what is good. It is an empirical, experimental question, an imperative exhorting us, in proper Spinozian and Nietzschean fashion, to do the utmost of which we are capable to overcome our depreciative tendencies in favour of appreciative ones.

The paper examines in this light the role and constitution of the negative, the “abominable by right” in Deleuze’s philosophy, and the role and constitution of evil in Whitehead’s. It is observed that there is a great difference between the two, and the question is addressed whether consequently there is any important difference in the messages carried by the ethical imperative in the two philosophies, which at first seemed so similar in their affirmation of experimentation and creativity. Is there, as Isabelle Stengers suggests in *Penser avec Whitehead*, an important contrast between a violent Deleuze and a peaceful, trusting Whitehead?

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**Becoming Molecular in the Bodily Interstices: A Whiteheadian Framing of Deleuze-Guattari's Eco-Mysticism**

**Abstract:** This paper will attempt to create a rhizome between Whitehead's structural mapping of the physical organism and Deleuze-Guattari's concept of becoming-molecular / becoming-animal. I will argue that Whitehead's unique understanding of life's emergence in the interstices of a structured society, (as developed in *Process and Reality*) can open a new perspective on the kind of dynamic, rhizomatic becoming that Deleuze and Guattari describe in depth in their work, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Together, these thought systems might inspire us to imagine a non-anthropocentric, ecologically grounded mode of mystical receptivity to the "chaosmotic" non-human reality from which human becoming emerges. Part of this investigation will entail an exploration of potential parallels between Whitehead’s understanding of the primordial nature of God and Deleuze-Guattari’s concept of the plane of immanence or plane of consistency.

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**Nomadotheology? Whiteheadian Receptacle Meets the Deleuzian Sieve**

**Abstract:** Roland Faber states that Christian theology can no longer uncritically refer to Being as God and proposes a new insight of the divine via readings of Levinas, Deleuze and Whitehead. ("De-Ontologizing God" in *Process and Difference*, 2002). This paper seeks to explore the Deleuzian univocity of Being and its affiliation with Whiteheadian thought. It asks if Faber’s middle way is possible or even needed. Whitehead presents the notion of ‘the Receptacle’ as “the community of the world” (*Adventures of Ideas*, 192). ‘The Adventure’ and ‘the Receptacle’ complement each other for a unity of all entities, the latter is devoid of forms, the former is full of it. Deleuze’s use of Whitehead is eclectic, focusing on God as process, the sieve (or the receptacle) and the divine appetite. The receptacle becomes a screen for Deleuze, where Nature’s patterns and repetitions are
actualized and realized in bodies, in a life, a world (The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque, 1993). The paper argues that Deleuze’s sieve and the Whiteheadian receptacle have more in common than meets the eye and for a theological space in the Deleuzian cosmology, the possibility of a “nomado-(theo)logy.”

Thursday, July 6, afternoon
Room: HS 106

Session 2

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Whitehead on the (social) Body

Abstract: The problematic status of the body within science, philosophy, and, by implication, social theory, is a recurrent theme within Whitehead’s work. This paper will argue that his analysis and critique of the ‘bifurcation of nature’, as emblematic of the now familiar dichotomous approaches to the mind/body, individual/society, nature/social, offer both support and development to contemporary conceptualizations of both the materiality and subjectivity of the body.

More precisely, the question to be asked is: ‘who best understands our bodies?’. According to Whitehead the very possibility of the response to such questions has been stifled by the tacit acceptance of this ‘bifurcation of nature’. One major casualty of this has been the strict division of the physicality of the body from the un-physicality of thought and the mind.

As such, this paper will argue that the over-reliance on the nature/social distinction has supposedly left the body, considered in term of its ‘real’ materiality, in the province of the natural scientist and seemingly left the remainder of academics to focus only on the phenomenological, social or cultural significance of the body. A conceptual wedge has been driven between a supposedly objective world without meaning upon which science reports (and in which the body lies) and the ‘meaningful’ realms of human existence (and in which the mind resides) and with which philosophy, the humanities and social theory deal. The body and bodily existence has been reduced to either a mechanism isolated and distinct from subjectivity, or, has been ‘elevated’ to a realm where its significance is heightened in direct proportion to the extent that its physicality is denied. The paper will follow Whitehead’s argument that this has led to the division of academic inquiry into discrete realms which deal with subject matters so diverse, so different, that they are unable to communicate. Indeed, they may as well be talking about different universes.

Programmatically, the paper will commence with an analysis and critique of Judith Butler’s important work on materiality in relation to the body. It will then outline and assess Whitehead’s analysis of the human body’s integral place and potentiality with existence. It will conclude with some tentative remarks on how his work might further contemporary understanding of the relationship between bodily existence and subjectivity.
What Do We Miss When We Misplace Concreteness? Judith Butler’s Excess, Whitehead’s Efficacy, and the Queer Adventures of Grief and Exaltation

Abstract: What Do We Miss When We Misplace Concreteness? Judith Butler’s Excess, Whitehead’s Efficacy, and the Queer Adventures of Grief and Exaltation.

Promulgating abstractions by means of exclusions and temporal halts, Whitehead’s “fallacy of misplaced concreteness” performs the “gravest” of errors. (PR 7) In assessing value and agency through fixed categories, misplaced concreteness undergirds the substantialized essentialism by which immense violence is perpetrated under the auspices of contemporary Western religious thought.

Misplaced concreteness quietly creeps into Whiteheadian scholarship through a frequent over-emphasis on concrescence as the completion of the individual rather than on the perpetual incompletion from any perspective other than that of the atomistic individual event. Emphasizing the “subject” primarily as telos (rather than in its ongoing, plurally relational, unknowable, and public “superjective character”) inadvertently sustains the hegemony of the metaphysic of substance by effecting an arrival into unchangeability. In a similar way, by treating discourse as a group of “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, AK, 49), poststructuralist thinkers also sustain the habitual Western focus on arrival. By doing a genealogical analysis of the subject position, there is, while no longer a subject who pre-exists its discourses, a subject as telos. Yet, how might dynamics of effect extend beyond the threshold of the subject’s arrival? What otherwise obscured, ever plural, and necessarily temporal mobilities of agency and value emerge by reading for the departure rather than the arrival of the subject?

Part of a larger project that both critiques the hegemonic entailments of a metaphysic of substance and seeks to theorize agency and value in more dynamic ways, this paper shakes loose some of the misplaced concreteness that clings even in the presence of a discursively or relationally constituted subject/event. Employing a Bergsonian method of intuition, I take up Whitehead’s process hermeneutic as a theory of value and Butler’s feminist/queer performativity as a theory of agency, speculatively extending temporal elements from each for reading departure, and apprehending felt mobilities of value and of agency not apparent when process and poststructuralist views are engaged separately.
Abstract: In post 9/11 U.S. politics “truthiness” reigns, according to
comedian Colbert—a peculiar mix of fabrication and absolutism. One
postmodern trend needs to be countered by another. Can the Whiteheadian
discourse of truth as subordinated to aesthetics support a robust
alternative? The proposition that “it is more important that a proposition
be interesting than that it be true” makes an interesting truth-claim of
its own. It would liberate thought from fixation upon truth, and truth from
absolutism. Yet by the same token, Whitehead rather consistently relegates
the “true” to the mere opposite of the “false.” A developing
postmodernism/postsstructuralism lost interest altogether in truth; or, more
precisely, found it (as in Foucault’s “regimes of truth”) all too
“interested.” Yet as deconstruction twists beyond the “death of God” by way
of a negative theology, a more positive discourse of truth emerges in its
wake. One recent current in poststructuralist philosophy, represented in
this paper by John Caputo’s new *Weakness of God*, suggests an understanding
of truth as event, indeed as an “event harbored by the name of God.” This
paper considers whether such an event-concept of truth may help to
stimulate in process thought a notion of truth more Whiteheadian than that
of Whitehead himself. By contrasting Caputo’s and Whitehead’s notion of
“event,” I hope to surface a concept of ‘truth as participation,’ a truth
of apophatic indirection and affirmative interest, *inter-esse*.

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Whitehead, Post-structuralism, and Realism

Abstract: Poststructuralist thinking locates itself in the problems and
predicaments of representation. In their critique of concepts like
‘ground’, ‘presence’ and ‘subject’ etc, various poststructuralisms have
moved beyond the desire to locate the given in representational structures.
This has taken a variety of forms. For the sake of brevity I will suggest
there are two main logics or trajectories. The first is governed by what we
might call the logic of ‘transcendence’. We can gloss this view in terms of
the Heideggerian idea that the event of being is a unique otherness that
cannot be captured in philosophical concepts. Philosophy must become a
‘poetry of thinking’ in order to express the other. Derrida develops this
‘transcendent’ trajectory by showing how there is no simple choice between
staying within metaphysics or ‘twisting free’ of it. The closed
representational structures of metaphysics are always already and
necessarily opened up by a transcendence that functions as their condition
of possibility and impossibility. They ‘deconstruct’ themselves. This is
the aporetic condition of philosophical thought.

Another trajectory that operates through what we might call a logic of
‘immanence’ escapes representational structure by positing the event of the
given as nothing but itself, not immanent to anything but itself. In this
trajectory immanent sub-representational, genetic or genealogical factors
are appealed to in order to account for the given. In this line of
poststructuralism the real or the other of reason is not inaccessible but
can be expressed through ‘concepts’, ‘intuitions’ or, indeed, perhaps even
‘categories’, albeit ‘open’, incomplete or differential categories.

I would argue that the debates within these two trajectories of post-
structuralism are best understood not in terms of idealism or materialism,
social constructivism or essentialist realism but in terms of forms of ‘non-
realism’ versus types of non-essentialist ‘realism’. The first more
Heideggerian trajectory corresponds with a range of anti or ‘non-realisms’
and the second perhaps more Nietzschean and Deleuzean trajectory corresponds with various forms of non-essentialist ‘realism’. Although Whitehead is rarely thought of as a post-structuralist he is often described as – and describes himself as – a ‘realist’. In this paper I want to a) explore whether Whitehead can be seen to be working within either of the poststructuralist trajectories outlined above and b) examine the nature of the ‘realism’ that Whitehead appeals to and the idea, stated in *Process and Reality*, that the philosophy of organism might be the transformation of idealism onto a realist basis; and c) the connection, if any, between the a and b. My argument will be that Whitehead can be seen as fruitfully contributing to debates within poststructuralism on the basis of a realist process ontology.
2.7 Existentialism

Section Head: Yasuto Murata

Wednesday, July 5, morning
Room: HS 106

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The Past as Eternally Imperishable

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to examine one view of time and life: the idea of “the past as eternally imperishable,” which was developed by Whitehead and Frankl, independently of each other and from different perspectives. According to this viewpoint, the past is not what has vanished away into nothingness, but what is realized as eternally imperishable. Frankl’s concepts of “optimism of the past” and “the eternal record” express this view of time in an existential way. Life's transitoriness is only true of possibilities to fulfill meaning. Once such possibilities are actualized, they become unchangeable and imperishable reality in the past. It depends on our decision and action what possibility will be rescued into the past and “eternalized.” Meanwhile, Whitehead’s process philosophy contains the ideas of “objective immortality” and “the consequent nature of God” to suggest the past as everlasting from a cosmological standpoint. “the insistent craving is justified—the insistent craving for existence be refreshed by the ever-present, unfading importance of our immediate actions, which perish and yet live for evermore.” In the consequent nature, God makes this immortality byprehending all perished objectified entities.

In this paper, I will compare and link these two thinkers’ ideas with regard to their similarities and differences in the metaphors, ontological positions, and existential significance. I hope to develop a more unified view of time and life that assures the ultimate meaningfulness of our life beyond death.

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Relativistic Holism in Whitehead with Applications in Existential Phenomenology

Abstract: Whitehead provides another metaphysical investigation, though indirectly, of intersubjectivity in Adventures of Ideas and Process and
Reality. Intersubjectivity, while fundamental to Whitehead’s system, is examined differently by continental philosophers/phenomenologists from Bergson to Merleau-Ponty in their ontological, existential, and phenomenological orientations. This paper suggests an inter-subjective relativistic holism in which each ontological ‘being’ in the universe, from prehensions and actual entities to societies as ‘selves’, is inexorably interconnected with every other, though by varying degrees of importance as in Quine’s holism, even to the point of negligibility. Importantly, within this holism Whitehead’s necessary dualism of ‘formal immediacy’ and ‘objective otherness’ that affords plurality is retained. Heidegger’s existential analysis of Being, as Dasein, with its fundamental characteristics of being-with and being-in-the-world can be compared to Whitehead’s concrescent actual entities as both private and public. As Dasein’s being-with involves care, concrescence comprises ‘feelings’ and compassionate prehensions coalescing into a pragmatic actuality. Sartre’s description of the Other as objectifying, in-situation, while retaining its subjective totality and organizing the whole which contains/limits it, suggests this notion of relativistic holism with regard to Others. Also, Sartre’s being-in-itself, for-itself, and for-others will be compared to Whitehead’s concrescence, prehensions, and actual entities respectively. Following Sartre, Levinas suggests that the responsibility that comes from the self radiates outwards onto the Other, becoming that which exists for all others, in every situation. This responsibility is found within us from the Other’s trace; a transcendent trace that goes all the way to the point of negligibility, i.e. suggesting an ethical relativistic holism. The manner in which actual entities become temporalized will be compared to Heidegger’s time and Sartre’s time that flows over worldly things. Finally, Merleau-Ponty’s description of the body as enmeshed within a world of connections will be compared to Whitehead’s relatedness of nature. Also, Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception as that fundamental, pre-objective comportment translates into Whitehead’s conception of a fundamental unity within the perceiver and centrifugally toward the physical universe. Whitehead’s phenomenological account of prehensions presents us with a rather general account of an inter-subjective existence. Thus, the philosophy of organism can be thought of as the complete theory within which these other theories can resonate, though discourse with these theories illuminate the elusive, penumbral self that is, at times, left in the shadows of Whitehead’s work.

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Individual Existence with the Creative Cosmos

Abstract: In Whitehead’s philosophy of organism, the actual is an outcome of limitation on unlimited potentiality, and each individual existence realizes itself with the whole cosmos. Genetic process of its self-realization is in itself not only the temporalization of extension but also the epoch-making process. The realized actual occasion occupies its unique place in the extensive continuum as the eternal Receptacle, and creativity imposes the functional solidarity of actualities on individual existences. If we are to understand these aspects of Whitehead’s mature philosophy, it is necessary to trace when and how Whitehead came to hold them. On this theme, L. S. Ford’s The Emergence of Whitehead’s Metaphysics is quite suggestive. Through the compositional analysis, he maintains that Whitehead’s later philosophy came into being with the discovery of ‘temporal atomicity’ which had been inspired by quantum physics, and that
the shift from naturalism to the later metaphysical position took place between the original Lowell Lectures in February and the completion of *Science and the Modern World* in June 1925.

I reconsider and approach the development of Whitehead’s philosophy from a viewpoint different from Ford’s one. It is true that the adoption of the discontinuity was one of the most important occasions for the origination of Whitehead’s mature metaphysics; but it is not right to say that the unanticipated discovery of ‘temporal atomicity’ under the influence of the quantum theory urged Whitehead to change his position. Rather, the occasion for Whitehead to develop his philosophy was a struggle to solve the paradoxes around the theory of relativity. Analyses of texts including the notes of the Harvard lectures for 1924-25 show that those paradoxes are concerned with the problems about divisibility and individuality, part and whole, the limited and the unlimited, the finite and the infinite, the actual and the potential.

My thesis traces the process of these arguments. First of all, I shall critically scrutinize Ford’s understanding of Whitehead’s mature philosophy, in particular his doctrine of ‘temporal atomicity.’ After that, the period from the philosophy of nature to the publication of *Science and the Modern World* is examined. In conclusion, it will be proved that the final features stated above had been gradually constructed during that period.

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**Whitehead and French Philosophy**

**Abstract:** In *Process and Reality*, Dualism of the Body-Mind problem, one of the most important and crucial topics in the traditions of Occidental thought, is rather interpreted as a "polarity". Such Whiteheadian conception of natural/spiritual reality has its origin in Aristotelian physics and metaphysics, especially in the doctrine of the four causes. This comprehension of Body-Mind problem as polarity stands in sharp opposition to a monistic interpretation of whole reality as "duree" in the Bergsonism. Whiteheadian conception of "polarity" shows rather its proximity to the thinkers of french "spiritualism" in the later 19th century (Ravaisson, Lachelier) and their caracteristic interpretations of Aristotelian metaphysics.

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**A Contribution to the Existentialist Cosmology**

**Abstract:** In this paper, I try to show some significances of Whitehead’s metaphysical ontology in relation to the dominant existential philosophy. It is probably fair to say that the dominant existential philosophy has emphasized, as Heidegger says, the point that our individual existence is
thrown into the world. In the modern world, some philosophers (Pascal, Nietzsche and Sartre) have discovered that existence is the concept expressing our helplessness without the absolute being. They considered themselves to be forsaken in the world enlightened by the modern natural science. The word of “existence” means our homelessness in the modern world. It also connotes traditional contrasts between our temporal being and the eternal and transcendent being, between our life and the mechanical, physical and lifeless world. To be sure, the so-called post-modern philosophy will not agree to this contrast any more. But we have not discovered any solution for the problem of our helpless and homeless being in the world. Although it is true that Whitehead also disagree with these dualistic contrasts, he approves that our actual occasion of experience occurs by connecting what is temporal with what is eternal, the world as a whole with our individual existence. His metaphysical cosmology shares the idea of human solitariness in the universe with existential philosophy. There are three points to be made about his cosmology. One of them is the point that, in his cosmology, what is real is the unity of what is eternal and what is temporal. In other words, temporal actual entities occur by virtue of ingression of eternal objects. The second point is that his cosmological vision has something to do with the existentialist viewpoint from which our existence is lost in this world. In his cosmology, he makes it clear by his unique ideas of “prehension” and “extension” that every existence in the universe arises out of the actual world with connecting with all other elements in it. In short, from his point of view, the universe is not any lifeless mechanical system but rather an organic whole, alive, creative and interconnected. It concludes the third point that is expressed by the question: if our existence is the focal point in the creative world as an organic whole, do our decisions made in every moment determine not only our own future but also the future of the whole universe? In every moment, do we take an irrevocable step influencing the whole universe? His theology gives a solution by presenting the idea of God as “the poet of the world, with tender patience leading it by his vision of truth, beauty, and goodness.” In this Whiteheadian vision, we find ourselves in the world as an organic whole, enjoy our own existence as a creative focus in the creative world, and make the decision to create our future with feeling the lure and drive which comes from the divine vision.
2.8 Bio-Philosophy

Section Head: Spyridon Koutroufinis

Tuesday, July 4, morning
Room: HS 101

Session 1

1

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The Good Will for a New Beginning

Abstract: The good will for a new beginning constitutes a highly varied anthropological phenomenon. The philosophical analysis of this phenomenon will proceed by contrasting Kantian critical transcendental philosophy and Whiteheadian speculative process ontology. The former provides the deduction of this will as basis for moral action and for a life in respect of human dignity. But the latter can show the ontological premises of Kantian theory to be insufficient, regarding the specifications of selfness, of subjectivity and of the new beginning. Furthermore its differentiation of past, present and future possibilities, and the differentiation of missed and met possibilities will provide the margin for a differentiation of the living and the specifically human within the reality of the actual. God, as the fundamental principle of the preservation of unfulfilled possibilities, is considered as a category.

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Systems Biology and Process Structural Realism (PSR)

Abstract: Recent biological research dealing with structures of virus capsids, networks of biochemical interaction that engender oscillations ("os- cillophores"), evolutionary origins of robustness of circadian rhythms, and swarming of organisms will be considered in terms of a neo-Whiteheadian ontology – "Process Structural Realism" (PSR). In response to developments in the philosophy of science, there has been a revival of interest in structuralisms. Ontic Structural Realism (OSR) holds that objects scientists discuss do not exist – but, paradoxically, their structures do exist. Each macroscopic change (chemical reaction, biological life, economic integration) involves the coming-to-be of new coherences and the dissolution of old ones. Ultimately, "process" is all of a single sort; self-creation of actual occasions. FSR holds that, when a group of processes achieves such closure that a set of states recurs continually, the effects of that coherence differ from any effects that would occur in the absence...
of that closure. Such altered effectiveness is an attribute of the system as a whole, and would have consequences. This indicates that the network of processes, as a unit, has ontological significance. The closed network of processes, together with the conditions that prevail, constitutes the “form of definiteness” of the coherence. Each coherence persists only so long as that form continues to be realized. Whitehead held that members of societies share elements of form are have the same form of definiteness: this accounts for the persistence (personal order) of societies. However, when many components come together to constitute an ontologically significant unity (as they do in all the biological systems considered here) those components contribute to, but do not share, a single form of definiteness. PSR achieves the goals of OSR without engendering paradox.

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Quantum Biology: A Live Possibility

Abstract: The recent emergence of quantum decoherence theory with the notion of entanglement and its rejection of the human observer as a necessary component of measurement, along with the discovery of quantum effects in large molecules (e.g.C70) now make it possible to reconceive biology in non corpuscular-kinetic terms. This paper will explore attempts to create quantum biologies by Johnjoe McFadden (Quantum Evolution, 2000) and Mae-Wan Ho (The Rainbow and the Worm, 1998, 2nd Ed.) and others. While these authors make a brave beginning for their views, it is clear that their work will have continuing impact.

4

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The Extraordinary Simplicity of Complex Biological Systems and Processes

Abstract: Living systems are characterized by the architectural complexity of their key constituent parts, such as the chemical structures of many biological macromolecules - DNA/RNA, structural proteins, catalytic enzymes, immunoglobulins, long-chain fatty acids and carbohydrates. Moreover, such polymeric substances are biosynthesized and homeostatically maintained in biological organisms through a complex set of interactive mechanisms and metabolic processes. What is not amply recognized today is the extraordinary simplicity of such complex biological systems and processes. In this paper, the author will demonstrate this newly emerging perspective by presenting how, in addition to non-linear feedbacks, a simple set of symmetry breaking principles and biochemical selection rules governs the underlying basis of all living systems and cellular processes. Applying the use of a relatively novel statistical approach, called
'affinity-bias analysis', it will be shown how seemingly intractable problems in modern biology, such as explanation of protein folding mechanisms and enzymatic reaction rates, can be addressed or even solved with appropriate data mining and the employment of strategic selection rules. The paper will also examine the larger question of a process-based ontology in a continuously evolving universe - the surprising similarity of symmetry breaking principles and selection rules (e.g., those affecting neutrinos, electron spins, amino acids and neural networks) that guide the overall evolution of the physical, biological and human worlds.

5

General Discussion of the Papers

Tuesday, July 4, afternoon
Room: HS 101

Session 2

6

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Numerical and Categorical Logics for a Process Philosophy of Living Systems

Abstract: Historically, natural language served as a principle source of scientific and other logical notations. Scientific notations for mathematics, chemistry, biology, and genetics emerged from natural languages more or less independently over the centuries. The recent construction of new mathematical notation for the chemical sciences obliterates the need for special chemical symbols. This suggests the possibility of integrating logical relations constructed from mathematical, chemical, and genetic symbol systems. The exciting possibility of using multiple symbol systems concomitantly to describe life exists. This possibility will be explored here by exploiting the potential for assigning different natural correspondence relations to the material, spatial and temporal observations associated with living processes.

A scientific description of living systems can invoke four logically intertwined symbol systems. Natural language and alphabetic symbols describe visible characteristics and properties of biological organisms. Chemical symbols and structures describe invisible, indivisible, and individual biological structures, characteristics and properties. Classical mathematical symbols and operations describe abstractly the perplex dynamics of living systems, the emergence of new structures in time. Genetic symbols describe both visible and invisible hereditary properties of organisms.

I propose polymodal systems of numerical logics that relate these symbol systems to one another. Closure of the list of atomic numbers corresponding with chemical elements is a natural imperative. Closure over electrical particles and relations is indicated by constructing a new notation for chemical "words", labeled bipartite graphs (LBPGs) and associated patroids listing the dependency relations. Optional positional isomerism within LBPGs is expressed in terms of "discrete metrics" between electrical particles. Genetic traits are express as individual positional isomers of DNA. Continuous
functions express motions of electrical particles in space (quantum mechanics) and contingency relations within specific external circumstances (temperatures, volumes, pressures). The numerical grammars correspond, roughly speaking, with the traditional categories of moods of the copula of English sentences (imperative, indicative, optative and subjunctive.) Modern adaptations of Aristotelian categories and Porphyrean trees show the way to empirical correlates between the logic of the grammars, the individual operations of the number systems and living processes. The example of the mechanism of the human genetic disease, sickle cell anemia, illustrates the ontological and epistemological utility of these numerical and grammatical methods. (This abstract is to be read in conjunction with a parallel abstract in the chemistry section.)

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Evolution in the Cosmology of Alfred North Whitehead

Abstract: Evolution and creation are pictures of reality. Both are founded in the same world. But, while evolution asks, how reality develops, for creation stands the question in the focus after the origin of reality, and why the world exists at all. A philosophy which evolution and creation puts as equal, and which is founded on causality and teleology as basic description forms has to dissolve or to integrate the differences inside – outside, consciousness matter, object subject. Whitehead’s philosophy of organism offers a starting point for this. Besides, speaking in anthropomorphical concepts of reality seems to be a necessary consequence of reflection.

In SMW he characterizes the basic ideas of scientific development and their consequences for philosophy. He wants to unite different views of the nature of things, and to overcome the dualistic tradition of Cartesianism in modern age. The area of conflict between creation and evolution contains these dualisms exemplarily. Unity of reason forms an ideal to be aimed. Whitehead wants to overcome especially the area of conflict between natural sciences and humanities, and between reality of experience and perception.

While putting the concept of actual occasion in the centre of his philosophy of organism, he succeeds in resolving handed down contrasts in a common unified ground.

Four leading ideas determined the theoretical sciences in the 19th century: atomicity, continuity, energy preservation and evolution. The new understanding in science was not concerned with the introduction of these concepts, but with her fusion and expansion. At that time for Whitehead the cell theory and Pasteur’s work were more revolutionary than the achievement of Dalton’s nuclear theory, “for they introduced the notion of organism into the world of minute beings. ... The doctrine of evolution has to do with the emergence of novel organisms as the outcome of chance.” (SMW, p. 95)

Neither individual experiences nor results of natural sciences give reason to believe in invariable subjects; on the contrary, the whole being of reality is in a process of becoming and passing. “On the organic theory, the only endurances are structures of activity, and the structures are evolved.” Whitehead’s speculative cosmology is based on the results of the
theory of evolution. However, he tries to integrate all experiences of reality. For this reason he criticizes the Darwinism. Darwinism excludes programatically experiences of reality as for example creativity.

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Kosmos and Bios: Whitehead's Conception of Life and its Possible Impact upon an Adequate Understanding of Evolutionary Processes

Abstract: Whitehead's conception of life, which is embedded in his cosmological framework, emphasizes both the constitutive processual and the societal-structural character of the genesis and persistence of living systems as parts of the life of the universe. Though Whitehead accepts en gros the content of Darwin's theory of evolution, he utters criticism against its lack of explanatory power with regard to the observable increasing complexity of living systems, which culminates in the emergence of reason-able homo sapiens (1). The paper wants to show, that Whitehead's bio-philosophy provides an adequate conceptual and methodological framework for the dialogue with new evolutionary theories, which intend to complement or even correct the predominant neo-Darwinian evolutionary theory(2). The concluding remarks will try to present the draft of a dialogically developed conception of adventurous living systems, which is as philosophically as biologically adequate (3).

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An inquiry into the Origins of Life on Earth – a Synthesis of Process Thought in Science and Theology

Abstract: An initiating event in the development of life on earth is thought to have been the generation of self-replicating catalytic molecules (SRCMs). Despite decades of work to reveal how SRCMs could have formed, a chemically detailed hypothesis remains elusive. I maintain that this is due, in part, to a failure of metaphysics and question this research program's ontologic foundation of materialism. In this paper, I suggest another worldview that might provide more adequate ontologic underpinnings – Whitehead's process philosophy of dynamic, relational becoming. Here, we come to see molecules not as unchanging objects but rather as processes that possess the capacity for subjective experience. Molecular transformation is driven by experience, both internal and external. Process thought accounts for the world's creative impulse by positing a God who lures the becoming of all entities towards greater complexity and value. Chemical evolution is now seen as divine motivation of molecular becoming and, as such, possesses the potential for introducing true novelty into the world. The 'causal joint' between God and world is hypothesized to be an
energy transduction at the molecular level that allow divine action without violation of chemical principles or physical laws.

10
General Discussion of the Papers

Wednesday, July 5, morning
Room: HS 101
Session 3

11
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Covariance and Evolution

Abstract: Whiteheadian metaphysics in particular and dual aspect theories in general allow that reality coheres in nodes that admit experience. Such entities may exhibit two modes: all carry a subject-centered phenomenal aspect, and some of the more complex ones also manifest a perspective-free epistemological mode. Each mode supplies part of the basis for a rational ontology, but it is the latter that affords the possibility of a fully sharable worldview, and, in particular, a community-wide ontological deployment.

We claim that at the heart of the technical mechanism by which subjects distinguish world objects is a generalized conception of symmetry that often goes by the name covariance. Certain kinds of subjunctive transformations operate reciprocally with perception to populate the world of experience with various kinds of objects: physical, mathematical, psychical, etc. The nature of the transformation defines the nature of the corresponding class of objects. The underlying abstract process that governs entification is the so-called quotient construction, which is mathematically both elementary and fundamental, but often left implicit. In this light we explore the hypothesis, suggested by the history of the world and science, that nature moves systematically toward the development of a covariant epistemology, and that this is reflected in greater and greater physical complexity. Explanations of this dynamic might appeal to a highly generalized Darwinian theory, God as a lure, God as simply being in the world (and therefore an object to be represented and understood), or perhaps some sort of natural imperative that favors covariance. A hybridized special case of the possibilities above includes Whitehead's position on the relationship of God to living things in general. In any case, if true, physical reductionism phrased in terms of a third-person ontology must be incomplete either at the level of ontogeny or phylogeny insofar as our notion of covariance is necessarily grounded in symmetries founded upon first-person references; likewise the metaphysical theories of epiphenomenalism and property dualism fail. Our hypothesis also bears on the problems of rationality and intentionality since structural compatibilities and background formalisms are necessarily implicated by any such theory.
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Neo-Darwinism, Intelligent Design, and a Whiteheadian Theory of Evolution

Abstract: What is generally considered the neo-Darwinian theory of evolution can be characterized in terms of 15 doctrines, some empirical and some metaphysical in nature. Much of the discussion of neo-Darwinism by both advocates and detractors is confused because it is not clear which of the 15 doctrines the speaker has in mind. I suggest that from a Whiteheadian point of view, 4 of these doctrines are true, the other 11 false. Most of the false doctrines are ones that imply an atheistic worldview.

The atheism of neo-Darwinism has led it to be strongly opposed by those who advocate "creation science" or at least "Intelligent Design." But these views are also unsatisfactory from a Whiteheadian point of view, because they reject the doctrine of naturalism, which is one of neo-Darwinism's true doctrines. I refer here to naturalism in the generic sense, which simply rules out supernatural interruptions of the world's normal cause-effect relations (not the sensationist-atheist-materialist version of naturalism).

After showing why the advocates of neo-Darwinism and Intelligent Design usually talk past each other and why neither can see the elements of truth in the other view, I suggest a Whiteheadian theory of evolution that, being naturalistic but not atheistic, and nondualistic but not materialistic, provides a via media.

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A Fourth Variable in Evolution

Abstract: The standard explanation of evolution deals only with the random mutation of genes, the organisms that result from these, and the environment as selective agent. This enables biologists to think that a "materialist" account, one that excludes such things as the purposive behavior of animals, is adequate. There is, however, evidence that the actual course of evolution is far more complex. Far from being passive recipients of the effects of genetic change and environmental selection, organisms actively participate in shaping the course of evolution. Their activities affect the selection of genes through the Baldwin effect and also the character of the environment that selects. The activity of organisms is an independent variable in explanation of evolution. Resistance to accepting this comes largely from the desire of biologists to exclude any reference to the subjective side of organisms from their explanations. If they insist on doing so, they should recognize that their explanations are incomplete. The alternative is to expand the understanding of science to include the testing of hypotheses about the subjective side of nature.

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Discussion: Organism and Evolution
Does Moral Theory Presuppose Theism?

**Abstract:** This paper argues that an affirmation of God’s existence as the universal and thus necessary being or individual is implied by any moral affirmation or denial. This thesis is defended through an engagement with its major contemporary challenge, namely, the view, occasioned by linguistic and hermeneutical successors to the subjective turn of Kant, that all understandings are mediated by a language or lifeworld and thus meaning and truth is in all respects circumscribed by some context within the human adventure. Having argued that this view is pragmatically self-contradictory, the paper seeks an alternative account of human understanding and, specifically, moral evaluation that gives due appreciation to the transparent importance of language or lifeworld and thus to learning and reflection on learning. This account turns on a distinction between explicit understandings mediated by language or learning, on the one hand, and, on the other, an implicit understanding the moral law constitutive of human understanding as such. Understanding of the moral law, I continue, must be understanding of its ground, which may be called metaphysical in the broad sense. Further, the ground of morality must include metaphysical conditions in the strict sense because morality requires a comprehensive good. In turn, a comprehensive good requires a universal and thus necessary being or individual.
Abstract: One of Whitehead's remarks suggests that he should be classified as an ethical particularist or an ethical relativist: The notion of one ideal arises from the disastrous overmoralization of thought under the influence of fanaticism, or pedantry (PR 84). However, I shall argue that his metaphysics is compatible with the metaethical thesis that ethical judgments are universalizable. On the other hand, because a conception of time is fundamental to his metaphysics, I shall defend the metaethical thesis that ethical judgments are temporalizable. A key task is to show how temporalizability is coherent with universalizability. A general goal is to illustrate how process philosophy might contribute to ethical theory.

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Ethics’ Dipolar Necessities and Theistic Implications

Abstract: Every value judgment must consider both the ‘is’ and the ‘ought.’ Each moment of reality is a dipolar whole, a creating subject-whole grasping its factual casual past as object-parts within itself while evaluating its possible outcomes against an abstract, conceptual standard, also a characteristic within itself. An argument is presented that the conceptual standard must be metaphysically grounded, that is, a characteristic necessarily found in every moment of existence. Five concepts of purported metaphysical generality are presented, without which ethical theory would fail to make sense: Two are necessities exhibited by the facts inherited by every moment of reality: Creative Freedom and Making a Difference; two others are necessities concerning the value of facts, namely, the Value Standard itself and the Principle of Co-Equal Values; and one expresses the global necessity of Dipolarity, that wholes can only evaluate their own actual and possible factual parts. The principles necessary to make sense of value judgments imply theism, specifically neoclassical theism. Theism is either the only way reality is conceivable, or theism is meaningless since it is not a contingent possibility. Frank Gamwell’s similar conclusion in The Divine Good, is generally supported except for his belief that Creativity is the ultimate principle of value (182/3). Creativity is the means to the ultimate end of Beauty or aesthetic richness. Creativity is neutral to the positive-negative value scale except in the most attenuated sense of ‘something is better than nothing,’ but since ‘nothing’ is meaningless, being or coming-to-be in some way or other is on the ‘is’ side of the ‘is-ought’ contrast. One cannot argue from the necessity of some creative freedom, to one ‘ought’ to have more freedom or creativity since, apart from the divine, freedom may be used to create ugliness. ‘Unsurpassable Ugliness’ as a divine attribute is rationally meaningless, but the necessity for Beauty to be unsurpassably fulfilled every moment can lay the basis for Beauty as creativity’s ultimate purpose which, as a value principle, is uniquely ubiquitous, and as such is the principle that ought to be fulfilled.
Neoclassical Cosmology and Matthew 22:36-40: Cosmological Distinctions Imply Theological Ethics

Abstract: Recall elementary distinctions between all, some, none, singular, plural, whole, and part/portion/fragment. Philosophical cosmology requires distinctions between "the one all-inclusive whole of reality" (Ogden, PERKINS JOURNAL, Spring 1984, 21), all parts of reality, some part(s) of reality, and no part/none of reality, and between parts that include other parts (collectives or composites) and parts that include no others (noncomposite parts, particles or quantum events), also between individual and nonindividual. By considering the neoclassical version of Whiteheadian process thought worked out by Charles Hartshorne, Schubert M. Ogden, Franklin I. Gamwell and others, we discern that these most basic cosmological distinctions imply theological commitments and moral values such as indicated in Matthew 22:36-40 (also Mark 12:28-34 and Luke 10:25-28, and Matthew 25:31-46).

Tuesday, July 4, afternoon
Room: HS 122

Session 2

Testing Technology with Whitehead

Abstract: We all realize that technologies of the modern world have in many cases outstripped our abilities as individuals - and even sometimes as societies - to control them by norms of ethics or aesthetics or religion. Whitehead, however, offers not only thoughtful norms for assessing technologies (existing or anticipated) but also helpful suggestions for making these norms effective over the long run. This paper will range over a selection of technologies, actual or possible, applying Whitehead's tests and suggesting how these might be made practical even in a world where economic norms seem to rule.
Hope for the Earth: A Process Eschatological Eco-ethics for South Korea

Abstract: The principal purpose of this paper is to propose a process eschatological eco-ethics as a theological model for the Christian communities as they face the challenge of responding to the ecological crisis arising throughout the world. Toward this end, this project pursues the following interrelated objectives: first, to articulate a process eschatology through discussion of the decisive process notions of God and God’s way of dealing with the creation; second, to propose a set of principles for a process eschatological eco-ethics; and third, to evaluate those process eschatological eco-ethical principles by engaging them in a critical dialogue with Jürgen Moltmann’s political and ecological eschatology. In conclusion, this work proposes a process eschatological eco-ethics for the churches, and particularly for Christians in South Korea, where socio-political and economic injustice along with current ecological crisis is worsening due to effects of global development and political hegemony that remain unchecked by evangelical and mainline churches.

Through an exploration of the writings of John B. Cobb Jr., Schubert Ogden, Jay B. McDaniel, Charles Birch, Marjorie H. Suchocki, and Catherine Keller, the dissertation distills a vision of genuine openness to future possibilities. This eschatology is gathered from such process notions as the self-limitation of divine power, human freedom/self-determination, creativity, and the divine preservation of all values. Each of these notions serves as an eco-ethical resource for transforming the suffering and distorted state of the world. The strong socio-political, eco-ethical implications of process eschatology demand that human beings exist as co-creators with God in the process of continuing creation. Moreover, the process eschatological affirmation of the dimensions of time, history, and creation must place ethical emphasis on love for the life of others and care for the suffering and oppressed. Through its analysis of Jürgen Moltmann and especially John B. Cobb Jr., this writing critically responds to those conventional doctrines of eschatology that tend to surrender the world to God and the future onesidedly, thus placing an unreconcilable discontinuity rather than a creative tension between "this worldly" history and a kingdom of God to come.
Abstract: This paper is an analysis of ethical movements suggested by Alfred North Whitehead’s metaphysics and contemporary feminist and narrative ethical theory. These movements include: compassion - feeling the textures and powers of God and the world; creativity - participating in the process of discovery and making something new; and form - shaping social structures and policies to support life. Drawing upon issues faced by educational and religious institutions, Moore develops the three movements and suggests ethical practices that emerge from each. The first movement requires institutional decision-makers to prehend the entire universe and the Divine spark of life permeating it. Thus, institutions need to be: attuned to the universe (as in Brian Henning and Mark Wallace); attuned to ordinary people (as in Ada Maria Isasi-Díaz); attuned to the Divine (as in Franklin Gamwell), and grounded in the intelligence of emotions (as in Martha Nussbaum). The second movement requires decision-makers to open themselves to unexpected, novel, and emergent possibilities for individuals and wholes (as in Brian Henning). The third movement requires decision-makers to engage in structural analysis and critique, as well as form-giving, thus re-creating their institution’s master story and structures. Such values stand in tension with institutional caution and resistance to change, and in tension with the institutional temptation to make cosmetic changes for the sake of seeming progressive. These values also run counter to market forces, which presently dominate most institutional values in the United States.

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Beyond Enlightened Self-Interest: Process Philosophy and the Biology of Altruism

Abstract: Taking its title from Charles Hartshorne's famous essay published in Ethics, this paper argues that the social-relational ontology advocated by Whitehead and Hartshorne "deconstructs" any theory of altruism that views "other-interested" ethical values as mere biological contingencies. Particular attention will be given to Michael Ruse's view that both altruism and the attending "sentiment of objectivity" attaching to moral principles, while quite genuine as real moral feelings, exist only and without remainder because of their biological utility. (If we were creatures in different possible worlds under different nomological conditions, we might adopt radically different values and behaviors.) Evolutionary psychologists are adopting somewhat similar positions in the 'mating mind' hypothesis. Process philosophy offers a telling critique of such positions without undermining the importance of biological utility in contemporary evolutionary theory.
Ethical Seriousness

Abstract: The theme of my short essay is the connection between creativity, in Whitehead’s sense, and ethical seriousness or depth. I begin by mentioning The Emptying God: A Buddhist-Jewish-Christian Conversation. In the book, Masao Abe proposes that the Buddhist notion of “emptying” might usefully illuminate Christ’s kenosis. Abe holds that all distinctions including those between good and evil are dynamically emptied. Although this self-emptying is said to empty itself, the ethical implications still worry all of his Western dialogue partners, both Christian and Jewish. My goal is not to evaluate Abe’s view of dynamic emptying nor the Western response. But The Emptying God does allow me to connect several themes: ethical seriousness, Whitehead’s creativity, Creation from Nothing, and Tillich’s Being-Itself.

Tillich quite explicitly connects Being-Itself with depth and thus with cultural and moral seriousness. This raises the issue of creation from nothing. There is at least a historical connection between moral seriousness and creation from nothing. Whitehead, in precise contrast with Tillich, rejected creation from nothing in the name of ethical seriousness: creation from nothing does not, in his opinion, allow for that radical creaturely freedom which we moderns deem essential to moral life. So from Tillich’s point of view, we cannot have moral depth and seriousness without Being-itself and so without creation from nothing. From Whitehead’s point of view, however, we cannot have moral serious with Being-itself and with creation from nothing. Whitehead’s creativity, much as Abe’s dynamic emptying, is not a Creator, but only the open flow of creatures each of which acts, to some extent, freely to determine its own identity. That is one reason for the resonance between Process philosophy and Abe’s form of Mahayana Buddhism.

Both Tillich and Whitehead seem to me to make essential points. The depth of moral seriousness requires creation from nothing. But creation from nothing can destroy precisely that openness and freedom -- that is, the creative process of emptying -- which is essential to freedom and moral seriousness.

In my essay in Process Studies, I revise the doctrine of creativity so that I can affirm creation from nothing and Whitehead’s theodicy of freedom. I use the results of that paper to suggest a way of maintaining a deep ethical seriousness so basic to the Christian and Jewish traditions as well as the radical freedom so basic to modern ethical consciousness.
Is There an Ethics of Creativity?

Abstract: For some time process scholars have asserted that Whitehead’s philosophy of organism could provide an ideal ground for developing a robust moral philosophy, particularly one encompassing ecological concerns. However, in light of recent work by scholars such as Clare Palmer, this largely undefended assumption is increasingly being brought into question. In opposition to this skeptical trend, this essay will argue that, properly interpreted, Whitehead’s metaphysics does indeed provide a fertile ground for moral philosophy.

Unlike previous attempts at such a project, we begin by taking seriously Whitehead’s claims that the creative process of the universe aims at the production of beauty (MT 119; AI 265). The view that world process is inherently kalogenic or beauty creating has a profound effect on the shape of any would-be Whiteheadian moral philosophy. Insofar as aesthetic experience is the foundation of world process, all order, including the moral order, is ultimately an aspect of aesthetic order (RM 105). It is in this sense that we should understand Whitehead’s claim that “The real world is good when it is beautiful” (AI 268). The relation between what is good and what is beautiful provides an important clue as to how to develop a Whiteheadian moral philosophy. For insofar as something is only as good as it is beautiful, the complex conditions of a beautiful experience are also the conditions of a moral experience.

Thus, by examining the kalogenic structure of reality as the source and foundation of moral obligation, it will be argued that it is indeed possible to construct an ethics of creativity that is as unique, speculative, and fallible as the metaphysics of creativity which it takes as its inspiration and foundation.

Art of Life and the Ethics of Life Forming in a Process Perspective

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to discuss the consequences of Process Thought to the theory and practice of philosophically oriented life forming.

One important element is to clarify the meaning of ‘art of life’ in a process sense. Art is not merely an imitation of nature, it is much more the continuation of the creativity of natural processes in bringing about new forms constantly. Thus, art of life consists not only of copying and repeating pre-given patterns, nor is it the realization of potentialities in an Aristotelian manner. Instead, it means the intensive work of creative
forces to reestablish relations to other beings, and at the same time to redefine one’s own identity by this. Aesthetic values play a central role within these artistic activities, because former experienced beauty serves as motivation for our striving, while imagined beauty represents the goal toward which we strive. This differentiation together with some other considerations proves to be helpful for distinguishing more precisely between the ‘moral’ and ‘ethical’ dimensions as diverse subcategories of the ‘aesthetical’. Moreover, this conceptual framework explains and underlines the intrinsically teleological nature of life shaping.

Finally, the probably most significant point is the analysis of the nature of ‘self’ according to the principles of a non-substantialist metaphysics. The whole postmodern discourse on the ‘aesthetics of existence’ – that originates from the work of M. Foucault in the early 80s – is marked by an embarrassing ambiguity. Although it expressly refuses a substantialist interpretation of the human subject, and shares the heritage of existentialism and structuralism in this respect, it almost desperately seeks to constitute the same subject again, which seems to be a nearly impossible undertaking, based on this theoretical background. By emphasizing the superjective character of subjectivity, the philosophy of organism provides new conceptual means to resolve this apparent contradiction.

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Virtue and Norm

Abstract: Moral practice are, on the one hand, are based on virtues, and on the other hand, are guided by universal norms. Virtues, which are inherent in the moral self, primitively relate to human being’s existence. On the contrary, norms are initially external act criterions, which lie outside a certain agent. There is, however, no absolute demarcation between virtues and norms despite their different relations to the moral self. In this paper, I’d like to observe the mutual relations between virtues and norms.
2.10 Ecological Ethics

Section Heads: Barbara Muraca
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Wednesday, July 5, morning
Room: HS 103

Session 1

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Why Whitehead Is Important for Ecological Ethics

Abstract: Strong anthropocentrism has been the dominant ecological ethic in the Western world. In our increasingly globalised world, its influence is spreading. The core principle of such an ethic is that the value of the non-human world lies exclusively or primarily in its instrumental value for human beings. This ethic has been underpinned by both mechanistic materialism and dualism. The Whiteheadian view that the real stuff of the world is not a collection of inert objects, but experiencing occasions, poses a radical challenge to mechanistic materialism and dualism. In this worldview, the boundaries between organisms are fluid; and the assumption that there are radical discontinuities between humans and nonhumans is challenged. Such a challenge is a necessary condition for the development of an appropriate ecological ethic. At the same time, Whiteheadians have assigned relative degrees of richness of experience to different organisms as a basis for resolving moral conflicts. Problems arise over how to determine relative degrees of richness of experience, and its appropriateness as a criterion for resolving conflicts. This paper engages with some of the controversies on these issues, including references to the works of Birch, Cobb, Dombrowski, McDaniel, and Palmer. A weak anthropocentric perspective will be proposed, complemented by a challenge to Whiteheadian approaches which justify the human use of violence against nonhuman animals.

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Landscapes Seen With Whiteheadian Eyes – A New Perspective for Their Sustainable Development?

Abstract: This paper discusses the potential of Whitehead’s philosophy of organism for future approaches towards landscape. Could his non-dualistic
approach serve as a missing link for a consistent description of current developments in our environment? At the moment, sheer physical evidence, the processes happening outside, challenge the dominating, romantic view of landscape as natural scenery which serves as a green remedy for the pressures of our artificial modernity [1]. Contemporary theory starts to criticize this split between natural spaces as landscape and artificial spaces as built environment in favor of integrated concepts where landscape is defined as a dynamic system of manmade spaces [2]. Rolf Peter Sieferle speaks of a “Total Landscape” where the former antagonists city and landscape have dissolved into a homogeneous structure completely characterized by the accelerated processes of modernization. [3]

But despite physical evidence and theoretical explanations, the changed, hybrid situation is hardly accepted - neither in the public nor in environmental research. Instead, romantic landscapes are still the preferred ones[4] and ecosystem research is still unable to internalize human activity [5]. In environmental planning, for example, most human interventions into the landscape are seen as negative impacts into a previously harmonious equilibrium, which then have to be compensated by new, protected natural areas somewhere else. These dualistic, either-or approaches towards nature and man are less and less productive facing the modern, hybrid situation. They are based on the Cartesian metaphysics of substance with its bifurcation of nature. Yet, for an integrated thinking of man and nature, a more coherent metaphysics has to be adopted. As many authors have shown already, Whitehead’s philosophy could offer this new foundation for a non-dualistic thinking and acting [6].

In the main part of this paper, two innovative landscape projects which deal productively with a hybrid situation are discussed from a Whiteheadian perspective. The goal is to develop a new vocabulary which allows a consistent description of our modern landscapes where man and nature are inseparably merged. Important aspects will be Whiteheads process philosophy which makes any thinking of ideal, static landscape images impossible, his critique of the bifurcation of nature and his term “superject” which he proposes to overcome the Cartesian metaphysics of substance.

As a conclusion, the potentials of a Whiteheadian landscape-vocabulary is discussed for a contemporary understanding of ecology as well as for a sustainable development of our future environments.

The Ecological Imagination: A Whiteheadian Exercise in Temporal Phronesis

Abstract: Whitehead was not silent on the environment, and the ethical dimension of the way we understand it, even though he has a shallower sense of the term. "Organisms can create their own environment ... with such cooperation ... the environment has a plasticity which alters the whole ethical aspect of evolution." (SMW 105) Grasping what might be called a dialectical or creative relation to the environment gives us insights not available on the mechanical model in which the environment unilaterally determines the response of an organism, but we need to catch up: “ ... the increased plasticity of the environment for mankind, resulting from the advances in scientific technology, is being construed in ... habits of thought which find their justification in the theory of a fixed environment.” (SMW 105)

What we are calling a new temporal phronesis would be a major contribution to habits of thought, and indeed practice, that would not merely transcend the mechanical, but move to another level the creative engagement with the environment for which Whitehead calls. To be out of touch, to fail to be attuned to the complexity of time is not just a cognitive but an ethical failure. Such a phronesis would capture both the temporal complexity of the real, and of our engagement with it, and it would underpin the ecological imagination.

For Whitehead, grasping and enacting such an understanding is itself an evolutionary development: “On the organic theory, the only endurance are structures of activity, and the structures are evolved.” (SMW 101) It is our sense, however, that his main focus was on the creative possibilities of the human transformation of the environment. Philosophy would bring out the significance of: “piercing the blindness of activity in respect to its transcendent function.” Although in 1925, Whitehead was less taken by the tragic dimension of the human engagement with nature, it was not entirely absent: “Any physical object which, by its influence deteriorates its environment, commits suicide.” (SMW 103) Our temporal phronesis, on the other hand, is more precautionary than creative. As far as ‘nature itself’ is concerned, we learn to identify tipping points, nonlinear processes, transformative moments, and to think the multiplicity of interdependent but distinct temporal processes. As for action, we attend to temporal shapes of (1) Restoring natural systems, (2) Attending to natural cycles, (3) needing to act before we are sure we should; (4) timing (ripe and unripe times); (5) eventuation (enabling new systemic possibilities); (6) sustainable development, (7) Avoiding reactive responses, avoiding resistance: attention to the dialectics of action.

The significance of the temporal in nature has passed through many stages in the history of philosophy: Plato’s grasp of the importance of the permanent, purposiveness as a source of significance in time, time as a value immanent to historical change, and time as tied to human subjectivity. With Whitehead, Deleuze et. al., however, we have come to acknowledge something new: the nonlinear multidimensionality and complexity of time.

I focus here on this last stage, arguing that it is only by articulating and enacting such (often aporetic) complexity that we can achieve the attunement required for an environmentally sustainable ethos. This
attunement is itself a creative accomplishment of the human organism, even as it sets limits to an unbridled sense of the transformability of nature.

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Philosophy of Nature in a Theory of 'strong' Sustainability

Abstract: Even a moderate anthropocentric version of environmental ethics which adopts an egalitarian concept of intergenerational justice implies the very idea of sustainability. The controversy between “weak” and “strong” sustainability is about the maintenance of natural capital as such. In any theory of strong sustainability, the concept of natural capital is crucial since strong sustainability has at its core a “constant natural capital rule”. The concept of natural capital stems from economics but its clarification and explication directs into the realm of ontology and epistemology. The concept of natural capital is to be seen as a turntable which points in different directions. One direction is focused on the notion of capital, as it is being reflected in theoretical economics, an other direction is focused on the notion of living nature, as it is reflected in theoretical biology. A comprehensive concept of natural capital entails not only fossil fuels or raw materials but also living funds (as forests or fishes) which are autopoietic, prolific and are structured by low entropy. Such living beings are nested in biotic community which can be researched at different scales. Seen from the perspective of a history of ideas, Herman Daly, the “spiritus rector” of strong sustainability, relies on Georgescu-Roegen who had been influenced by Whitehead. Thus, some ontological assumptions have to be seen in the background of the sustainability-debate. In this realm, a Whiteheadian ontology and process philosophy might be helpful for philosophical explication of the concept of natural capital. Whitehead’s critique of the “scientific” perception of nature as matter is strongly relevant both for theories of sustainability and for environmental ethics at large. The lecture will be structured as follows: First, a case in favor of strong sustainability will be made. Second, the ontological background in the work of Herman Daly and Georgescu-Roegen will be clarified. Third, the concept of natural capital will be analyzed in some detail. Theories of neg-entropy, living funds, and ecological services will play a role in this analysis. Fourth, the result of such analysis will be confronted with some concepts which are to be found in Whitehead (“actuality”, “efficacy”, “creativity”, “internal relations”). Fifth, a skeptical reflection will compare a Whiteheadian interpretation of the very nature in the concept of natural capital with theoretical alternatives which are less “metaphysical”. Sixth, some implications for environmental ethics and ecological economics are reflected. The underlying idea of this presentation is to free and purify the notion of natural capital from the perception of nature as matter. It is argued that economists are unable to understand the concept of natural capital as such until they purify neoclassical economics from this misperception.
Process Relational Metaphysics as a Necessary Foundation for Environmental Philosophy

Abstract: Process philosophy is explored as a basis for an environmental philosophy that is dynamic and elastic, with particular emphasis on value, beauty, integrity and stability supporting Aldo Leopold’s environmental vision. In this paper I identify a conflict within ecological thinking - the duality of ecological science based on dynamic processes and justification of ethics of the environment based on issues of balance, stability, and integrity, concepts from traditional substance metaphysics. The concept of Leopold’s idea of a biotic community is extended via the concept of iterated scale. The result is a basis for value in the biotic community clearly reliant on the process-relational approach. I will end with an overview of the type of metaphysics that is necessary to support ethical value in general.


Abstract: The debate between Humeans and Whiteheadians on the issue of causal relations stems at least as far back as 1940. For example, J. W. Robson’s “Whitehead’s Answer to Hume” and M.W. Gross’ “Whitehead’s Answer to Hume: A Reply” in Kline, G. L. (ed.), Alfred North Whitehead: Essays on His Philosophy (1963) represents but one instance of the friction between the two parties. Today, the debate is particularly important in light of the need to determine the ‘causes’ of global environmental problems, scientifically, and for example, to hold neglectful corporations legally responsible for the ecological damage and detrimental health-effects their actions have ‘caused’. It is the purpose of this paper to address and to help resolve the debate in a generalized way. While my approach is emphatically Hegelian, namely, it is based in his articulation of the three-fold dialectical unfolding of the logical Concept, it does offer room for both Humean and Whiteheadian perspectives as ‘moments’ within it. The debate centres around the issue of the non-determination versus determination of causal connection. On the one hand, unmitigated Hume’s skepticism argues that there is strictly no empirical basis for the determination of any necessary connection between putatively-stated
'causes' and 'effects'. On the other hand, Whitehead’s process-relational metaphysics holds that the extensive continuum is itself composed of an indefinite multitude of causal nexus, but that it is potentially divisible into 'causes' and 'effects'. However, by treating both the Whiteheadian and the Humean positions as 'moments' within the 'working-out' of particular instances of causality, we may come to a three-fold 'process' view, similar to Hegel’s stance in the Encyclopedia Logic. The paper further raises a subsequent issue: that Whitehead’s philosophy of organism, which overcomes traditional 'substance-ontology’, implicitly calls us to rethink our Aristotelian conceptions of causality.

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Holocoenotic View of Ecology: An Indian Process Model

Abstract: In Kalidasa’s Abhijnana Sakuntalam (3rd C. A.D), Sakuntala was depicted as an affectionate associate of the trees, the creepers and the deer. The ashram life was an integral part of the forest, and membership to an ashram is shared equally by humans, animals, birds and trees surrounding the place. There was no antithesis between human life and the surrounding nature. We find in Gandhi and Tagore an attempt to reinforce the philosophy of wo/man-nature unity within a holistic civilizational framework. (Gandhiji’s Sabarmati Ashram and Tagore’s Santiniketan are instances of both protest and innovation.) The civilization of India had grown up in close association with nature.

My purpose in this paper is to present a mode of conceptualization of wo/man-nature relationship; a conceptualization of ecology, which is "holocoenotic" in nature, understanding and action. The word "ecology" comes from the Greek word oikos, meaning 'household', 'home' or 'place to live'. The Milesian cosmologists, according to Karl Popper, "envisioned the world as a kind of house, the home of all creatures, our home." It was Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919) who coined the term oekologie, from which the modern ecology has been derived. He defined ecology as "the study of the reciprocal relations between organisms and their environment." Both the "philosophy of organism" proposed by A. N. Whitehead in his Process and Reality and the "societism" professed by Hartshorne in his Reality As Social Process, highlight this inter-connectedness and inter-dependence which deserves to be appreciated as contributing substantively to any organic whole.

The Vedic world-view was that gods, men and nature formed one 'organic whole'. All the three were equally eternal and mutually dependent. All these three categories of beings were corporately responsible for maintaining and promoting the cosmic harmony (Rta), a very vital concept of Vedic culture and religion. There were gods for heaven, mid-space and earth. Most of these gods were personifications or deifications of the powers of nature.

Hinduism’s belief in the "kinship of all creatures," Jainism’s commitment “to avoid harming living creatures,” and Buddhism’s principle of “a loving compassionate heart for all creatures,” recognize a doctrine of God’s love for creation and for all the creatures of the world. The principle of ahimsa (non-violence) - one of the greatest contributions Indian thought has offered to the world - proposes and promotes universal love and respect to all beings - animate and inanimate.

The very foundation of Visistadvaita (qualified non-dualism) is the conception of "God as the self of all entities and all entities as the attributive body of God." Ramanuja taught that the basic awareness and acceptance of the fact that one is part of God’s body, and, therefore, is radically depended on him, is the beginning of real spiritual life. His
vision of cosmos as God’s body is not just a means for philosophical and metaphysical understanding of the structure of the cosmos; rather it is the motive force for the sadhana, the spiritual means, for liberation. Ramanuja also advocated a “dependent-independent-relation (pan-en-theistic relation) of the Universe to God. This world-view provides us with a rational model to apprehend God, the Supreme Reality, and human self in this world, and to eminently safeguard the meaning, dignity and destiny of nature and all the entities of nature.

Finally, the Indian traditions recognize that it is the same life principle, which exists in all “life forms.” The life forms do not differ in kind but only in the degree of evolution. Because of the “unity of life” doctrine, they argue, God does not show favouritism and neglect other forms of life. Humans alone are not God’s chosen creatures. To the western religious precept, “Love thy neighbour,” they add, “and every living creature is thy neighbour.” This sensibility of ‘unity of life’ is also the rationale to adopt a ‘holocoenotic’ (holistic and wholistic) attitude to life and nature, which, in turn, will help to lead us out of the moral impasse created by the divorce between humanity and nature.

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"We Are Nature": Environmental Ethics in a Different Key

Abstract: In this paper I will consider five elements of the I will consider five elements common elements of the worldviews of ecofeminism and process-relational philosophy that bear upon the question of environmental ethics. The first of these is that all individuals are both intelligent and embodied. The second is that all individuals are internally related to other individuals. The third is that all individuals are interdependent in the web of life. The fourth is that life in a finite and interdependent world is inherently ambiguous and thus there is no guarantee that everything will work out for the best. The fifth is that ethics arise out of the web of life, out of deep feeling of connection to other individuals. All of these ideas can be found in both ecofeminism and process-relational philosophy. They can be found in some other feminist theologies and spiritualities as well, especially feminist Goddess spirituality. I will draw out the implications of the more general synthesis of feminist and process-relational thought that I call a feminist process-relational paradigm. By articulating the insights of ecofeminism and Goddess spirituality in a more general philosophical context, it becomes possible to see that they hold together and make sense as a consistent worldview. In addition, this worldview becomes accessible to others who may not share a particular spiritual perspective.
Let Means be Causes - Instrumental Values in a Process Framework

Abstract: The debate about the role of intrinsic and instrumental values plays a major role in environmental ethics. With respect to the so-called demarcation problem the main focus of discussion has been so far directed mostly on the ascription of intrinsic values to the nonhuman world. It is a merit of Process scholars to have brought the relevance of instrumental values back on the arena. Along this line this paper aims at analyzing the role of ‘instrumental’ values within a Process framework. The very concept of ‘instrument’ recalls the idea of a means chosen by an already given subject in order to achieve a particular aim. The relevance of the means is connected to its appropriateness for the achievement in question and its value is dependent on the end to which it is the means. Means and ends are the reciprocally dependent variables, whereas in this frame the subject seems to be out of question. However, in a Process framework the subject of an action itself is included in the process and dependent on it. Means are not ‘mere means’ but also active causes, which influence and partially determine subjects of agency. Therefore, a ‘mere means’ can only be the outcome of a practice of abstraction that reduces complexity to a manageable size. Although abstraction is a necessary procedure for the development of ordered shapes (as well as theories), it cannot be disentangled from the issue of what is left out. Accordingly, the demarcation line does not only refer to what can and ought to be included, but leads also to the question about the status of the excluded in the ‘outer’ space thus delimited. When for example a work of art opens our eyes to the ulteriority of a so-called instrumental value - i.e. its being widely more than a mere means - we are bound to admit its efficacious power upon us and to face its claim for (moral) consideration. It is the aim of this paper to address these different aspects connected to the ethical relevance of instrumental values in the light of a dialogue with Whitehead, Kant, Heidegger and Latour.

Hybrids in Process

Abstract: Human-animal hybrids (chimeras) are becoming increasingly common, common enough for George W. Bush to warn against their development in his
2006 State of the Union Address. Despite this warning, the development of such hybrids is quickly proceeding. Much of the current public confusion and outrage arises from the metaphysical boundary-crossing involved. While some have mistakenly argued that this boundary is merely an outmoded taboo, such human-animal hybrids in fact present an extremely important moral issue, one for which process philosophy provides helpful guidance. In the process perspective species are defining forms of societies, forms which are inherited and which arise out of the wider social environment. Species have their own properties: these defining forms convey the behavior, nature and needs of the species in question. In addition, they can evolve. There is no fixed essence or nature for any species, including the human. Unfortunately, in the case of transgenic organisms, we lack the knowledge conveyed by species membership. In fact, animal scientists warn that small genomic changes can produce unpredictable, drastic changes in the organism, and that all transgenic experimentation should plan for unanticipated suffering and termination. But human-animal hybrids are not merely transgenic. They are artifacts as defined by Sippi: intentionally brought into existence with certain properties which allow new functions. Like all such artifacts, they result from a reductionist, instrumental and commodified view. Thus our consideration of what a good life would be for a human-animal hybrid is heavily weighted in favor of our own power interests. Nevertheless, the moral value of hybrids cannot be reduced to their resource value: this is not only a narrow but a debased perspective. Process philosophy affirms that animals deserve and require moral consideration. An appropriate approach is one in which not only the interests but the capabilities of a being are considered—capabilities manifested in the defining form of the novel society. The novelty of the human-animal hybrid mandates that the organism receive the utmost in attentive, knowledgeable, and respectful care from its human creators.

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Whitehead and Nonhuman Animal Rights

Abstract: In this paper I will explore a particular application of the revolt against dualism and the defense of a scale of becoming in Whitehead’s thought. I will detail Whitehead’s belief in both continuity between nonhuman animals and human beings as well as partial transcendence of human beings over nonhuman animals. I will also note two arguments used by recent philosophers in favor of nonhuman animal rights. Finally, I will indicate what a Whiteheadian contribution to a defense of these two arguments would look like.
Techno-fying the Process

Abstract: This is an attempt to see how much of what Whitehead predicted and claimed as true can be said to be valid today in our rapidly changing technological society. When Whitehead’s “Process and Reality” was published many people found it difficult and anti-intuitive: too metaphysical. Nowadays, however, we can see around us more of the things and phenomena he had in mind and some of his ideas have become clearer. For example we can see more easily that there are more than one ways of ordering reality and what is felt as noise in one system can be meaningful in a different one, or in a different culture. This is what Whitehead called relations and relatedness, when he emphasized that when we are looking at a wall we are not only looking at it, but also we are affected by it, and thus not only we make our environment but also our environment makes us. Nevertheless, certain developments that Whitehead witnessed in the first half of 20 century and that affected his ideas have been supplanted in later years and his diagnosis is not quite right today. Huge changes have taken place in technology and by technology and as a result the relationship between machines and humans has become much more complex and bilateral than Whitehead was able to foresee. Focusing on the ‘process-thought’ or ‘knowledge of process’ so central to Whitehead’s thought, I shall try to explore how the ‘process’ itself is nowadays ‘technofied’.

Making use of Aristoterian pair concepts of techne and phronesis, or more exactly, two of triadic concepts of episteme, techne and phronesis, which we can recognize an echo in somewhat shifted frame in Whitehead’s ‘Functions of Reason’, where there are two kinds of reason (that of Plato and that of Ulysses), I shall emphasize there is also a mutual dialectic activity, the ongoing process of teknofying human skill and humanizing machine, which seems to lead us to thus far unknown, completely transformed ‘process’ and ‘reality’ of our life.
The Philosopher's Plea: Towards a Vital Critique

Abstract: This paper will attempt to locate Whitehead at the center of American literary studies through his connection to F.O. Matthiessen's emphasis on the "vitality" of 19th century U.S. literature, the "vitalism" of the late work of Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault, and the "vital" importance of zen meditation for an understanding of Whitehead's characterization of philosophical intuition.

Chinese Lute & Aesthetics

Abstract: For thousands of years the Chinese Lute, being one form of the most archaic, culture-filled, and philosophized arts in China and the rest of the world, has been revealing itself far more than merely a simple art instrument. It indeed portrays the core spirit of Chinese culture and further reflects the moral integrity that Chinese intellectuals cultivate as their moral character and mold their relevant behavior. In this article, the Chinese Lute, as an art, will be explored from four different aspects, i.e. the "lord" of Ch’in (?), the "morality" of Ch’in, the "artistic conception" of Ch’in and a "practical way" of the intellectuals' cultivation of such aesthetics.
Vision and Visual Expression - A Discussion by An Artist Working in the U.S.

Abstract: People in Western society have generally been blessed with good physical conditions, with good health and good eyesight. But good eyesight does not necessarily register the connection between visual ability and inner vision in a person’s mind. Aesthetic appreciation requires visual exposure to the world in general. Limited exposure often causes limited vision.

The stimulation that comes from a strong economic environment, the visual intake of sound and sense that comes from daily exposure to television and cinema, the effect that comes from multiple styles of fashion and architectural design, the advantage that comes from cultural establishments such as museums and libraries and from world travel, all influence people’s visions and enhance esthetics. So, esthetics is no longer contrived, no longer the domain of the philosopher, no longer confined in an academic environment. It is a part of living.

The aspects of technical ability and presentation skill are important in the final execution of a work, but visual expression has to come from an inner calling. Inner calling enhances inner vision. The richness of life experiences often challenges an artist’s visual expression. So do a hard life and a struggling mind because they often push toward a yearning for expression. For the completion of many projects of the creative process, longevity becomes extremely important in an artist’s career.

In recent years, social change and intense, sometimes spellbinding visual exposure have transformed esthetics and value systems - and abstract art as well. Society’s busy, active lifestyle, a willingness to settle for the obvious, and choosing instant gratification in visual expression have created mixed messages as many artists follow a compulsive, self-indulgent rush to explosion rather than displaying a responsibility to esthetics or urging compassion toward for? visual quality. Viewers are left asking why this art is so chaotic.

After traveling five continents and viewing hundreds and hundreds of galleries, I have told many colleagues that people like me walk a lonely, narrow road because the works’ subtlety and tranquility are rare finds these days. Like many devoted artists, I continue to work on those projects as part of my creative process. Those I know the best and love the most represent a time capsule, searching and finding within the limited space. We all pay a price as a trade-off to map out our passages in the journey of an artist’s life.

The Art of Process

Abstract: Following the path foreshadowed by the title the present discourse approaches it's unified subject - a special interpretation
of process art - from two different sides. On one hand, the theoretic foundation of our discussion is the process philosophy of A. N. Whitehead (as well as an underlying system of metaphysics, and as an aesthetic theory based thereon). On the other side, the side of (life)practice stands Art, especially in a particular medieval interpretation and aspect, as Alchemical Art', as 'Ars'.

In the first part of our presentation, we approach our subject from the side of this practice. In course of our discussion we briefly sketch the problem of language (the validity of the use of verbal expressions for the modeling and understanding of our environment), and two special responses on it given by the thinkers of medieval European alchemy. (A special form of cryptic literature, and a peculiar pictorial language.) In frames of this examination we will have the opportunity to demonstrate the connection of alchemical theory and practice with fine arts, to briefly outline some considerations about the medieval concept of 'Ars', and to point out some fundamental characteristics of the metaphysics underlying the practice of alchemy.

This presentation will open the way for us in the second part to compare the basic theoretical structures of alchemical worldview, and the process thought of Whitehead. After we demonstrate the parallelisms between the two systems in three major points (1. process based worldview, 2. 'contextual character', and 3. the assumption of a certain kind of 'unified nature' of subject and object), we will try to (re)interpret the workings of 'Royal Art' with the help of modern process thought. This examination will lead us to the demonstration of certain aesthetical and ethical conclusions, which can enrich the field of process studies, and may open it for the exploration of unrecognized fields, and application of new methods.

Thursday, July 6, afternoon
Room: HS 104

Session 2

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Bread and Wine As Minimal Eucharist in the Poetry of Georg Trakl

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to explore the spirituality and tonality of the work of Georg Trakl, focusing on his central image of bread and wine. Whitehead’s philosophy helps in the interpretation of Trakl, because it is particularly attentive to tone, mood, or sensibility, as demonstrated in Whitehead’s Science and the Modern World. Whitehead says of the poet Wordsworth: “He always grasps the whole of nature as involved in the tonality of the present instance. That is why he laughs with the daffodils, and finds in the primrose ‘thoughts too deep for tears.’” With a persistent mood of dejection and melancholy, Trakl finds in nature images of decay and dreariness to match his expressionist sensibility. Working in Whiteheadian fashion, we describe the experience of each of several of Track’s poems as a series of actual occasions, successively prehending one another, and culminating in a single actual occasion. The single and final actual occasion in the reading of each poem is a
concrescence in four phases: datum, process, satisfaction, and anticipation. All the sounds and images of the poems are assembled in the datum phase. Data from the actual world flow in upon the concrescing and self-composing actual entities of the poet. In the process phase, the myriad of data are unified and organized, and assigned subjective forms or affective tonalities. They are organized around the central and integrating theme of minimal eucharist as “bread and wine.” The inner reality of the third phase of concrescence is that of enjoyment or satisfaction. This is the feeling Trakl expresses as “righteous contemplation,” or “irreproachable contemplation.” The fourth phase anticipates the prehension of all of our moments of experience by God, involving their incorporation into the rich and gentle “blueness” of God’s healing vision.

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The Conception of Literary History as Process

Abstract: Traditional conception of literary history is the conception which centers on works, namely that takes literary history for the chain which links valuable works one by one. But a chain of works cannot gather all works, researchers have to select works by their own criterions and bias and divergences come into being. Such a conception of literary history ignores continuous, active process of literary activities, and ignores real development of literature as well. The conception of literary history as process means understanding the continuity of the process of literary activities, namely studying the creative process of subjectivity and objectivity in literary narrative, thereby understanding the organic essence of literary development.

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The Concept of Harmony as an Aesthetic Category and its Relevance - A Comparison between Whitehead and Traditional Chinese Thinkers

Abstract: Whitehead once wrote, his process or organic philosophy has affinity with Chinese thought. Many scholars have been dedicated to explore the affinity from different perspective. This paper tends to explore the affinity from aesthetic perspective by comparing Whitehead’s and Chinese concept of harmony. My thesis is that the concept of harmony as an aesthetic category is a very important aspect or constituent of the affinity. The paper also explores the reason why both
Whitehead and traditional Chinese thinkers pay so much attention to harmony. According to their thoughts, harmony is not only an aesthetic category, but also a very crucial practical principle for human survival because only the harmonious can survive. “Survival of the fittest” as suggested by Darwin should be replaced with “survival of the harmonious” reflecting the fact that the individual can exist and develop only in harmony.
2.12 Consciousness

Section head: Judith Jones

Wednesday, July 5, afternoon
Room: HS 104
Session 1

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Intensity and Consciousness

Abstract: This paper will explore the nature of consciousness in Whitehead's system by focusing on his concept of "intensity", in order to lay out the contours of a robust process theory of consciousness. The contributions of such a theory to the specific task of developing a model of "moral consciousness" will then be outlined and engaged.

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"No Thought Is Thought Twice"?

Abstract: Whitehead visits Locke’s notion of time as “the fleeting and perpetually perishing parts of Succession” (Essay, II.XIV.1) in several contexts in Process and Reality, improving and further elaborating the conception in each case towards the construction of his own argument. Whitehead introduces the idea, together with the notion of “subject-superject”, as part of "the categorial scheme" in connection with the concept of “experience”, emphasizing the relation between the subjective perishing and objective immortality of actual entities (PR, 29). He then conjoins the two in terms of the completion of an actual entity (PR, 81-82). The former passage refers to the argument that “no subject experiences twice” (PR, 29), whereas the latter is part of the argument against the “solipsism of the present moment” (PR, 81). Whitehead develops the line of thought, still with reference to Locke, by the argument that “the actual entity ‘perishes’ in the passage of time, so that no actual entity changes” (PR, 147). This broad argument is reaffirmed in a more sophisticated version by the discussion of the two aspects of Locke’s notion of time. Here Whitehead reformulates the relation between the subjective perishing and objective immortality of actual entities in terms of "concrescence" and "transition", which correspond to the "subjective aim" and the "immortal past" respectively (PR, 210).
In this paper, I will trace Whitehead’s argument about “time as perpetual perishing” as a constituent of his “coherent cosmology” (PR, 128) and revisit his initial claim that “no thinker thinks twice” (PR, 29) in the light of the argument that thought is “a constituent operation in the creation of the occasional thinker” (PR, 151). I will particularly discuss what happens with a thought, that of cogito, when this thought occurs as a constituent of different occasional thinkers (“Descartes”, “Lichtenberg” and “Nietzsche” as “actual occasions”).

Pre-Syntactical Randomness; Towards a Process-Oriented Foundation of Higher-Order Syntaxes

Abstract: From the most basic subconceptual level, the brain’s neurocognitive processes inevitably bring along object-oriented portrayal of reality. Through self-referential dynamics neural patterns organize themselves into distinguishable units ('neural-mental objects'). Damasio (1999), Gärdenfors (2000), and Edelman & Tononi (2000) mention that this neural self-reference is essential for generating conscious mental experience. It facilitates the preconscious and conscious categorization of novel somatosensory input, which is essential to higher-order neurocognitive processes (such as concept formation and pattern recognition), and provides the emergent foundational 'objects' of conscious experience.

Although, the bound-in-one, collective whole of these neural-mental 'objects' may constitute a very convincing object-oriented image of reality, these neural-mental unitary patterns are not objects. Rather, they are relatively stable emergent dissipative structures (G. Nicolis & I. Prigogine, 1977) brought along by a dynamical, self-referential neural substrate.

Remarkably, the only tools ready-available for analysing this neural substrate, are the higher-order mental concepts that are emergent from the neural substrate itself. However, these mental concepts cannot be adequately applied beyond their own mental syntax - just as a higher-order programming language cannot adequately embody binary code. Similarly, in axiomatic mathematics, nothing can be proven beyond the axiomatic foundations, i.e. mathematics cannot adequately encompass any sequence or assembly of mathematical 'objects' that cannot be reduced into a shorter description. This insusceptibility to reduction is called 'randomness' (Chaitin, 2001; Casti, 1996), which is primarily regarded in a 'post-syntactical' sense, in that it involves irreducible mathematical facts that are expressible, but not computable (i.e., reducible) through the mathematical syntax involved.

However, randomness can also be 'pre-syntactical', in that it represents any lower-order, pre-syntactical dynamical structures (e.g. Self-Referential Noise; Cahill, 2000, 2005) that cannot be adequately expressed through higher-order (emergent) syntax. To mathematical realists, this pre-syntactical randomness does not make any sense; at most it represents disturbing, non-formal, 'real-life' noise that one should ignore. Nevertheless, in cognitive science of mathematics (Lakoff and Nuñez, 2000; see also: Edelman and Tononi, 2000, p.214), axiomatic mathematical concepts are believed to be subsequent to cognition. Combined with the above-mentioned emergence of cognition from self-referential neural processes, this makes the (omni)presence of lower-order pre-syntactical substrata quite plausible, especially when considered within the context of: (a)
dynamical hierarchies (Baas, 1994; Kitto, 2002), and (b) Max Velmans's proposal that a 'reflexive' (i.e., self-referential) universe is the most obvious and natural generator of a reflexive mind (2000, pp.278-281).

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How to use Whitehead’s Metaphysical System in Psychological Research: The Case for ‘subjective form’

Abstract: A metaphysical system can be used at in scientific research at an explicit and concrete level of analysis. The system provides a way of viewing reality. It opens up for study various types of objects, and their relations, which might otherwise be invisible from an alternative metaphysical perspective. I will illustrate this general claim with an application of Whitehead’s notion of ‘subjective form’ to some problems in psychological theorizing.

The first example is an attempt to understand the apparent lack of coherence in the psychological literature and, by implication, the behavior of academics themselves. Some reasons for the dynamic of academic debate and the production of alternative theories will be examined with the notion of subjective form.

The second example takes a closer look at a certain type of theory: specifically, at the spatial metaphor implicit in information processing models of cognition. The role of so-called cognitive ‘processes’ will be compared with the more temporal implications of subjective forms.

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Consciousness as a Process: the Enlarged Mind

Abstract: present a view of conscious perception that supposes a processual unity between the activity in the brain and the perceived event in the external world. On account of the role played by this process I refer to it as ‘onphene’. I use the rainbow to provide a first example, and subsequently extend the same rationale to more complex examples such as the perception of objects, faces and movements. I use the onphene as an explanation of ordinary perception and other variants, such as illusions, memory, dreams and mental imagery.
2.13 French Speaking Section: Process Thought and Empiricism

Section head: Guillaume Durand

Monday, July 3, afternoon
Room: HS 109

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"Un empirisme supérieur": Whitehead et Bergson

Abstract: Bergson définit, comme Whitehead, un nouveau rapport de la métaphysique à la science dans le cadre d’une investigation sur la philosophie de la nature. Gilles Deleuze a pu désigner la méthode du premier comme un "empirisme supérieur" (Bergson parlait lui-même d’un empirisme "vrai", refusant l’intellectualisme qui caractérise encore la tradition empiriste lorsqu’elle commence par réduire l’expérience à des abstractions). On se demandera comment la métaphysique s’en trouve réformée, et ce que la science peut y gagner. On examinerait plus particulièrement le cas de la relativité, pour ressaisir quelques gestes typiques de cet empirisme au travail. Whitehead propose une reconstruction (sans réduction) de quelques notions fondamentales (points, instants, espace et temps) avec la méthode d’abstraction extensive ; mais il critique aussi la "fallacy of misplaced concreteness" en reconduisant ces constructions à l’expérience primitive du "passage" de la nature. Bergson cherche pour sa part à faire la genèse réelle des faux mouvements de pensée qui cristallisent une théorie physique en vision du monde ou en métaphysique. On cherchera à situer ces deux approches l’une par rapport à l’autre pour distinguer deux voies possibles (et non exclusives) d’un "empirisme du concept".

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Des machines naturelles aux sociétés: Leibniz et Whitehead

telle autre. Lorsque Whitehead place le concept de « sociétés » au centre du projet spéculatif de Procès et Réalité il prolonge l’intuition de Leibniz. Les sociétés sont des « consistances », des « êtres-ensembles » d’entités actuelles maintenues le long d’un trajet historique. De la même manière que Leibniz pouvait dire « tout est machine », Whitehead donne au concept de société la même extension. Les analogies sont nombreuses : les machines sont des composées de monades et les sociétés des composés d’entités actuelles ; les deux sont mobilisés à l’intérieur d’une pensée de l’individuation ; enfin, les deux sont applicables autant pour le physique que pour le vivant. Il s’agirait de mettre en évidence ce que le concept de sociétés entraîne comme déplacements au sein de cette histoire d’un univers de machines.

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La Critique de la vision par Whitehead

Abstract: Le langage constitutif de la métaphysique occidentale, en parfaite convergence avec le schème scientifique matérialiste, s’est en grande partie construit en référence au champ sémantique de la vision, ce depuis la théoria platonicienne jusqu’à la phénoménologie de la perception, en passant par l’intuitus cartésien. Nous aimerions montrer comment la philosophie de l’organisme tente d’effectuer un pas de côté par rapport à cette tradition, en s’accordant l’audace d’une critique de la vision, laquelle repose indûment sur le privilège d’une perception sensible pour Whitehead, qui lui oppose parfois le caractère viscéral du vécu corporel. Cet aspect d’une pensée déterminée comme « critique du sentir pur » ne peut manquer d’être associé à la critique du primat de la lumière comme véhicule privilégié de la transmission des signaux dans le cadre de la relativité einsteinienne.

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Whitehead et Leibniz

Abstract: Whitehead mentionne Leibniz comme il mentionne Spinoza non pas parce qu’il en a une connaissance approfondie mais parce qu’il éprouve le besoin de confronter sa pensée avec la tradition philosophique. C’est ainsi qu’il évoque Platon, Aristote, Descartes, Kant ou Hume. Mais le rapport à Leibniz apparaît plus important même s’il en parle peu. Tous deux tentent d’accorder une vision métaphysique et mathématique du monde fondée sur une dynamique. Tous deux s’opposent au dualisme du corps et de l’esprit, de l’action et de la passion, du fini et de l’infini. Tous deux reconnaissent la nécessité d’accorder l’ordre de la causalité efficiente à celui de la finalité. Enfin tous deux rejetent la théorie abstraite de la matière réduite à la substance étendue. Bien que Whitehead n’adhère pas à l’idée d’un Dieu sage et infini créant le monde le meilleur à partir d’une mathématique divine, il est proche de la théorie des monades.
Leur métaphysique repose sur un holisme qui vise plus à réunir qu’à
diviser. Whitehead, comme Théophile dans les Nouveaux Essais, s’accorderait
avec Leibniz quand ce dernier écrit : « Cependant le fond est partout le
même, qui est une maxime fondamentale chez moi et qui règne dans toute ma
philosophie. Et je ne conçois les choses inconnues ou confusément connues
que de la manière de celles qui nous sont distinctement connues ; ce qui
rend la philosophie bien aisée, et je crois même qu’il en faut user ainsi.
Mais si cette philosophie est la plus simple dans le fond, elle est aussi
la plus riche dans les manières, parce que la nature les peut faire varier
à l’infini, comme elle le fait aussi avec autant d’abondance, d’ordre et
d’ornements qu’il est possible de se figurer. » Whitehead et Leibniz se
sont inspirés de leur recherches mathématiques pour comprendre la nature
autrement que comme un automate dirigé par son créateur. Tous deux
critiquent le mécanisme au nom d’une conception abstraite de la matière
réduite à une substance sans force et sans vie : réduite à une substance
étendue, la matière, la nature et le monde sont abandonnés à l’inertie.
Même Newton qui a montré le poids de la dynamique dans la cosmologie reste
prisonnier d’une conception de la matière réduite à des fragments qui
s’associent dans l’espace et le temps sans raison ce qui fait de l’ordre
une nécessité externe dont Dieu doit être la raison. La nature ne peut
alors subsister que par un miracle permanent. S’il n’y a pas de relations
internes entre les parties, il faut introduire une dimension surnaturelle
qui rend problématique la véritable métaphysique.

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Les objets perceptuels du Professeur Whitehead

Abstract: De PNK à R, les objets perceptuels (les chaises, les
tables,...etc.) sont définis comme les objets les plus ordinaires et
insistants de l’expérience sensible : « les ‘choses’ que nous voyons,
touchons, goûtons et entendons » (PNK, p. 88). Or, le statut de ces objets
au sein de la philosophie de la nature est problématique ; Whitehead
soutient simultanément deux lectures difficilement conciliables, voire
contradictoires: Depuis ASI, une lecture empiriste classique, en
particulier huméenne, selon laquelle un objet perceptuel est défini comme
une simple collection d’objets sensibles.
Une seconde lecture, plus complexe et originale, selon laquelle un objet
perceptuel est le signe d’une véritable unité et identité, données dans
l’expérience la plus concrète, et irréductibles à celles d’une collection
ou d’une classe d’objets plus simples.
S’agit-il ici d’une contradiction indépassable, d’une simple hésitation,
voire d’une faiblesse philosophique des textes whiteheadiens de la seconde
période ? Comprendre le statut et la nature des objets perceptuels
constitue l’une des clés principales pour approcher cet empirisme « peu
ordinaire » (selon la formule d’Alix Parmentier) que constitue l’empirisme
whiteheadien du début des années 20.

2.14 German Speaking Section: Process Thought in Germany

Section Head: Sebastian Ullrich

Monday, July 3, morning
Room: Stuba

Session 1

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Schwierigkeiten mit Whitehead - Der prozesstheoretische Systembegriff und seine Missdeutungen


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Kreativität und Sprache. Whiteheads terminologische Reflexionen


3

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Von der Substanz zur Funktion. Whitehead und der Paradigmenwechsel in Philosophie und Theologie


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Die Konvertibilität von „Kreativität“ und „Gott“. Zur Einheit der Welt in Whiteheads Kosmologie


So muss die Kreativität nämlich den aktuellen Ereignissen eine ursprüngliche Wertung der ewigen Objekte vermitteln, damit sich überhaupt jedes Ereignis als ein (neues und) bestimmtes Ereignis artikulieren bzw. vollziehen kann. Diese Funktion wird innerhalb der Prozessontologie allerdings zugleich von der primordialen Natur Gottes ausgefüllt. Ähnlich sieht es aus in Hinblick auf das Verhältnis von superjektiver Natur Gottes und der charakterisierten Kreativität aus, durch die als reale Potentialität die Erfüllungen an die folgenden aktuellen Ereignisse vermittelt werden.

Epoche und Dauer


Monday, July 3, afternoon
Room: Stuba

Session 2

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Monadologie und Kausalität in Lotze und Whitehead

Herbert Wildon Carrs *Monadology* und Whiteheads *Process and Reality*


**Abstract (English):** Although only mentioned once in Process and Reality (p.40), the similarities in Carr’s *Monadology* and Whitehead’s *Process and Reality* are astounding. As we have shown in (Prozeß-Gefühl und Raum-Zeit) Carr, Alexander, Whitehead et al were discussing philosophy in the Aristotelian Society in London. In this paper, I would like to point out some striking similarities as well as some differences between the two works.

Metaphysik bei Whitehead und Kant: Weltwilligkeit und kategorischer Imperativ


(Josiah Royce, ein Vorgänger Whiteheads in Harvard, definierte „Loyalty“ als den Willen an etwas Ewiges zu glauben und diese Überzeugung im Handeln sichtbar zu machen. Demnach bedeutet Loyalty das Ziel, den eigenen im objektiven Willen des Universums aufgehen zu lassen.)

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Subjektivität und Bewußtsein in A. N. Whiteheads spekulativer Prozeßphilosophie


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Alfred North Whiteheads Prozessphilosophie und die Gestalttherapie – ein Integrationsversuch