

I find it interesting that, again and again, Whitehead speaks of such things as “beliefs,” “faith,” or “presuppositions” as all resting on, or arising from, “insight,” “direct inspection,” “perception,” and the like.

Thus he asks, for instance, “What is the dominating insight whereby we presuppose ourselves as actualities within a world of actualities?”—his assumption being, obviously, that there is—indeed, must be—some such insight by which we presuppose “ourselves as activities among other activities.” Significantly, he answers his question by speaking of “the insight into a world of many coordinated actualities” (*MT*: 146 f.).

Or, again, he says of the “deeper faith” in reason underlying not only science, but all rational inquiry, that “[I]t springs from direct inspection of the nature of things as disclosed in our immediate present experience” (*SMW*: 27 f.).

Yet another example is provided by his comment on the “dim presuppositions” with which experience awakes “to guide its rising clarity of detached analysis”—namely, that “[t]hey are presuppositions in the sense of expressing the sort of obviousness which experience exhibits” (*MT*: 159).

As for “beliefs,” he says, “common sense is inflexibly objectivist. We perceive other things which are in the world of actualities in the same sense as we are. Also our emotions are directed toward other things, including of course our bodily organs. These are our primary beliefs which philosophers proceed to dissect” (*PRc*: 158). Here, again, it’s clear that our primary belief in the existence of other things that are in the world of actualities in the same sense in which we are is based on our perception and our emotions.

8 August 2001

(over)

Ad 8 August 2001—In discussing "peace" in the last chapter of *Adventures of Ideas*, Whitehead describes it as "a broadening of feeling due to [sic!] the emergence of some deep metaphysical insight, un verbalized and yet momentous in its coordination of values" (367).

19 April 2009