

If Whitehead can talk about metaphysics, or "speculative philosophy," "interpreting" the world or experience (as, e.g., in *PRC*:^{xiv,} 14 ff. [21 ff.]), he can also talk about its "understanding" the world. Thus he can say, in closely parallel passages in *Adventures of Ideas* (cf. also 269):

The understanding of the Universe requires that we conceive in their proper relations to each other the various roles, of efficient causation, of teleological self-creation, and of contemporary independence. This adequate conception requires also understanding of perspective elimination, and of types of order dominating vast epochs, and of minor endurances with their own additional modes of order diversifying each larger epoch within which they find themselves (251 f.).

The understanding of the Universe, in terms of the type of metaphysics here put forward, requires that the various roles of efficient causation, of teleological self-creation, of perspective elimination, of contemporary independence, of the laws of order dominating vast epochs, and of the minor endurances within each epoch, be conceived in their various relations to each other. Another summary expression of this type of understanding is contained in the phrases, Constraint and Freedom, Survival and Destruction, etc. (256).

Of course, it goes without saying that the understanding of things in terms of this or any other type of metaphysics (which is referred to, as such, significantly, as a "type of understanding") is properly "critical" and "theoretical," a product of the "secondary activity" of reflection in which philosophy as such consists.

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