

Reflections on "God" and "Creativity"

If one takes seriously both (1) the interconnections on which Whitehead insists between "creativity," "God," and "temporal creatures"; and (2) the mode of such interconnections—namely, that they are matters of "meaning," and, therefore, logical, necessary, not merely factual, contingent (*PR*: 344)—it seems clear enough that God could not be a single actual entity and that the notion of God is no more a "derivative notion" than the notion of "creativity." On the contrary, it lies in the nature of the case that "the ultimate creativity of the universe" (344), "which is actual [only] in virtue of its accidents" (10), always and of necessity occurs under the twofold condition of (1) God, as the "primordial, nontemporal accident [of creativity]" (11), or as its "aboriginal instance," and hence "aboriginal condition" (344); and (2) the temporal creatures, which are, in a sense, as necessary to God as God is to them, sharing with God the "double character" of being at once "a creature of creativity and a condition of creativity" (47; cf. 374: "God and the actual world jointly [*sic*] constitute the character of the creativity for the initial phase of the novel concrescence.") This is not to deny, of course, that, in another sense, God is necessary to the creatures in a way in which they neither are nor could be necessary to God. Whereas creatures are necessary to God only in that God requires *some* creatures, not any *particular* creature, God is necessary to creatures in that each of them requires not merely *some* God, but *the one and only* God that there either is or could be.

At the same time, the fact that Whitehead can seem at least to imply a temporal limit to creativity—as when he says, for example, that "the oneness of the universe, and the oneness of each element in the universe repeat themselves to the crack of doom in the creative advance from creature to creature" (348⁷)—may be an indication that the necessity he implies for all three notions, "creativity," "temporal creatures," and "God," is something other than the strictest possible kind of necessity. In other words, Whitehead may be talking about a kind of *factual* necessity, as distinct from the logical necessity insisted upon by Hartshorne.