

1. Whitehead's statement that "the sense of importance (or interest) is embedded in the very being of animal experience" (*MT*: 12) bears reflection in the light of Habermas's (and Apel's) notion of "leading interests of knowledge." In fact, when Whitehead says that "the sense of importance," which is to say, "interest," "exhibits itself in various species" (37), he seems to be acknowledging something like the same plurality of interests that Habermas and Apel draw attention to, although, admittedly, Whitehead's species of the sense of importance include interests (aesthetic, religious, etc.) other than the *knowledge*-constitutive interests that Habermas and Apel mainly have in mind. The connection between the two views seems especially close when Whitehead insists that "the two notions of importance and of perspective are closely intertwined" and that "perspective is the dead abstraction of mere fact from the living importance of things felt" (13, 15). Here, clearly, Whitehead is talking about something like internal, meaning-constitutive interests as the transcendental conditions of the possibility of knowledge in its different forms. For he says in the same context that "the concrete truth is the variation of interest; the abstraction is the universe in perspective; the consequent science is the scheme of physical laws which, with unexpressed presuppositions, expresses the patterns of perspective as observed by average human beings" (15 f.).

2. Also, when Whitehead says that "the generic aim of process is the attainment of importance, in that species and to that extent which in that instance is possible" (16), and, in the same vein, says that "the life-aim at survival is modified into the human aim at survival for diversified worthwhile experience" (42 f.), he's evidently thinking along lines parallel to, if not, indeed, convergent with, Habermas's and Apel's thinking when they speak of human history as the continuation of evolution at the new level represented by human life-praxis. Nor is there much doubt about the parallelism or convergence evident in the understanding of "history," which Whitehead defines as "the record of the expressions of feeling peculiar to humanity" (37), or in the centrality assigned to language and in the notion that "the life of a human being receives its worth, its importance, from the way in which unrealized ideals shape its purposes and tinge its actions" (37 f.).

3. Equally striking is Whitehead's repeated stress that the evolution of sense perception allowed the higher animals to obtain "a manageable grip upon the world" (42 f.). Implicit in this stress, taken together with the association of science primarily, if not exclusively, with sense perception (cf., e.g., *MT*: 210 f.), is something very like Habermas's and Apel's idea that modern science serves the underlying human interest in managing the environment. As Whitehead puts it, "interest and importance are the primary reasons for the effort after exact discrimination of sense-data. . . . Importance generates interest. Interest leads to discrimination" (43 f.).

4. And when Whitehead says that "philosophical truth is to be sought in the presuppositions of language rather than in its express statements" (*MT*: vii), how different is his point, really, from Apel's correlation of philosophy with the "meta-language game" that is necessarily presupposed by all our language games and forms of life? (Compare Wittgenstein's "forms of life" with Whitehead's "directed activities of mankind" or "ordinary civilized social relations"!)

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