

Creativity

According to Hartshorne, "The concept of creative becoming has a religious origin, for it is the generalization of the divine 'fiat' back of the world" (*LP*: 122). "Whitehead's 'category of the ultimate'—creativity—is merely theology become clear as to its own meaning. It is the only ultimate category that belongs in a theistic philosophy. Not 'being,' for that is an abstraction from becoming or creative freedom" ("Man's Fragmentariness": 27). "A theistic philosophy . . . must make of creativity a 'transcendental,' the very essence of reality as self-surpassing process. This is precisely what Whitehead does in his 'category of the ultimate'" (*ANT*: 26).

Elsewhere Hartshorne points out that "just as in Thomism 'being' is not simply the same in God and in other things, so in [Whitehead's] system 'becoming' or 'creativity,' rather than mere being, is the supreme but analogical unity" (*JR*, 37: 72 f, 78). "[C]reativity-as-such is no more a God beyond God in [Whitehead's] system than being-as-such is in Thomism. The difference is mainly in the shift from mere being to process—as the ultimate analogical universal or form of forms" (*WM*: 41).

Can Hartshorne's statements on this matter be sustained? The first seems sufficiently well-founded to require no further discussion. As for the second, one may test its validity by asking whether "creativity" could be used in the different senses in which "being (= *das Sein*)" is used, for example, by Coreth, when he speaks of (1) its **summative** sense (=being as the sum of all beings); (2) its **pricipiative** sense (=being as the principle of all beings=*actus essendi*); and (3) its **horizon-like** sense (=being as the horizon of all beings: the a priori unity and totality as the condition of the possibility that—within this unity and totality—individual beings can be posited as being and known as being). It seems to me that, *mutatis mutandis*, "creativity" *could be* appropriately used in all three of these senses consistently with Whitehead's own intention in using it, regardless of whether or not he himself ever so used it.