

On the Logic of the Relative

The relative, Hartshorne argues, is to be defined as "that which contains relations, not . . . that which relations contain." "Insofar as a thing is absolute, it contains no relations; but relative things always contain relations to at least some other relative things, and to the absolute as well" ("Duality versus Dualism and Monism": 53 f.).

"[T]he universal rule for relative things is not interdependence but only dependence. Each depends upon some other things" (55).

"Individuals who are contemporaries and near neighbors, or who endure long enough for influences to travel both ways, are indeed interdependent. . . . But though interdependence is the rule with neighbors or long-lasting individuals, independence is the rule with contemporary events or momentary states . . . , and these, and not individuals as enduring through change, are the most concrete entities. . . . [M]omentary realities [are] dependent upon previous realities and independent of later ones. . . . [I]nclusion [or dependence] runs backward, and noninclusion or independence[,] forward" (58).

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