

Heidegger speaks of "the ontological difference" between "a being" (*ein Seiendes/das Seiende*) and "being" (*das Sein*). In somewhat the same way, I should speak of the ontological difference between "**a reality**" and "**reality**." Any reality, whether concrete or abstract, divine or nondivine, is ontologically different from reality, in the sense of reality itself and as such. But what, exactly, is the nature of this difference? What is meant by "reality itself and as such"?

My answer to the second question is that reality itself and as such is "concrecence," which is my preferred name, using Whitehead's term, for the broadly natural (*physis, natura*), i.e., the one process of becoming, whereby, without beginning or end, the many again and again so grow together (*concrecere*) as to become one and to be increased by one. This one process of becoming or concrecence is actual only in its instances—in the many "**concretes**," each of which comes to be by instantiating concrecence, by the many's so growing together as to become one and to be increased by one. But distinct from the one process of concrecence and the many concretes in which it alone is actual are the distinguishable abstract aspects of the process and of its instances. Although these aspects, being abstract rather than concrete, are not themselves actual, save as aspects of the concretes that alone are actual, they are nonetheless real, each being a reality distinct both from all other realities and from reality itself and as such.

These "**abstracts**," which are in their own way realities even as concretes are in theirs, are themselves distinguishable into two ontologically different types: extraordinary abstracts, or, as I call them, "**transcendentals**," which are inherent aspects of the one process of concrecence and hence of each and every concrete; and ordinary abstracts, which include all other nontranscendental abstracts, whether these be, in my terms, "**categories**," "**genera**," "**species**," or "**individualities**" (\equiv "individual essences"). Whereas extraordinary abstracts or transcendentals, being inherent aspects of concrecence, are strictly necessary and incapable of noninstantiation, ordinary abstracts of all types are like concretes in being, to some extent or other, contingent and are therefore capable of not being instantiated.

"Reality itself and as such," then, includes, and, therefore, is ontologically different from, all realities, abstract as well as concrete, nondivine as well as divine. The inclusion, and hence the difference, are twofold: abstract and concrete. As **abstract**, they are simply that any reality, concrete or abstract, divine or nondivine, is real in the same completely general sense of "reality," which contrasts with "unreality," "mere appearance," or "fiction." In this sense, to be real is to be real for something else that either has become or is in process of becoming real in the same general sense and, in any event, to be real for the divine. As **concrete**, the inclusion, and hence the difference, are simply that all realities, concrete and abstract, divine and nondivine, are included in, and so real for, the one concrete reality of the divine, which, like the one process of concrescence that it eminently actualizes, is strictly necessary, an inherent aspect of this very process.

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