

There is an eternal abstract ideal or purpose (Plato's "Form of the Good").

And there is an eternal continuum of qualitative possibilities (Peirce's "multitude beyond all multitude"), out of which fully definite single qualities emerge, or are created, in their appropriate cosmic epochs.

Peirce's view that "the eternal is a continuum of possibilities, a 'multitude beyond all multitude,' lacking, as eternal, in definiteness," implies both that "possibilities are determinables[,] not determinates" and that "determinables are not classes of determinates, but aspects of creativity relevant to such classes, so far as the latter are given." "Given a determinate how[,] we can relate it to the [sc. indeterminate but determinable] somehow, but given only the somehow we cannot relate it to a determinate how."

The region of possibility to which a particular event can be related, or which we say it actualizes, never implies just this determinate mode of actualization. In fact, this determinate mode is not even one of the antecedent possibilities, which as such are determinables, not determinates or classes thereof, so that any determinate mode as such must be a creation out of them, or a further particularization of them.

Each antecedent phase of process involves various more or less well-defined alternatives for the next phase. And the particular emerging from the next phase is the actualization of one of these alternatives. But "actualization" is not a simple change from "merely possible" to "actual," whatever that could mean, but always connotes "some additional definiteness, or determinateness," not already contained in any of the antecedently obtaining alternatives. This is not to say (with Bergson and others) that there are no antecedent possibilities or that there is something absurd about the concept of such. What we mean by "the antecedent possibility of particular *p*" is simply that the antecedent phase of process defined itself as destined to be superseded *somehow*, within certain alternatives, by a next phase of process. This "somehow" is not a wholly undifferentiated question mark, but involves certain more or less well-defined alternatives, none of which can coincide in character with the particular that emerges from the next phase of process, but some one of which, or some one region of the continuum of possible quality, will later be recognizable as the nearest alternative or region, the one that *with the least*

*further definition* is equivalent to the particular once it has emerged and is given as such.

A distinction is necessary, then, between pure, or unrestricted, potentials, on the one hand, and impure (= mixed), or restricted, potentials, on the other. But, far from being either mere selections from pure potentials, or mere (re-)arrangements of them with respect to gradations of relevance, the impure potentials are really creations out of them, further determinations of them, without which the pure potentials would remain determinables but not determinates, or classes thereof.

Granted that there must be some eternal measure of quality, some set of variables, or dimensions, such as "intensity," "complexity," "unity," "harmony," is it necessary that these variables involve possible values as distinct items? Or is the creative process such that the primordial continuum of quality is inexhaustibly subdivided in the course of the creative advance, and actualization really adds something, namely, definiteness or determinateness?

One advantage of restricting the eternal to the strictly necessary, i.e., to the transcendental universals, and regarding all other universals as impure (= mixed), or restricted, and, therefore, emergent, is that individuals as a type of concretes might be given a somewhat more secure ontological status in the overall scheme of things. The enduring individual could then be regarded as constituted, in one aspect, by its distinctive impure, or restricted, potential, its own peculiar potency of becoming as a still more determinate, but still only determinable, potentiality than that of pure, or unrestricted, potentials. (The other aspect of the individual's self-identity as such would be the immanence of its history in its present state, whereby it has a *concrete* as well as an abstract self-identity.)

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