Hartshorne's Conception of God

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HARTSHORNE'S CONCEPTION OF GOD

by

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LIFE

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CHAPTER I

BASIC PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLES

A. LIFE AND WORKS

Charles Hartshorne was born in Kittanning, Pennsylvania, on June 5, 1897, and received his education at Haverford College, Pennsylvania, and Harvard University, where he received his doctoral degree in philosophy in 1923. He taught at the University of Chicago from 1928 to 1955, and since that time has been teaching at Emory University, Atlanta.

Among his writings are included seven books, contributions to more than half a dozen others, and numerous articles in the leading religious and philosophical journals. His philosophical writings are described by Andrew J. Reck in these terms:

His first book, The Philosophy and Psychology of Sensation, introduces into psychological theory principles of continuity and aesthetic feeling espoused by the new metaphysics in the philosophy of mathematics and of nature, and the upshot is the novel doctrine of the affective continuum. Hartshorne's next book, Beyond Humanism, announces the movement as "a genuine integration of all the modern motifs" culminating in a new theology, which he designates "theistic naturalism or naturalistic theism," and which he presents in contrast with and in opposition to its great contemporary rival, "non-theistic" humanism. Man's Vision of God undertakes to formulate the logic of the new theism and to demonstrate its superiority to the classical synthesis of

1See the bibliography at the end of this thesis.
Thomas Aquinas. In these works Hartshorne expounds a metaphysics of panpsychism and he also suggests what he subsequently develops more fully as a theology of panentheism. In his Terry Lectures at Yale, later expanded and published as *The Divine Relativity*, Hartshorne systematically formulates the panentheistic conception of deity, a conception which owes much to Whitehead. Then, in *Philosophers Speak of God*, Charles Hartshorne, in joint authorship with William Reese, presents and discusses all the important possible conceptions of deity, arguing in the comments and in the opening and concluding chapters for the validity of panentheism.2

In his latest book, *The Logic of Perfection*, Hartshorne presents several proofs for the existence of God and reprints of some of his more important journal articles from recent years.

Our critical investigation of Hartshorne's thought will undertake to explain his fundamental philosophical positions, to outline his conception of God, and to criticize certain points in his philosophy.

This first chapter deals with Hartshorne's conception of philosophy and its method of procedure, as well as with his own basic philosophy, panpsychism.

B. CONCEPTION OF PHILOSOPHY

What is metaphysics? Hartshorne gives two answers, the first of which says that it seeks the most general features of phenomena


and of things. Both natural science and mathematics stand in contrast to it.

Natural science seeks special truths; it seeks to "generalize the details so as to arrive at the total system of details which distinguishes the actual world in this cosmic epoch, a giant detail in the eternal procession of world systems." The characteristic mark of natural science is that it specializes the generic traits of human experience, or phenomenology, with the object of predicting the details or specializations of future experience. For verification of its statements, attention to sense data is all-important.

Metaphysics on the other hand seeks the most general traits of phenomena "as yielded by abstraction from all imaginably variable details of experience." The aim of metaphysics is not to predict, but to relate us "consciously to the outlines and the

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5Ibid., p. 267.

6Ibid., p. 268.

7Ibid.

8Ibid., p. 267: "For knowledge of special truths, the kind sought in physics, sense-data are all-important." See also p. 268: "In natural science verification is effected by attention to details of experience."

9Ibid., pp. 269-270.
permanent aspects of existence;"\textsuperscript{10} in contrast to natural science, it generalizes on the generic traits of human experience, in order to become aware of the generic characteristics of all actual and possible objects of experience.\textsuperscript{11} The verification of metaphysical statements is effected by "attention to experience's generic traits, e.g., memory, anticipation, desire, vividness, discord,"\textsuperscript{12} "the vaguer phenomena of emotion, more or less conscious memory, dim anticipation, aesthetic harmony and discord."\textsuperscript{13}

But mathematics also treats of the generic traits of all reality.\textsuperscript{14} How is it distinguished from metaphysics?

There are two types of generic traits: a) "those which can in principle, or in their finite aspects, be accurately diagrammed in symbolic sets." Only these can be perfectly clear and definite, and are such because of the abrupt contrasts of sensory qualities. Mathematics deals with this type of generic traits.

b) Traits which "are incapable of symbolic embodiment of this neat and definite kind," which cannot be wholly clear or wholly consistent in their meanings because they form the continuous as-

\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., p. 268.
\textsuperscript{11}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{12}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 267.
\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 273.
pect of experience. They form the province of metaphysics.15

Metaphysics thus treats of the non-mathematical generic traits of all objects of experience. There are two distinct steps in its procedure: the phenomenological inquiry, or the search for generic traits, and the drawing out of consequences from the traits discovered and defined.

A generic trait is necessarily exemplified in any possible experience; conversely, experience is not possible if the generic traits are not exemplified in it. To establish which traits are generic, we must ask, "Is experience possible if this trait is not exemplified in it?" Memory is taken as an example: "No one will deny that he knows what is meant by a memory with other quantitative features than the human, such as longer or shorter span, greater or less vividness. These features are given as special cases. But if we try to generalize beyond memory altogether, we find ourselves in contradiction with the given."17 Generalizing beyond memory causes the unity of time to disappear; but because the unity of time is evident, memory must be a generic trait of all experience. Other traits can be put to the same test: if their absence from experience makes experience impossible, they are generic traits of all experience.

15Cf. ibid., pp. 273-274.
16Ibid., p. 271.
17Ibid., p. 272.
Once the generic traits of phenomena, or "categories," have been discovered, "the rest is a matter of deduction from definitions which attempt to state the interrelations of categories exhibited in the phenomena." The metaphysician attempts to explain the intelligibility implicit in the definitions gathered inductively in the phenomenological inquiry, or, in other words, to analyze concepts.

Hartshorne's second answer to, "What is metaphysics?" is that "metaphysics studies non-restrictive existential affirmations." A partially restrictive statement of the existential type affirms the existence of one thing, but in so doing excludes the existence of another; for example, "There are men in the room" denies that the room is filled solid from floor to ceiling with wheat or sand; and "There are no men in the room" affirms that every substantial part of the room contains something (if only air, or a 'vacuum' furnishing free passage to radiant energy) other than men.

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18Cf. ibid., p. 270: "The most general phenomena in this sense are philosophical categories, such as relation, thing, change, actuality...."

19Ibid., p. 271.

20Ibid.; see also The Logic of Perfection, p. 11: "I agree with Leibniz that metaphysics is essentially a question of the logical structure of concepts, and that mathematical method is the technical key."


22Ibid., p. 35.
completely restrictive statement," on the other hand, "denies that any existential possibility is realized," as, for example, "Nothing exists." But a wholly non-restrictive statement excludes nothing from existence, "except bare 'nothing' itself." Such a statement is "Something exists."

How do we know a statement is wholly non-restrictive? First, it cannot be falsified. "Something exists' is in no conceivable circumstances falsifiable, since the falsifying experience would have to exist, and it would also have to be the experience of something existing." Second, the wholly non-restrictive statement is verifiable: "But though 'Something exists' is unfalsifiable, it is verified every moment."

Wholly non-restrictive existential statements are necessary, for they exclude nothing from existence and can be falsified by nothing. Thus their "truth is neutral to all existential alternatives," and this neutrality is precisely the definition of nec-

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23 Ibid.

24 Ibid., p. 36. See also Charles Hartshorne, "Metaphysics and the Modality of Existential Judgments," The Relevance of Whitehead, ed. Ivor Leclerc (London, George Allen and Unwin; New York, Macmillan, 1961), p. 111: "There are, then, three modal forms of existential statement: those which contradict every positive existential assertion; those which contradict some positive existential assertions but agree with others; those which contradict no such assertions."

essity.

Mathematics also studies wholly non-restrictive statements, but only those of the nonexistential variety; it explores possibilities, while metaphysics tries to "express what all possibilities of existence have in common," or "the strictly universal features of existential possibility, those which cannot be unexemplified."26

These two conceptions of metaphysics are not opposed to each other: according to both, metaphysics seeks the most general and universal characteristics of experience, which characteristics are necessarily exemplified in every experience. However, since the explicit formulation of these two conceptions differs, their explicit, formulated conclusions also differ.

C. HARTSHORNE'S PANPSYCHISM

The phenomenological inquiry of the first-mentioned conception of philosophy begins with the observation that there seem to be two great classes of things: organisms, and things that are not organisms.27 Thus the search for generic traits, or "cosmic variables,"28 seems to be blocked at the very start by a dichotomy in the things of our experience.

But at this point a hypothesis is introduced. "There are

26 Ibid., pp. 36-37.
27 Hartshorne, Beyond Humanism, p. 111.
28 Cf. ibid., p. 112.
good reasons, however, for thinking that the inorganisms are simply aggregates of parts which are themselves organisms." The elements of inorganic things exhibit activities analogous to those of organic things. The universe itself is "organized" by the universal laws of nature and is thus similar to an organic thing. These observations allow us to say that it is at least a reasonable view that all things are in some way organic.

Hartshorne states his hypothesis in these terms: there seem to be two classes of existents; however, let us call inorganic things aggregates, and call organic things, as well as anything else which resembles the organic, individuals. Then, insofar as things are individuals rather than aggregates, they will all fall on a single scale, the organic scale.30

But what does it mean to be organic? What variables apply to everything on this scale? First, we notice that "the most obvious feature of the scale is increasing complexity of spatio-temporal structure."31 Second, we notice that over part of the scale, there is an increasing complexity of psychological structure.32 Third, we notice that spatio-temporal complexity is regarded as a sign of psychological complexity; that is, the two types of com-

29 Ibid.
30 Cf. Ibid., p. 112.
31 Ibid., p. 115.
32 Ibid., p. 116.
plexity are correlative. The natural question is then, "Can the psychological variables be extended over the whole scale? Can we predicate psychological characteristics of all things insofar as they are individuals?"

The answer, which both tells us what it means to be organic and at the same time attempts to justify panpsychism, falls into two parts: 1) psychological variables can be thus extended to all things; 2) unless we actually do this, certain areas of the scale remain impenetrable mysteries.33

1) Let us take the variable "memory" for an example. Its infinite extension both in regard to span and complexity is conceivable.34 Or let us consider "feeling": its intensity, or variation of intensity, is potentially infinite. The same holds true regarding its vagueness or clarity.35 Because these and other psychological variables can have an infinite number of forms, it is possible that every individual possesses some form of them.36

33Ibid.
34Cf. ibid., pp. 116-117.
36Ibid., pp. 119-120: "Thus the main variables of psychology are of unlimited breadth or flexibility. Hence it is bluff and not argument to reject the psychic interpretation of the scale of beings on the ground that this interpretation is 'anthropomorphic,' for it is precisely in its psychic makeup that a being can be infinitely other than man. The values of psychic variables which are used by panpsychism to interpret the subanimal and the superhuman are values realized in man. Those who say psychic concepts are too narrow to apply to all the universe are not thinking of these con-
2) "The second ground for using the psychological variables over the whole scale of beings is that there are no other variables."37 The only competitor Hartshorne considers is the variables employed in physics; but these tell us only what relations things have to each other, not what things are.38

Hartshorne explains further why psychological variables can be the only variables with universal application. All variables must be variables of human experience; we can conceive of differences between this experience and that, but there is no meaningful contrast between what is experienced and what is simply not experienced. All we know is human experience. Generalizing beyond that means to generalize away knowledge.

On Hartshorne's hypothesis, then, that some set of variables is cosmic, and taking into consideration, as he does, only the variables used in psychology and in physics and reducing the latter to the former, the panpsychist interpretation readily follows. Two major consequences of this position are the affective continuum and organic sympathy.

Concerning the first consequence, Hartshorne notes that pan-

cepts in their full range. They betray themselves by their reiterated charge that to psychologize everything is to humanize everything.... It is easy to show that we must generalize beyond psychology -- if an arbitrarily restricted psychology is in question. But the only sound approach is first to generalize our psychology."

37 Ibid., p. 121.
38 Cf. Ibid.
psychism is directly opposed to materialism, which "posits the existence of atoms, discontinuous, discrete, independent bits of matter, devoid of feeling and life, isolated except for accidental external relations, timeless and unchanging with respect to internal constitution and hence without growth and evolution." 39 But if it is true that all existents, insofar as they are individuals, possess psychic traits in some way, or in some degree, nothing can be devoid of life. The affective continuum is an instrument for removing faulty psychological conceptions which tend to foster materialism. Further, though this doctrine is, in one way, a consequence of panpsychism, in another it is part of the phenomenological inquiry -- insofar, that is, as it seeks to explicate experience. We might call it part of a "panpsychist phenomenology."

Five points are to be noted in this conception. a) Psychic variables can be analysed mathematically, but they ought not to be, for in reality they are continuous. 40 b) Aesthetic qualities are not merely associated with sensory qualities, they are, in part at least, identified with sensory qualities. "Thus, the 'gaiety' of yellow is the yellowness of the yellow." 41 Feeling can be analysed into different qualities, but we must remember that these different


41Ibid., p. 7.
qualities are the results of analysis and do not exist as such in reality. c) "Experience is social throughout, to its uttermost fragments or 'elements'." Experience must be conceived as a social continuum. d) "The intrinsic natures of sensory qualities tend to incite modes of behavior," and are not merely associated with them. e) Sensory qualities have a common origin. "On this point - namely, the evolution of sensory qualities from a common origin, Hartshorne's indebtedness to Peirce's category of firstness is pronounced. Thus a continuum of sheer, undifferentiated, indeterminate, vague feeling becomes specified and determinate, through a process of objectification, into particular sensory qualities." Thus "feeling" is primordially undifferentiated, but made determinate by its objectifications at various levels and in various ways; further, "feeling" forms a continuum rather than a series of discrete values.

This leads to the second consequence, organic sympathy, for

42 Ibid., p. 8.
43 Ibid.

44 Reck, op. cit., p. 95. See The Philosophy and Psychology of Sensation, p. 8: "The first appearance of a given quality at a certain stage in evolution is not a pure 'emergence' (though it has an emergent aspect) of the quality, unrelated to the previous state of nature, but is intelligible in much the same fashion as the appearance of a new organ. A primitive quality of sensation may be conceived, such that the development of more specific qualities may be made intelligible as a true development, or differentiation, rather than as a sheer displacement of the old and interruption of the new." Also p. 208: "According to this view, the emergent is not utterly incomparable to the pre-existing qualities, but is related to it as the more to the less determinate."
all the psychic variables can thus be reduced to feeling, if this term is taken to include sensory and aesthetic qualities. Now, according to panpsychism, all individuals have the power of feeling, or of sympathy.\textsuperscript{45} To sympathize with another is to share in the feelings of another, or to intuit his feelings, a "feeling of feelings." But this intuition, while being the basis for all knowledge, is not the only kind of knowledge. That "human minds communicate only indirectly, through material means,"\textsuperscript{46} and not by a direct intuition, is quite obvious. Without intuition, however, this indirect type of knowledge would be impossible.

An individual intuits the members of his own body. Human beings intuit the feelings of the parts of their bodies, or share in their feelings.\textsuperscript{47} These parts are our cells, which intuit the feelings of their parts, molecules and atoms, as well as the feelings of the whole of which they are a part, the human person. In a somewhat similar way, men and the rest of the universe constitute the body of the world mind, or God's mind, and in some degree directly know his feelings.\textsuperscript{48} In the case of an electron, which

\textsuperscript{45}\textsuperscript{46}cf. \textit{Beyond Humanism}, pp. 195-196.
\textsuperscript{47}Ibid., p. 196.
\textsuperscript{48}Ibid., p. 197.
\textsuperscript{49}Ibid.: "We can now explain why men do not communicate with one another primarily by direct sympathy. Complex minds like ours derive their complex content from inferior minds through a relation of partial dependence upon them, i.e., upon the units composing their bodies. If we human beings reached one another directly, we should be dependent upon one another in the same drastic
has no bodily parts subject to it, its fellows or neighboring electrons take the place of a body. 49 A hierarchy is thus established

way in which we and our bodily parts are interdependent, and then indeed would human personalities lose their freedom and distinctness with respect to one another. But all this is thoroughly consistent with the idea that human minds do act directly upon their bodily servants, the cells, and vice versa (the advantage on our side being that no one individual in the body has nearly as much influence as our own personality upon the whole system). It is also consistent with the idea that low-grade minds, "disembodied spirits," act upon their equals directly and with the idea that men are cells in the body of God, yet are partially free with respect to him. It is only the combination of equality with complexity that makes indirectness necessary in the relations among men.

See also pp. 284-285: "It is necessary to this view that God should also be a datum for us, that we should directly participate in him. And if positivists do not know it, it might perhaps interest them to be told that the great theologians have asserted direct though faint intuition of God not only for mystics but for all men. Augustine's doctrine is notorious; but Aquinas can be shown to qualify rather than negate it. All talk of immanence is a quibble, indeed, if it be denied. Peirce asserted it. Whitehead's theory of direct prehensions of one individual by another recognizes no exception with regard to God, whose control of the world is through the direct though more or less vague awareness which each occasion has of his envisagement of the future.

"The notion of the direct awareness of God is the only explanation of the generic intuitions which metaphysics claims for man. In existential scope these intuitions are equivalent to omniscience, though in quality of clearness they are anything but equivalent to it. They tell us nothing whatever about details as such, and even as generalities they are at best obscure. But the range of objects to which they are relevant is identical with the range known by God."

49 Cf. Hartshorne, The Logic of Perfection, p. 195: "To render an electron or other particle an organism it is only necessary that neighboring electrons or other particles should contribute directly to each other's values, that is, should directly feel each other.... But perhaps a particle, like a disembodied spirit, has no bodily parts. Its intimates, if any, will be its equals."

See also p. 196: "Hence it is the particle, the lowest, not the highest, organism - in spite of what has often been said about God - that best fits the idea of an unembodied spirit. The particle, one might say, is embodied only in its environment, not in itself."
of particles, atoms, molecules, cells, animals, men, and God, all of which (except the particles) directly feel the feelings of the parts of their bodies.

D. ARGUMENTS FOR PANPSYCHISM

Hartshorne offers these six further arguments for panpsychism:

1) Causality can be explained only by the persistence of the past into the present by means of memory.

So let us suppose that the intuitive relation, which we have held to be sympathetic in essence, is primarily a relation of sympathy with the causative processes in the body. It follows that the cells of the body or its molecules, or both, must be psychic in their manner and degree. Indeed, if causality in the mind-body instance is sympathetic, we should at once inquire if all causality may not be so explained and if the very idea of time does not involve the notion of a sympathetic bond between the moments of time.

But nothing is explained by calling the relation causal, since, as we saw above, modern philosophy has totally failed to find any intelligible account of causality except the explanation of it in terms of the sympathetic rapport [of panpsychism].

Hartshorne opposes the positivistic interpretation of causality to his conception of organic sympathy. Either his position must be adopted, he says, or causality must be altogether abandoned.

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51Hartshorne, Beyond Humanism, pp. 197, 198-199.

52Hartshorne, Reality as Social Process, p. 79.
2) Apart from panpsychism, there is no answer to the question of unity-and-multiplicity, or unity within diversity; for only universal subjectivity provides the requisite unity.53

3) Likewise, the contrast of particular and universal, actual and potential, is furnished with a principle only by universal subjectivity.54

4) Subjects can choose between alternative possibilities. But there is something corresponding to choice in (supposed) non-subjects, "since the concrete is always logically arbitrary;"55 this choice in a non-subject seems totally unintelligible.

5) Qualities belong only to subjects; if all individuals are not subjects, how are non-subjects qualified?56

6) A subject has intrinsic values. To be interested in a subject is to participate in its values, and hence to enrich oneself.

53Reck, op. cit., p. 98. See also Reality as Social Process, p. 79, and Charles Hartshorne, "The Philosophy of Creative Synthesis," Journal of Philosophy, 55 (1958), pp. 944-945: "'Synthesis' means 'putting together,' a combining of factors into a whole. The obvious example of a synthesis is a single, momentary human experience, in which there is a diversity of data, things experienced. Experience puts together its data; these remain several, but the experience in and by which they are put together is one. Synthesis is thus the solution of the problem of 'the one and the many.'"

54Reck, op. cit., p. 98; see also Hartshorne, Reality as Social Process, pp. 79-80.

55Ibid., p. 82.

56Ibid., pp. 80-82; see also Reck, op. cit., p. 98.
Knowing the enjoyment which another feels over some value-object is to possess value oneself. A non-subject has no values and is not able to give a subject-enriching knowledge. It has nothing to reward a subject's interest.⁵⁷

Both Hartshorne's systematic formulation of panpsychism and his further arguments for it are based on his first-mentioned conception of philosophy. But philosophy as the study of "completely non-restrictive existential statements" gives rise to certain conclusions which differ in their explicit formulation.

Besides "Something exists," we find that "Experience occurs" is also necessarily true. The statement can easily be verified, for it is obvious that experiences occur; but "is the statement conceivably falsifiable? Would any experience exhibit the total nonoccurrence of experience? Clearly not."⁵⁸ Using the same criteria, we find that necessarily, a) creative synthesis occurs; b) there are concrete actualities which are all both externally and internally related; c) infallible, or divine, experience occurs, and it has fallible experiences among its objects.⁵⁹ These conclusions are more or less summaries of Hartshorne's basic positions in neat logical form and do not differ essentially from his earlier


⁵⁸Hartshorne, "Metaphysical Statements as Non-Restrictive and Existential," p. 58.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 47.
positions, except in the explicit manner he arrives at them: we do not ask, "Is experience possible if they are false?" but, "Are they verifiable but nonfalsifiable?"

This rough sketch of Hartshorne's panpsychism needs to be completed by a discussion of his conception of God, who forms an integral part of his philosophy.
CHAPTER II

NATURE AND EXISTENCE OF GOD

God is not something incidental to Hartshorne's metaphysics; rather, "God as supreme psyche completes the panpsychic system." 1 But as this is a conclusion rather than a beginning, we must first explain the types of possible conceptions of God, Hartshorne's conception, and his proofs for God's existence.

A. TYPES OF CONCEPTIONS OF GOD

Hartshorne begins his philosophical theology with an explanation of God's nature, rather than with proofs for His existence. He offers these reasons for his procedure: traditional proofs for God's existence lead to the traditional conception of God, or are based on such a conception. They have, furthermore, been proved unsatisfactory:

We might not unreasonably begin with an examination of the traditional proofs for God. These proofs of course lead, if anywhere, to [traditional theism]. They have been examined many times by leading philosophers and, with increasing frequency and emphasis, judged unsatisfactory:

factory. Ought I to add my mite to this judgment or attempt to correct modern philosophy on a matter which it has so carefully considered? It may be said, however, that the proofs have not been really met on their own ground. There is some justice in this claim. Modern thought has often drifted so far from medieval metaphysics as scarcely to see what that metaphysics was about. But the force of this consideration is weakened, for me at least, by another. Modern thought has not been content to pass judgment on the traditional proofs; it has also proposed disproofs of God as conceived in traditional theology. These disproofs have, if anything, been even less adequately met by traditionalists than traditional proofs by their critics.²

Proofs for his own conception of God might be a suitable starting point, but without first making this idea of God explicit, it would be "impossible to look for evidence without knowing what idea is to be tested."³ Hartshorne's proof flows out of his conception; the meaning of the word "God" is of primary importance.

Where can we find out what God is? Men of all ages have had some idea of the divine nature, and despite their many differences, all seem to have this much in common: "To discuss God is, by almost universal usage, to discuss some manner of 'supreme' or 'highest' or 'best' individual (or superindividual) being. As a minimal definition, God is an entity somehow superior to other entities."⁴ Hartshorne then gives this analysis of the Anselmian notion of God

³Ibid., p. 58.
⁴Ibid., p. 6.
as "that than which none greater can be conceived": "'None' may mean 'no entity other than that (the being said to be perfect) as it actually is,' or it may mean 'no entity other than that as it either is or else could be or become.' According to the first meaning, the perfect is unsurpassable in conception or possibility even by itself; according to the second meaning it is unsurpassable except by itself." The first meaning is called "absolute perfection," the second "relative." The word "greater" can mean "'in some (but not all) respects' (say in size or in ethical goodness); or we may mean, 'in all respects whatever;' while the joint negative of these two, 'in no respect,' gives the third possibility." From the various combinations of these possible meanings, Harschorne works out these seven possible types of conceptions of God:

1) Absolute perfection in all respects;

2) Absolute perfection in some respects, relative perfection in all others;

3) Absolute perfection, relative perfection, and imperfection, each in some respects;

4) Absolute perfection in some respects, imperfection in all others;

5) Absolute perfection in no respects, relative in all;

6) Absolute perfection in no respects, relative in some, imperfection in others;

7) Absolute perfection in no respects, imperfection in all.  

5Ibid., pp. 7-8.

6Ibid., p. 8.
This listing is logically complete, but does not mention specific attributes. Hartshorne gives these five attributes as the most important and most often mentioned:

1) Eternal -- that is, in some or all aspects of his reality devoid of change;

2) Temporal -- in some or all aspects capable of change, at least in the form of increase of some kind;

3) Conscious, self-aware;

4) Knowing the world or universe, omniscient;

5) World-inclusive, having all things as constituents.  

The selective combination of these specific attributes according to the general patterns given in the first listing gives rise to nine historically significant conceptions of God:


2) The Supreme as Eternal Consciousness, not knowing or including the world. Aristotelian theism.

3) The Supreme as Eternal Consciousness, Knowing but not including the world. Classical theism: Philo, Augustine, Anselm, al-Ghazzali, Aquinas, Leibniz.

4) The Supreme as the Eternal beyond consciousness and knowledge. Emanationism: Plotinus.

5) The Supreme as Eternal Consciousness, Knowing and including the World (so far as 'real'). Classical pantheism: Sankara, Spinoza, Royce.

6) The Supreme as Eternal-Temporal Consciousness, Knowing but

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not including the world. Temporalistic theism: Socimus, Lequieir.

7) The Supreme as Eternal-Temporal Consciousness, partly exclusive of the World. Limited panentheism: James, Ehrenfels, Brightman.

8) The Supreme as wholly Temporal or emerging Consciousness. Alexander, Ames, Cattell.

9) The Supreme as Temporal and nonconscious. Wieman.

This third listing is not logically or historically complete, but contains the most important conceptions which are historically exemplified. Notice that only the first alternative, panentheism, manages to combine all five of the attributes in the second listing. All other conceptions have failed to include some attribute or the other, and so have made God less than the Perfect Being, or that being than which no other could be conceived to be more perfect.

Classical theism, for example, excludes relative perfections from God and thus conceives of Him as less than Perfect Being. Hartshorne, on the other hand, does not deny absolute perfections of God, but does not see that the inclusion of these in God necessarily implies the exclusion of relative perfections. The two are compatible. On the ground of the compatibility of absolute and

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8Hartshorne and Reese, Philosopberes Speak of God, p. 17.

9Ibid., pp. 17-24, and also Hartshorne's criticisms before and after the selections throughout the book.

10Cf. Charles Hartshorne, "Tillich and the Other Great Tradition," Anglican Theological Review, July, 1961, p. 4: "There is the long, powerful tradition that God is the infinite, unconditioned,
relative perfections in God, classical theism can be rejected, because it unnecessarily makes God less than Perfect Being, and has been disproved and can be replaced with a more satisfactory alternative:

For nearly two thousand years European theology has staked its fortunes upon a certain conception of divinity. In the last decade or two a genuinely alternative type of theology has been proposed - so unobtrusively, however, that nearly all opponents of theism are still fighting the older conception, convinced that if they can dispose of it the theological question will be settled. And those who feel dissatisfied with a Godless universe suppose that it is to traditional theology that they must turn. Both parties are mistaken. Today the theistic question, like so many others, is a definitely new one. The old controversies in their old form are antiquated.11

Furthermore, panentheism, since it makes God the truly Perfect Being, also makes Him the truly worshipful being, the possessor of supreme value not only considered in Himself, but also considered precisely under the aspect of His relations with men. Hartshorne asks, "Can the idea of deity be so formulated as to preserve, perhaps even increase, its religious value? By religious value I mean the power to express and enhance reverence or worship on a high ethical and cultural level. The question is whether and how God can be conceived without logical absurdity, and as having such a

and the oversimple assumption that the disjunctions infinite-finite, absolute-relative, unconditioned-conditioned are simply exclusive. I have often shown, and have not yet been refuted, that they are not so." See also Philosophers Speak of God, pp. 507-508.

character that an enlightened person may worship and serve him with
whole heart and mind." The execution of this project, to bring
God to the enlightened person, quite definitely does not belong to
the above-mentioned tradition that would make Him absolute (unre­
lated), immutable, eternal (non-temporal), and would predicate any
positive attribute of Him only in a symbolic manner. This tradi­
tion tells us (or thinks it does), Hartshorne says, what God is
not: no particularly great intelligibility resides in a series of
negations, nor can an abstraction readily be worshipped:

He [God] may, we concede, do these things 'symbolically,'
whatever that may mean, but we tell him in no uncertain
terms that he must not literally do them! Is this modesty
-- or is it monstrous presumption? Have we this veto
power upon divinity? Not to sustain relationships, not to
respond sensitively to the existence of others, is to be
wooden, stupid, or an utterly empty abstraction. It is the
abstract which has these negative characteristics, not the
concrete.... Is God to be found merely in this direction,
looking toward the less and less concrete?13

The new theology will rather be in positive terms; more speci­
ifically, it will be stated quantitatively. This approach will al­
low people to actually understand what is being said, rather than
being left in the throes of "mystery":

The differentia of the new definition are that it is pos­
itive rather than negative, and that it is quantitative
rather than merely qualitative. It limits comparison between
the creator and the creatures to differences of degree. It

12 Charles Hartshorne, The Divine Relativity (New Haven, Yale
University Press, 1948), p. 1; see also pp. 41-47.

13 Hartshorne, "Tillich and the Other Great Tradition," pp. 6–
7; see also The Divine Relativity, pp. 18-19.
will be admitted that relative or quantitative distinctions are characteristic of scientific thought wherever it has been successful. But it is a curious paradox that in theology it is precisely the popular rather than the technical conceptions which are the most unambiguously quantitative in meaning. Contrast these [technical conceptions], with their relatively qualitative or negative connotations, - with such popular notions as almighty, all-knowing, maker of all things. The common basis of these latter descriptions is the quite positive and quantitative idea of all-ness or totality.14

Hartshorne's contention then is twofold: the tradition which makes God in all respects absolute or unrelated actually makes Him less than perfect; this same tradition fails to make God sufficiently intelligible to the educated person and so does not supply him with a proper object of worship.

B. PANENTHEISM

In The Divine Relativity, Hartshorne distinguishes the meaning of "perfect" and "absolute." According to the preliminary definition given above, God is the Perfect Being; but this is not the same as saying that God is the Absolute Being, that is, the being who is entirely nonrelative.15 Traditional theology has mistakenly used "perfect" in this double sense (without realizing it) and so fallen into a dilemma: if the Perfect Being sustains no real, non-essential relations with imperfect beings, He is less than the Perfect-and-the-imperfect (that is, the Perfect Being as sustaining

such relationships); thus God is actually less than Perfect Being. On the other hand, if the nonrelative Perfect Being is said to include all the values of the imperfect (and so has no need of relations with the imperfect), "God did no good thing when he created the world, and our human existence is metaphysically useless and meaningless." If God actually includes all possible values, creatures can contribute nothing to Him and so are useless.

Defining the Perfect Being as that individual than which no other individual could be greater avoids this dilemma. If God is nonrelative in some respects, but relative to the world in others, He can include it. The world, however, is temporal and thus God must be temporal also. Thus God at one time is more perfect than He is at another, because He includes a greater reality on some occasions than on others, and so surpasses Himself in perfection from one time to another.

How can God include the world? Hartshorne agrees with traditional thought when it says that God knows everything, or is omniscient; this means literally that God knows everything that there is to be known; everything, that is, which right now is actually existing and so can be known. But to know something is to include it. Hence God includes everything He knows - the whole world.

16Ibid., p. 19.
17Ibid., p. 20.
18Ibid., p. 76.
One might ask Hartshorne to explain why God must sustain real, nonessential relations to the world in order to know it. His answer, quite bluntly, is that "actual knowing is relative to what in particular happens to exist and therefore as existent can be known. But what in particular is known in a given knowledge is not in its existence relative to this knowledge. If, then, the known, or object, is the nonrelative, and knowing or subject the relative, factor, as we have just seen, must not God, as all-knowing, be supreme-ly relative?"\(^{19}\) That is, unless we wish to fall back into the unintelligibility of analogical predication, God's knowing must be treated as of the same type as the knowing we experience, in which the one knowing is relative to what he knows.

Another seemingly reasonable objection is that if less value is being achieved in the world at one time than another, that is, if there is less of value to be known in the world - will not God's perfection decrease in comparison to its former state?

This objection ignores the divine memory, which is of such a nature that it retains permanently whatever God at any time knows. The values known by God on one occasion become part of His very being, just as we receive real though accidental increments to our being when we know objects. The values we achieve pass away and are lost; God permanently retains them in His memory, however, and they thus add to the perfection He has already come to possess in

\(^{19}\)Hartshorne and Reese, *Philosophers Speak of God*, p. 120.
knowing previous values. Assuming that there is always more value in the world at any given time than disvalue (rather than that there is more disvalue, for the former seems to be the actual case) God's perfection is an always increasing one. "The first horn of the dilemma," Hartshorne remarks, "need not concern us, unless it can be proved that there is ever more sorrow than joy in the world. For if there is always more satisfaction than dissatisfaction, then God should always have more reason to rejoice than to grieve over the world, and since he can retain the consciousness of past joys, there will always be a net increment of value accruing to God at each moment. Now if life were not more satisfying than otherwise, could it go on?"\(^2\) God is the Perfect Being because He possesses more values than any other individual; for He possesses the sum total of all values of all beings at any one time. He retains the values He acquires by knowledge and so continually surpasses Himself in perfection.

This interpretation of "perfect" makes God both intelligible and worshipful. Regarding the first point, Hartshorne acknowledges, with traditional theology, that God is omniscient, for example; but this omniscience takes on a new meaning. "Omniscience is knowledge that is in some sense equal to its objects,"\(^2\) or capable of knowing them perfectly, while nonomniscience is not thus

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\(^2\)Hartshorne, *The Divine Relativity*, p. 46.

\(^2\)Ibid., p. 120.
equal. Omniscience is an abstract perfection, or the generalization
from a set of concrete instances of perfect knowing of individual
objects. Further, God's knowledge of the world cannot be consti-
tuted by a "single inclusive and unique relation," even though "its
term is the one totality of being," because we find actualities and
potentialities in the world. Each must have a corresponding type
of adequate knowledge, the actual known as actual and the potential
known as potential. But what is at one time potential becomes
actual; hence a new knowledge of the actual as such must be estab-
lished if cognitive adequacy is to be maintained. The same applies
to the potential as such. To define "omniscience" as adequate
knowledge of what actually exists as actual, and of what potential-
ly exists as potential, necessitates positing the temporality of
God. For omniscience is then recognized as an "infinite class of
relationships," in that an omniscient being knows adequately each
totality separately as it presents itself to be known. This infin-
ite class has the common characteristic of "adequacy," which prop-
erty is not, however, relative to the objects known, as are the
concrete exemplifications of "cognitive adequacy." God's perfections, in the light of this analysis, take on a
dual character. In His abstract nature God is absolute (or unrela-

\[22^\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 121.\]
\[23^\text{Ibid.}\]
\[24^\text{Ibid.}\]
ted to the world) in His perfections; His capacity to adequately know everything is entirely unaffected by other things. In His concrete nature He is not only relative, but the most relative of beings, since knowledge of all things demands dependence on all things. God cannot know a value which someone creates unless that person actually creates it. God's enrichment of His being by knowing and possessing value (His relativity) thus depends entirely on His creatures' activities and His own concrete activities in assisting them to create value.

According to Hartshorne's conception, then, God has all the perfections ascribed to Him by traditional thought, as abstract perfections or real capacities or potentialities which cannot be affected by other beings; at the same time He possesses more value in His concrete nature than any other individual (even if the world is taken as an individual, for He possesses all the values created in the world) and so is the truly Perfect Being.

The religious value of God, on the other hand, is not destroyed by His relativity and His dependence on His creatures. Hartshorne contends that "for the present, I suggest that all we can assert to have obvious religious value is the faith that God is to be relied upon to do for the world all that ought to be done for it, and with as much survey of the future as there ought to be or as is ideally desirable." 25 Omniscience in the sense of a totum

simul knowledge or nontemporal knowing (and consequent ordering) of the world is not required for a worshipable God; indeed, this conception has caused considerable religious difficulties. For if, for example, God knows everything that will happen, how can He allow evil to occur and still be called good? This single difficulty is enough to show us that all that religion needs is a God who knows what there is to be known (all actual and possible reality as or when it is actual or possible) and a loving ordering of the world in accordance with that knowledge. Of course, because God does not know perfectly what will happen, evils do occur; but we should not expect the impossible.

God's traditional religious perfection is not only maintained, but even increased, by panentheism. Consider the following situation. God's concrete perfection depends on the values He knows adequately (and thus possesses); but these values are created by His creatures in the world. Therefore God's creatures can contribute to His perfection. They can choose or refuse to create value for God to know and possess:

What is the inclusive value of human life? Is it human welfare only? Is it the "glorification" of God defined as so completely absolute that it must be beyond our power to contribute to his greatness? A new era in religion may be predicted as soon as men grasp the idea that it is just as true that God is the supreme beneficiary or recipient of achievement, hence supremely relative to all achieved actualities, as that he is the supreme benefactor or source of achievement, and in so far nonrelative to its results. There has

been a secret poison long working in religious thought and feeling, the poison of man's wanting to be an ultimate recipient of value. Religion then becomes man's self-service, not genuinely his service of God. For if God can be indebted to no one, can receive value from no one, then to speak of serving him is to indulge in equivocation.27

Hartshorne's basic conception of God is dependent in its origin on the historical meaning of "God" as the Perfect Being; omniscient, all-powerful, all-loving. Traditional thought had made these abstract perfections into concrete perfections and thus had asserted the absoluteness or nonrelativity of God. But the traditional position erred in this regard. God's abstract perfections are exemplified in concrete relations of knowing, loving, willing; He is abstractly absolute but concretely relative. Recognizing this preserves His traditional meaning as Perfect Being (though in a new sense) as well as enhancing His religious value.

Hartshorne has given what he considers a coherent, positively meaningful definition of God, beginning with what men have said about Him, classifying this, abstracting the essential features, and working them into a coherent conception. But since he considers his work an effort in metaphysics rather than merely a piece of historical research, his next step is to prove that the conception he has arrived at has an ontological counterpart. Though several proofs are offered, we will consider only the two we consider the most forceful.

27Ibid., p. 58.
C. THE ONTOLOGICAL PROOF

Hartshorne's Ontological Argument is based on his definition of the divine perfection: "God cannot conceivably be surpassed or equalled by any other individual, but He can surpass himself, and thus His actual state is not the greatest possible state. This implies that there is potentiality as well as actuality in the divine reality."28 This differs radically from what Hartshorne calls the "classical doctrine," in which God is "exclusively actual." The neoclassical redefinition, however, is free from the logical difficulties of the classical; further, it is no less a priori (that is, does not lessen the necessity of God's existence) than the classical; contingent properties are predicated of God, but not contingent existence.29

The more excellent a being is, the greater potentialities it has; a man can select this career or that, but an ape cannot.30 God can create this world or that, but such is not possible for men.31 The classical view held that no matter what God did, He remained unchanged. "On the classical view, any other world or

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29Ibid.
30Ibid.
31Ibid., p. 36.
none would have actualized the very same state of divine love and knowledge."32 The truth is that if God is Perfect Being, His potentialities are greater than those of any other being. "The divine power-to-be is absolutely infinite, or is all power to be."33 God, in fact, coincides with possibility as such.34 In the same manner, He coincides with actuality as such. This is called God's modal coincidence;35 He coincides with, or is, these two modes of being (actuality and potentiality).

According to Becker's Postulate, Hartshorne says, "modal status can be affirmed or denied in the mode of necessity only,"36 so that God's existence is not a question of contingent existence opposed to contingent non-existence, but of necessary existence opposed to necessary non-existence.37 Why? If God is actuality, what could conceivably cause Him to cease to exist? Only that being on which He depends for His existence; but if there is such, this other being is God. What could conceivably cause Him to exist, if He does not already exist? For this reason, to speak of the contingently-existing Perfect Being is as contradictory as to

32Ibid., p. 37.
33Ibid.
34Ibid., p. 38.
35Ibid.
36Ibid., p. 39.
37Ibid., p. 50.
speak of the non-existent Perfect Being. If Perfect Being exists contingently, or does not exist, He is not Perfect Being.  

The formal proof is as follows:

1) If Perfect Being exists, it necessarily exists.

2) Either it necessarily exists, or it necessarily does not exist.

3) If it necessarily does not exist, it is necessary that it necessarily does not exist.

4) Thus, either it necessarily exists, or it is necessary that it does not exist.

5) If the latter, then it is necessary that it does not exist.

6) So, it either necessarily exists, or it is necessary that it does not exist.

7) We intuitively know that it is not necessary that Perfect Being not exist (it is not impossible).

8) Thus it is necessary that it exist.

9) But if this is so, it exists.

10) Perfect Being, or God, exists.

Step (1) does not say that God's non-existence is contradictory, but rather that if God exists, He must do so necessarily or He is not God; so-called "Perfect Being" which exists contingently is in reality an imperfect being.

In summary form, the argument states that 1) perfection must

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38 Ibid. See also the section entitled "The Incompatibility of Perfection and Contingency," pp. 58-68.

39 Ibid., p. 51. Hartshorne gives the argument in symbolic form.

40 Ibid.
necessarily exist, if at all; 2) if non-existent, it is necessarily so; 3) if necessarily non-existent, perfection is impossible; 4) but perfection is possible.\textsuperscript{41} We can coherently conceive of Perfect Being; we can conceive of God as Hartshorne has done. 5) Perfection is not impossible; therefore it is necessary. God exists.

This particular form of the Ontological Argument cannot be used to prove the existence of a God of the classical type because the classical conceptions are full of contradictions, or "paradoxes," thus not coherently conceivable; they do not show the non-impossibility of God's existence:

Anselm's most vulnerable assumption, so far as we see, is his belief that the idea of an absolute maximum of greatness is consistently meaningful; that positivism is incorrect. How does he know "maximal greatness" is not similar to "a number than which none greater can be conceived"? (No such maximal number is conceivable.) Only a slight effort is made by the great Bishop to meet this difficulty, that is, to refute positivism.... Indeed, it is hard to see how classical theism, with its paradoxical view of deity, could ever establish the consistency of its basic conception.\textsuperscript{42}

Only the neoclassical conception of God, in which He coincides with actuality as such and potentiality as such, is coherently conceivable, and so the only conception of God which can use this proof to show His existence.

\textsuperscript{41}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 52.

\textsuperscript{42}\textit{Hartshorne and Reese, Philosophers Speak of God}, p. 103.
D. THE PROOF FROM UNIVERSAL EXISTENTIAL TOLERANCE

All contingent propositions are restrictive; we always find that "This is the fact, instead of that." Alternative possibilities conflict one with the other and thus exclude the realization of the others. Some propositions, on the other hand, "are compatible with any positive and consistent assertion whatever, namely necessary propositions."43 The existence of Perfect Being is one of these propositions. "God exists" is tolerant of any state of affairs. But God's universal existential tolerance, it may be objected, does not prove that God exists.44 Hartshorne answers that if God's non-existence has no positive significance (for "God exists," as well as "God does not exist," interferes with the existence of nothing else), this non-existence would be a purely negative fact which could in no way be verified. But a negative fact always asserts something positive; it is only partially restrictive (unless it is a false statement, like "Nothing exists"). What is this something positive which is asserted by the absence of deity which we could use to verify the statement?

The formal argument is as follows: a contingent concept is one whose exemplification or non-exemplification is possible. 1) All such concepts are partially restrictive; that is, their exemplifi-

43 Hartshorne, The Logic of Perfection, p. 68.
44 Ibid., p. 70.
cation is incompatible with some other positive possibility. 2) The concept of Perfect Being is wholly non-restrictive, "its exemplification being compatible with the existence of any positively conceivable state of affairs." 45 3) The concept of Perfect Being is noncontingent; "God exists" is either impossible or necessary (Anselm's insight). But "nothing is strictly impossible unless it is inherently contradictory or meaningless." 46 4) Hartshorne's conception of God is neither contradictory nor meaningless; therefore God necessarily exists.

Both this proof and the Ontological Proof, it might be noted, are based directly on an insight or intuition into the nature of God: "Anselm's intuition was that God exists in a superior manner, the ordinary way of existing being a defect." 47 Nor is this intu-

45 Ibid., p. 70.

46 Ibid.; see also pp. 92-108.

47 Hartshorne, The Logic of Perfection, p. 56. — Regis Jolivet, in The God of Reason (New York, Hawthorn Books, 1958), pp. 46-47, mentions similarly that "the [ontological] argument seems to imply a thorough understanding of the inner requirements of the idea of God, of a being in whom essence and existence are not really distinct and are only one thing, so much so that here, contrary to what is true of the rest of reality, to grasp an essence is equivalent to apprehending an existence in its very necessity. It is precisely this point on which Descartes has most insisted, saying that his argument does not start from the word "God", but from a real and objective essence or nature, and hence always remains, from its beginning (the nature of God) to its conclusion (the existence of God), in the real order. (See Descartes, Réponses aux Premières objections, section 12.) Whatever may be thought of the Cartesian view, this aspect of the ontological argument makes it clear that St. Thomas, who had refuted the Anselmian proof before Kant, was far from taking up a purely negative attitude towards it.
ition put forth as something rarely encountered, but rather as an experience common to all men.48

Now that we have outlined Hartshorne's basic philosophy and his philosophy of God, we are in a position to offer some criticism.

if the assertion, "God exists", he says, is not and cannot be a priori evidence for us, in itself, that is, from the standpoint of what God's nature demands, it is evident that God exists, since essence and existence being identical in him, he cannot not exist."

48Cf. Hartshorne, Beyond Humanism, pp. 284-285; quoted in Chapter I, note 48 (p. 15) of this thesis.
CHAPTER III

CRITICISM OF HARTSHORNE’S PHILOSOPHY OF GOD

A. METAPHYSICAL OPTIONS

Two problems dominate Hartshorne's philosophy: first, how can we have a meaningful metaphysics; second, how can we speak meaningfully about God? Since metaphysics is an effort to speak about all of reality under some unitary aspect, and since God is at least a part of that reality, his philosophy of God is intimately connected with and dependent on his basic metaphysical positions. This relationship holds true especially in regard to Hartshorne's method of procedure. In Beyond Humanism, for example, we read that philosophy begins with observation of sensible reality. "As man looks out upon the world, he sees... the animals... the plants... inorganic objects."¹ The philosopher finds that "there seem to be two great classes of existents,"² organic and inorganic things. Apparently, the metaphysical effort is stifled at the beginning; reality does not present us with a unitary aspect which might be grasped, explored, enlarged upon to give one body of knowledge about all

¹Charles Hartshorne, Beyond Humanism (Chicago and New York, Willett, Clark and Company, 1937), p. III.
²Ibid.
things. Instead, we find a basic division in reality.

At this point, there are two options open. On the one hand, we can proceed, as Hartshorne does, to reduce all reality to one type or class. He remarks that "there are good reasons, however, for thinking that inorganisms are simply aggregates of parts which are themselves organisms." Since some things are obviously not organic, no reasonable man would say that they are; but it is not quite so obvious that these things are entirely inorganic. Perhaps they are composed of organic parts. Perhaps they themselves are parts of a larger, more inclusive reality which is organic. Hartshorne then proceeds to find rational arguments to support these suppositions and concludes that such an interpretation of reality is possible.

But it really ought to be said, in criticism of this, that the transition from the possibility of such an interpretation to its necessity rests on two assumptions. The first is that we do not falsify our vision of reality by treating things as though they all fell into one class. This assumption is especially hazardous since we are confronted at the outset with at least two classes of things, the animate and the inanimate, and further investigation might reveal other classes as well. Plants, for example, seem to be basically different from animals, and men from other animals, to say nothing of the distinction often posited between material and

\[Ibid.\]
immaterial beings.

The viewpoint that would reduce all things to one class, as Hartshorne would do, implicitly affirms that reality cannot be reduced to conceptual unity unless we first find something in all real things to serve as a basis for this concept or set of concepts, unless we first find some essential characteristics common to all things, or impose such characteristics on them, in the event of lack of clear evidence. Now this is quite correct; such a procedure, to be successful, has that necessary precondition. But how is the procedure itself justified? What do we find in real things that would allow us to affirm that its conceptual unity is possible? Hartshorne operates in rather a circular manner here; he first conceptually unifies reality, then says that it is possible. By "possible," however, he can only mean that it is possible as a human activity, not as a true and valid interpretation of reality. For if he meant "possible" in this latter sense, he would first have to investigate that question and ask, "What is there in real things that leads me to believe that they are all members of one class? Is there actually anything, or has my desire to know reality under some unitary aspect been guided in the wrong direction, a direction more suited to the physical scientist? Am I not confusing the method proper to physics with the method proper to metaphysics?" If Hartshorne could answer that weighty evidence led him to believe all things were members of one class, well and good; but since he finds that reality forms at least two
classes, the organic and the inorganic, it is doubtful procedure to form the hypothesis that all inorganic things are somehow organic, consolidate the notion, and argue from that basis that there may be only one class. The fact that he has made this interpretation does not mean that the procedure is valid. The necessary condition for the statement, "All reality may be organic," is the statement, "All reality may fall into one class" -- which, as he notes, is contradicted by experience. For this reason, interesting as it is, his metaphysics can be no more than a hypothetical construction without any solid foundation in reality.

But having accepted this "one-class" interpretation of reality, Hartshorne proceeds to say that only two sets of characteristics could possibly be used as metaphysical variables, or characteristics which could be predicated of all things: the first is the set of variables employed in physics; the second, those employed in comparative psychology. (These seem to be correlative with the two great classes of existents, the inorganic and the organic.) The patent impossibility of using the first set in metaphysics arises from the fact that some things are organic and have psychological characteristics; but, in addition, Hartshorne states that the first set, those used in physics, "are not a different set" from those used in psychology, "but the same set with certain aspects altered." He argues that "the space-time structures deal with by

4Ibid.
physiose, being the dynamic patterns of the world, do not of them- selves answer the question, Patterns of what?" Physics tells us how reality interacts, but not what reality is. Thus we must conclude that "the 'psychic' variables... are simply all the variables with unlimited range,"\(^5\) and alone qualify for application to a reality with a similarly unlimited range.

The second option open to the prospective metaphysician faced with an apparent dichotomy in the things of experience agrees with Hartshorne's insight that "all variables, whatever else they may be, must be variables of human experience,"\(^6\) and that "it is not the function or within the capacity of external perception to tell us what things are, but only to tell us where they... are, in how small or large an area, and how they are changing their relative positions."\(^7\) But the view which we affirm interprets this latter statement differently than Hartshorne does. He says that since external perception does not tell us what things are, the only course open is to turn to internal perception ("self-perception, intuitive grasp of the unitary nature of our experience")\(^8\), generalize on its essential characteristics and apply them to all things, in order to

\(^5\)Ibid.

\(^6\)Ibid.


\(^8\)Ibid.
have a metaphysics. (Again, external perception seems to be cor-
relative with inorganic things and the variables of physics, in-
ternal perception with organic things and the psychological vari-
able.) This is true only if external perception is considered in
isolation from man's other cognitive powers, notably the intellect;
in the concrete situation, however, men know things with both their
intellect and their senses, know things perceptually and intellec-
tually at the same time. This sort of knowledge does tell us what
things are and removes the necessity of looking for the "what" of
things by comparing them with the intuitively known human essence.

Our procedure will show this by arriving at a set of variables
applicable to all things but not derived from the general charac-
teristics of human experience (as Hartshorne's are).

B. EXISTENTIAL APPROACH

All things are obviously not members of one class. Accepting
this essential dissimilarity of things, we can ask if there is not
something more basic, more fundamental, than the essences of
things. Though this question has probably received "no" for an
answer many times in the past, Thomas Aquinas states affirmatively
that a thing's existence is more fundamental than its essence;
more basic to a thing than what it is, is the fact that it is.
This is so because unless a thing is, it cannot be this or that,
organic or inorganic. A metaphysics which proceeds from the fact
of a thing's existence does not eliminate the organic-inorganic
dichotomy we encountered at the beginning of our investigation, but, while respecting it, goes beyond it.\(^9\)

This metaphysics can, for example, draw these conclusions about reality: since both classes of things exist, they share in the qualities of goodness, truth, unity; because they exist in a limited manner, rational necessities dictate that they have a cause for both their existence and the limitedness of their existences. These characteristics, while certainly being applicable to organic things, are not limited to them, but can be applied to inorganic things as well. By going beyond the essences of things, a metaphysics can be established which does not reduce all reality to one class; this metaphysics, furthermore, need not take as a supposition that reality can be reduced in such a way, for it bypasses that procedure.

Let us return for a moment to our starting point. Our problem is the same as Hartshorne's -- how is a meaningful metaphysics

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\(^9\) Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Questiones Disputatae De Potentia*, VIII, 2, ad 9; translated by James F. Anderson in *An Introduction to the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Chicago, Henry Regnery, 1955), p. 22: "What I call esse is among all principles the most perfect; which is evident from the fact that act is always more perfect than potentiality. Now, any designated form is understood to exist actually only in virtue of the fact that it is held to be. Thus, humanity or fire can be considered as existing in the potentiality of matter, or as existing in the active power of an agent, or also as existing in an intellect. But that which has esse is the actuality of all acts, and for this reason it is the perfection of all perfections. Nor is it to be thought that something is added to what I call esse which is more formal than esse itself, thus determining it as an act determines a potentiality. For the esse I speak of is essentially other than that to which it is added as a certain determining principle."
possible? How must we proceed if we wish to know and speak of all reality in the light of some unitary aspect? We are both confronted with the awful variety that real things display, and yet can both sense that there is some common denominator. That our metaphysics and Hartshorne's differ is due to his choosing features of one segment of reality, the organic segment, and predicating them of the remaining segment, the inorganic, while we think it better to respect the obvious variety of real things and seek an element of unity in an order more basic than that of the essences of things of our experience.

The latter procedure has these advantages. First, predicating similarity of all things on the plane of their existence, rather than of their essence, allows us to speak directly of all things. Hartshorne cannot talk meaningfully about rocks and chairs except insofar as they are either composed of organic parts or are parts of a more inclusive organism. This can be compared to being able to speak about human beings only insofar as they are members of a group or are composed of different members and parts. To say that a stone is composed of organisms is to speak directly about the stone's parts, only indirectly about the stone. But on the other hand, all things which exist can be spoken of directly in a metaphysics which takes existence as the most basic aspect of reality.

Second, if we venture a bit further into this metaphysics than its starting point, we come to a realization of the relationship of essence and existence. We realize that even if we were to find in
reality some common essential characteristic, we would still be
faced with the deeply troubling problem, "How is it that there are
things composed of essence and existence, since a composed being of
this sort cannot be the source of its own composition? How can a
being whose existence is qualified ever come to be?" We see that
"to be" and "to be organic" are not coextensive and begin to wonder
what sort of being must be responsible for the limitation of the
"to be" of the things we experience. But a metaphysics built on
common essential characteristics cannot deal with this sort of
problem; it can only say what things are, not why they are, because
it does not explore the fact that they are. A metaphysics like
Hartshorne's cannot deal with certain quite basic philosophical
problems.

Third, Hartshorne's metaphysics rests on the assumption that
the only variables available for predication of all things are
those of comparative psychology and of physics (which are a variant
form of psychology's). But we have seen that by going beyond the
whatness of things (their有机ness or non-organicity, in this
case) and considering them simply so far as they exist, another set
of variables is discovered, the existential variables. This dis-
cover makes Hartshorne's dichotomy non-exhaustive and allows us to
disagree with his statement that the psychic variables are the only
ones with unlimited range and supreme flexibility.10 Even more so

10Hartshorne, *Beyond Humanism*, p. 121.
can we deny his supposition that unless some set of essential characteristics is predictable of everything, metaphysics is impossible, for the variables we have pointed out belong to a thing simply because it exists, not because it exists in this or that particular manner, whether that manner be organically, non-organically, or what have you.

The type of unity which our metaphysics finds in reality is not this simple unity of one class with many members, but the more tenuous unity of a multitude of things which are similar to one another only insofar as their characteristics are proportional to their act of existing. That is, they are like each other insofar as those characteristics which make them to be what they are, in the sense of being fully concrete individuals, bear a relation to the fact that they are such and such fully concrete individuals. We are dealing, in other words, with a unity-in-multiplicity which finds both terms in reality. Whereas "animate stones" and "animate plants" achieve a real multiplicity (dogs are not stones, nor is one stone another stone), but only a conceptual or abstract unity, the "beautiful apples" and the "beautiful stones" achieve a real unity as well. For they achieve an analogous unity: the beauty of both is not a miraculously multiplied identity, but a beauty shared in proportion to those things' sharing in the fact of being. Since this condition or state of affairs obtains in reality, a true metaphysics must take account of it and only assign things this analogous type of unity. The question whether all things are mem-
bers of one class is thus answered with a "no", and with it the further assertion that the psychological variables are applicable to all things.

This taking account of the analogous unity of things has important consequences. Although it is often necessary to speak of things as though we were attributing characteristics to them in the same sense, rather than as proportioned to the various degrees of participation of these things in existence, we ought not to lose sight of the fact that this necessity flows from language and that, as such, language does not accurately mirror reality; nevertheless, our knowledge must be accurate in this regard. Both dogs and men are alive, for example, but we cannot reason from this that the life proper to each is of the same type. The observation of this principle will be especially important in speaking about God, since His existence differs so radically from that of anything else.

C. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THROUGH PROOF FOR HIS EXISTENCE

Hartshorne answers the second great problem of his philosophy, "How can we speak meaningfully about God?" along the same lines as the first. He reasons that if all reality can be spoken of meaningfully only insofar as it bears resemblance to intuitively known human experience, God can be no exception. If an essential characteristic of human experience is to anticipate and to remember, then God also must anticipate and remember. The same holds true of other characteristics.
However, a consistent application of the alternative we have proposed to Hartshorne's philosophy demands that we first know that God exists before we can say anything else about Him. This clearly follows from the principle that things exhibit an analogous unity in the relation of their characteristics to the measure of their existence. If something does not exist, it does not exhibit the existential variables at all; if it exists in a limited manner, it exhibits them in precisely that particular limited manner, and so on. Now when we come to speak of God, it is quite essential that we know just what kind of being He is, if we are to be justified in saying that any statement about Him is really meaningful.

In what manner does God exist? The first difficulty encountered in answering this, is the fact that we do not see God as we see stones and horses. In fact, though we may believe He exists, we do not yet know that this is so. For two reasons, then, God's existence must be demonstrated: first, so that we may know that He exists; second, so that we can know, from the proof for His existence, in what manner He exists. The analysis of composed beings mentioned above tells us that this sort of being must have a cause of its existence in some being who is not so composed. Since composition is the source of limitation, this cause of limited beings, God, exists in an unlimited manner. Thus to speak meaningfully about God, we must take account of the fact that whatever is predicated of Him is exhibited by Him in an unlimited manner.

Thus we say that "God is good," meaning that He is good with-
out any qualification or limitation on that goodness. We know that He is good because whatever exists has this characteristic. "Good" means "desirable." If we ask what it is that is desired or sought after (by men, dogs, ravens, or what have you), we might give a list of the many and various things which each seeks. In general, however, we can say that that which exists is desired (and so is desirable), that which does not exist is not desired. This latter statement implies that the thing does not exist in any way, either in reality or in someone's mind. We can verify this by considering that whatever is desired either exists or is thought to exist, because the only alternative would be the absurdity that someone or something desires nothing. But this is equivalent to saying that someone or something does not desire. Thus that which exists is desirable, or capable of being desired (and, given the fact that there are beings who desire, some things among those that exist are actually desired), and what does not exist is not desirable. Further, this desirability is proportioned to the degree of participation of the desirable thing in existence (insofar as the being who desires is aware of that degree of participation). The thing which participates more in existence can contribute more to the being desiring it if it is attained; again, it can be known to a greater extent (since its being exhibits more knowable aspects than a lesser being does) and thus arouse a greater desire. Wisdom, for example, is more desirable than sensual pleasure, considering both these things as they are in themselves and not as they may or may
not be known to be desirable to particular individuals. If, then, as we have pointed out, God is not merely a participant in existence, but rather is Existence Itself. He is the most desirable thing there is or can be, since attainment of God will enrich the being of the one attaining Him to the greatest possible extent, or the most perfect manner possible, and because God exhibits more knowable aspects than any other actual or possible thing and can thus arouse an "infinite" desire in us (that is, a desire for the Infinite).

But this is not all that can be meant in saying that God is good, for we are not dealing here with just another thing that participates in existence and thus exhibits the existential variables in a certain fashion. If we analyse the notion of participation, or ask what it means to be a participated being, we see that it involves more than sharing in various degrees in the formal characteristics involved in some notion. If this were so, our metaphysics would differ from Hartshorne's in only two respects: first, we have chosen a notion, the judgment of existence, as our starting point, while he has chosen a set of concepts of a certain type; second, we conceptualize this notion in the existential variables, while he uses the psychological variables. Actually, however, a much more fundamental distinction is involved.

Let us return to the previous consideration of limited beings, we say they are limited because their existence is "not infinite": they exist in such and such a manner, but do not exist absolutely
or without qualification. To reason from this fact to the necessary existence of a being whose existence is not limited involves much more, of course, than the assertion that things composed of existence and a limit of existence require something unlimited in existence to do the composing or limiting. It involves, for one thing, an analysis of the notion of existence. We ask, "Is existence an 'activity' which by its very nature implies some limitation of that activity in whatever it may be found?" If we truly have existence in mind, and not some form of existence which of its nature is limited (material existence, for example), it can be seen that the fact that a thing exists does not carry with it the fact that this thing exists as limited. This can be compared to the more limited concept of rationality: nothing within this concept implies that rationality will be limited to those things which actually exist and are rational. In this example, two consequences follow: first, there could be a potentially infinite number of rational things; second, the limitation of rational things to this particular number of "rationals" is not due to the intrinsic necessities of the concept itself. Similarly with the notion of being. Since nothing in the notion itself implies that existents exist as limited, two consequences follow: first, something outside of them is responsible for their being limited. This could only be some existent who exists without limit. Second, since it would merely be playing with words to say that limited things first existed and then were limited in their existence, the very fact that they exist
must also be ascribed to the unlimited existent. In other words, since existence and essence are not two parts of a being but two aspects, quite inseparable in reality, the unlimited existent is the cause of the (limited) existence of finite beings. On this ground we can ascribe to God the characteristics of the being He causes, as the cause of these characteristics. We could, for example, also say that God is good in the sense that He is the cause of goodness in all limited beings.

Between our metaphysics and Hartshorne's, then, lies this difference: in his, the particular things of which the psychological variables are predicated share in those variables only according to formal causality. In ours, however, the very reasoning involved in coming to a knowledge of God's existence reveals Him as existential cause.

Hartshorne has decided that God exists as a limited being and predicates the psychological variables of Him accordingly. After he has done this in a logically coherent manner and with an eye to make Him the most Perfect Being in a "religious sense," he puts forth a formal proof for His existence based on the conception of God he has thus constructed. But in the light of the metaphysics we have proposed, he has no right to say anything about God until His existence is established. If, for example, Hartshorne says that "God is good," what real meaning does this have? Knowledge of God's mode of existence is the primary and basic prerequisite for predicking any attribute of Him, for it is only from this
knowledge that we learn what kind of being He is and consequently say anything meaningful about Him.

We can illustrate this difference in method between the two metaphysics by considering two problems which Hartshorne uses to argue against the notion of an actually infinite God: his analysis of knowledge, and his concern that God be "religiously" perfect.

D. GOD'S KNOWLEDGE

Knowing is a relation of the thing known and the knower in which the knower is really relative to and dependent on the thing known.\textsuperscript{11} Since God knows all things and knows them completely, He is the most dependent being, the most relative, in regard to knowledge. If, for example, God had created a different universe than the one He actually has created, He would know that universe instead of this one and thus sustain a different relationship.\textsuperscript{12} This, Hartshorne infers, points to a finite God.

However, it can be argued that Hartshorne's discussion of knowledge does not tell us what knowledge as such is; he rather states characteristics which sometimes attend knowledge, specifically, real relativity and real dependence. The first task, then, in refuting this argument is to give a more informative description of knowledge.

\textsuperscript{11}Hartshorne, The Divine Relativity, p. 8.

\textsuperscript{12}Cf. ibid., pp. 12-15.
We can say that it is a vital activity by which the characteristics of another being (including in this last term the knower himself when he knows himself or is the object of his knowledge) are present to, or possessed by, the one knowing, in an immaterial or non-physical manner, precisely as the characteristics of the other being. "Present in an immaterial manner" means that the characteristics which are known do not become characteristics which can be attributed to the knower, e.g., a man seeing a red wall possesses red, but not in such a manner that we could say that he is red, or a red man. "As the characteristics of the other being" emphasises the fact that the characteristics remain predicable of the thing known, but not the knower, and points out that in those knowers capable of some sort of reflection or self-awareness, these characteristics are recognised as belonging to the thing known. "Possession of" and "present to" must remain somewhat undefined, but their meaning can be ascertained from the simple experience of knowing. In general, we can say that these terms signify a participation in the being (by way of formal causality) of the thing known. Efficient causality is excluded because knowledge is a vital activity (although there may be efficient causality involved in the reduction of finite knowers from potential to actual knowledge).

Can God have knowledge? That God knows is consistent with the fact that He is Existence Itself. We find, first, that the more excellently a being participates in existence, the more excellent
is his knowledge, for higher types of beings know things both more completely and in a simpler manner than lower types. A man can know something about all plants by means of a concept, but a lower animal only knows something about those plants it has sensed. Again, a man can know that all plants give off oxygen, but a lower animal can form no universal judgments about them. On these grounds, God should know things more completely and more simply than any other being. Second, we note that nothing in the description of knowledge necessarily implies that the knower be a finite thing; "participation by way of formal causality in the other being's characteristics" does not imply finitude because the causality involved does not imply real dependence of the knower on the known. In finite things, there is this dependence. In God's case, He possesses the formal characteristics of the thing as they are virtually contained in His own being, and thus there is no need for them to be caused in Him by the thing known. Indeed, since God is the existential cause of all finite things, He must have perfect knowledge of them, insofar as they are participations in His own being. Thus to speak of God as participating in the form of another being is more or less a way of speaking that has been derived from finite things, and cannot mean that there is any real dependence of God on what He knows in the "preparatory phases" of knowledge: because He already possesses the characteristics of the things He knows, God is not reduced from potential to actual knowledge.
E. GOD'S RELIGIOUS VALUE

Hartshorne states that a completely non-relative God cannot fulfill the aspirations of the religious person; unless God can respond sensitively to men (that is, have the potency of "sensitive response to men"), He is less than religiously perfect:

Assurance that, at worst, our sincerely right efforts will, in the long run, however distant, produce on the average more good than our insincere or perversely motivated actions, we must have. Thus omnipotence in the form of a general providential tendency favoring the good and able to guarantee it a minimum of persistence through all future time answers to a genuine spiritual need. But for omnipotence which guarantees the exact degree and the last detail of future goods there is not only no need but also no possible place in an ethically significant world.¹³

This genuine spiritual need can thus be filled only if God is a limited being and so able to respond to our good and bad acts.

In criticism of this, we could accept Hartshorne's statement that knowledge that our sincerely right efforts will produce more good than evil is necessary in an ethically significant world (although we might well ask, "Good for whom?" Is it necessary that the good involved be anything other than the perfection, in some manner, of the one performing the good act?) We can further agree that we want such a world, and that such is possible if God is as Hartshorne says. But we must make two additional statements:

first, we know from the proof for God's existence that He is not finite, and that therefore the desire for an ethically significant world must be reconciled with this fact; second, God's infinity in the order of existence does not necessitate His "guaranteeing the exact degree and last detail of future goods."

Both statements are justified by these considerations. Hartshorne's identification of an infinite God with a provider-of-all-details is based on the assumption that if God can do all things, we can do nothing. That is, it presupposes that if God has infinite power, He must deny other beings the exercise of any power whatsoever (in this case, the power of free will). But if men are free (that we are seems more a matter of experience than the outcome of any demonstration), there is no inconsistency in saying that they themselves are responsible for their good and evil acts, and the consequences flowing from them, and saying that God is all-powerful. That He could control every detail of future events cannot be questioned; that He does not do so directly, or without the instrumentality of finite things, is contradicted by our experience of ourselves as free. These two facts are known: God is all-powerful, men are free. Difficulties have surely been plentiful in the exploration of the state of affairs which results from these two facts, but positing one does not necessitate denying the other. If, on the other hand, we adopt Hartshorne's extreme position that God's omnipotence means the end of free will (this does seem to be one valid way of interpreting His omnipotence), we ought to accept
a finite God in order to retain an ethically significant world, one in which free will can effectively operate. But such a procedure implies that we have taken God's infinity as a postulate and not as a fact; if it is taken as a fact, and free will not denied, the logical consequence is the rejection of the interpretation of omnipotence as denying free will. If there are other possible interpretations of omnipotence, these ought to be examined. To extend Hartshorne's procedure, we might decide that such omnipotence as would exclude free will is more desirable than an ethically significant world, and thus deny free will. A humanist, such as Hartshorne, will of course decide in favor of free will, a "worshipper of power" against it. But the actual facts are that God can do all things and that men are free; neither can be denied if we want to keep on talking about the real world. 14

A meaningful metaphysics and philosophy of God are possible if reality is considered from the viewpoint of existence. Hartshorne seems to fall short of this: his philosophy, in its origins, is an attempt to make reality fully meaningful in the face of an apparent lack of this very quality. The means chosen for accomplishing this task, unfortunately, is the acceptance of an avowed hypothesis on the grounds that the non-acceptance of this hypothesis would destroy the value of human life. The alternative we have proposed to

14 Cf., for example, Jacques Maritain, Existence and the Existent (New York, Pantheon Books, 1948), pp. 85-122, for an alternative view of the relations of these two facts.
panpsychism and panentheism does not banish mystery from those areas of experience which Hartshorne thinks should be non-myste­rous, but, as we have tried to show, a meaningful metaphysics need not be a rationalistic metaphysics.

In conclusion, we can express our agreement with John Wild's judgment on Hartshorne's philosophy of God:

Even though we cannot accept Mr. Hartshorne's answer, which would seem to involve the elimination of Deity, we must be grateful to him for raising these crucial questions once more in a manner which is both sharp and penetrating, and which cannot help but lead to much needed further analysis.15

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The thesis submitted by James P. Godar has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Philosophy.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

Jan. 3, 1963

Date

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