

# AMERICAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY

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## COSMIC PIETY IN WHITEHEAD'S WORKS

Michael Welker / University of Tübingen

Alfred North Whitehead published his works between 1898 and the early 1940s, beginning with works dealing with issues in mathematics and mathematical logic, moving on to studies of questions pertaining to the natural sciences and natural philosophy, and winding up with philosophical treatises wherein the most important texts contribute to the formation of a general cosmology.<sup>1</sup>

Any explicit treatment of religious themes, and even these to be understood in the widest possible sense of religious, is to be found only among the books Whitehead published between 1925 and 1929, namely *Science and the Modern World*, *Religion in the Making*, and *Process and Reality*. And when one reflects upon the fact that in the two more important, more highly developed, and comprehensive books of the three—*Science and the Modern World* and *Process and Reality*—explicit reference is made to themes involving religion and the theory of religion only in specific chapters and otherwise appears only incidentally, the question is unavoidable as to how Whitehead could have subsequently become virtually something of a post-modern Church Father. How, on the basis of a merely episodic treatment of religious themes, has he come to wield such a strong influence in theology and the theory of religion? How, given the obviously scanty comments on matters of religion tucked away within his vast corpus, has he even managed to place his stamp on a wide-ranging, expansive theological school of thought, the North American school of Process Theology? In what follows I shall attempt to come up with an answer to these questions.

In my first section I would like to work out the systematic center of Whitehead's theory of the development of piety and religiousness as he set it forth in *Religion in the Making*. What an investigation of this theory of piety and religiousness brings out is that piety and a specific relationship of the human being to the world coincide in Whitehead's opinion. If one then moves from this to a consideration of the genesis and primary intention of Whitehead's own cosmology, which I should like to do in the second section, one discovers that cosmos-oriented piety is not just a passing theme in his corpus, but is rather one of its distinguishing characteristics. The cosmos-oriented piety about which he reflects in *Religion in the Making* is itself a living factor in his own thought. It is not something that appears only in those sections where religious themes are openly and explicitly treated, but is much more an indispensable, characteristic, and necessary feature for his cosmology

1. This essay translated from the German by Dustin Anderson.

itself.

Now it may be the case that this piety and Whitehead's systematic fusion of thematic areas formerly distinguished by the expressions "God," "self," and "world" awaken not only theological enthusiasm but also considerable theological reservation. Yet in spite of that it is also true that Whitehead can well be considered a "religious thinker" even in those parts of his cosmology where conventional piety would not regard him as dealing with its own questions at all. Whitehead is a religious thinker precisely because he is concerned to find general answers to fundamental cosmological questions. As we shall see, Whitehead himself is quite aware of this fact. It is precisely the idea of cosmos-oriented piety itself that he considers the expression of a highly developed, superior form of religiousness. In the following I would like to bring out and discuss some of the suggestions and difficulties relevant to theological and philosophical thought provoked by his theory, his attitude, and his claims.

### I. Social, Individual, and Cosmic Piety

Whitehead denies that religion is chiefly and primarily a social fact.<sup>2</sup> Only in its early forms and in its decay is religion essentially tied up in social communication, is it—as he puts it—tribal religion or a phenomenon of sociability in its widest sense. It is only in a "primitive phase of religion, dominated by ritual and emotion, [that] we are dealing with essentially social phenomena. . . . Conversely, religion in its decay sinks back into sociability."<sup>3</sup> In Whitehead's view the primitive forms of religiousness centered around ritual, and the expression and reproduction of emotions are superseded in a cultural development directed towards the rationalization of belief. One can detect the beginnings of the abstraction process leading to the formation of rationalized belief already at work in the rituals of "tribal religions" which aim at social interaction and coaction, rituals Whitehead likens to the coordinated, uniform acting together characteristic of herd behavior in animals.<sup>4</sup> Insofar as the ritual behavior reproduces actions "which have no direct relevance to the preservation of the physical organisms of the actors,"<sup>5</sup> it already points in the direction of the abstract realm in which the higher forms of religion are to be located. Under consideration here are a relevance and order that transcend the spontaneous needs of the merely physical individual and that in mediated fashion retroactively affect the individual and his or her preservation. The "higher" idea of religiousness which emerges in this process forms a "system of general truths"<sup>6</sup> and so enables an ever clearer "apprehension of those permanent elements by reason of which there is a stable order in the world, permanent elements apart from which there could be no changing world."<sup>7</sup>

It is important to note at this point that concurrent with the intellectual individualization of religiousness found in this developmental process there

2. *Religion in the Making* (New York: New American Library, 1960), p. 16.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 20ff.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 8; see also pp. 30ff.

arises the formation of a "world-consciousness,"<sup>8</sup> a formation that is necessarily religious itself according to Whitehead. Just as in the rituals of "social religiousness," the ties to the immediate natural environment (the ties at work in physical need-formation and need-satisfaction) are loosened, and just as the individuals could then step out of the flow of nature as themselves and also simultaneously celebrate a greater sense of fellowship together, so also the higher religiousness both intensifies the individual's detachment process by loosening the bonds of natural sociality and also simultaneously makes possible a more comprehensive participation in the world.

Before we go on to discuss whether religion and piety are convincingly defined by this process involving the co-emergence and intensification of individualization and the formation of a world-consciousness, the actual process itself needs further elaboration. That is, this idea of the co-emergence of intellectual individualization and world-consciousness does by no means penetrate into conventional ways of thinking. Either the "I" cultivates its individuality over against the "world," or else it abandons its self-preoccupation and instead cultivates its relationships with the world, whatever sort they may be. So, or in similar fashion, goes the conventional sort of argumentation, and it is easy to see why in this context Whitehead's thesis is not at all enlightening.

If, for example, one clings to the usual notion that world-consciousness is to be understood as a heightened social consciousness set over against the process of individualization, the search for an entrance into Whitehead's theory of religion and thought in general will be in vain. The formative statements of his theory of religion seem mutually irreconcilable:

"Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness."<sup>9</sup>

"Religion is world-loyalty."<sup>10</sup>

In order to bring the two ideas together in Whitehead's sense, one must first see that "individual" does not mean the familiar, vague notion of the "whole human being," "human being as a psycho-physical organism." Our so-called "whole" human being is for Whitehead, the natural scientist, rather a series, to be more precise, a bundle of series of "occasions," indeed a "society," which itself in the first place requires a union, a "conrescence," an "individualization." With respect to the christological and pneumatological body/member distinction, this idea, though foreign to the train of modern thought, can indeed be given a thorough-going theological plausibility.

In Whitehead's view, particularly religious processes stimulate and intensify this individualization, this gathering, this concentration and conrescence of human beings. They are a continuation of the process started in the ritual abstraction from the immediate physical needs of the body, or as Whitehead would put it, from the "immediate physical environment" of the individual. The loosening from the ties to the immediate physical environment does not

8. *Ibid.*, p. 39.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 47, 58.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

take place for the sake of just any sort of individualization. It does not take place in order to develop, for example, the whimsical or bizarre or erratic, the headstrong, or anything that might be called "original" or "individual" in this sense. Nor does religious individualization aim at a culture of just any sort of merely psychic processes or even of possibly "purely psychic" processes as such, processes in which a "beautiful soul" inwardly and outwardly fades away.

What religious individualization does do is loosen the ties to the immediate environment in order to move on into a further, more extensive environment—initially the social one of the "tribal religions." There religion synthesizes and concretizes individuality within the framework of a "social body."

It is now easy enough to draw the conclusion that the intensification of the movement toward the individualization process is paralleled by an intensification of the loosening process from ties to natural context. In turn, the tying into the "social body" of the tribal religion and the inclusion in the "immediate social routine"<sup>11</sup> are superseded through an ever-higher religiousness. In this way the experience of solitariness is at once superseded and intensified.<sup>12</sup> However, as little as religious thinking is occupied with just any sort of individualization process, as little are the higher forms of religion expressed in the formation of the most integrative, general, and conceptually-open ideas possible. Such a directed sort of development could no doubt produce an abstract metaphysic, but would not cultivate a world-consciousness in Whitehead's view. It must be made sure that the processes of abstraction and generalization remain simultaneously processes of individualization in order to be considered developments of religion. For it is just in the tension of the culture of solitary experiences on the one hand and of world-consciousness on the other that the abstraction processes are considered religious. Not in view of any specific person, but put in more general terms this means for developed religion: "The peculiar position of religion is that it stands between abstract metaphysics and the particular principles applying to only some among the experiences of life."<sup>13</sup> Based upon individual and particular experiences—"a small selection from the common experiences of the race"<sup>14</sup>—religion at the same time claims that these experiences are universally representative. It claims to apprehend these experiences in such a way that they are indeed "of universal validity, to be applied by faith to the ordering of all experience."<sup>15</sup> And with exactly the same emphasis, religion must also claim that its so highly-generalized experiences are also quite concrete, private, indeed intimate, that they encounter the person in his or her "most inner," "most particular" self. According to Whitehead, the world religions have made the utmost of this position between the individual aliveness of selected experiences and the plausible claims of universal validity.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 38.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48: "The reason of this connection between universality and solitariness is that universality is a disconnection from immediate surroundings. It is an endeavour to find something permanent and intelligible by which to interpret the confusion of immediate detail."

13. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

14. *Ibid.*

15. *Ibid.*

In a rather starkly schematized sketch, Whitehead contrasts "the two Catholic religions of civilization"<sup>16</sup>—Christianity and Buddhism. He regards Buddhism as "the most colossal example in history of applied metaphysics."<sup>17</sup> The religiousness it evokes starts out with the general, explanatory dogmas and moves toward concrete experience, while of course remaining continuously within the given tension of individualization and world-consciousness.<sup>18</sup> Christianity on the other hand starts with the explanatory facts and only from thence searches for a metaphysic. In Whitehead's oft-cited words: "The reported sayings of Christ are not formularized thought. They are descriptions of direct insight. . . . His sayings are actions and not adjustments of concepts. He speaks in the lowest abstractions that language is capable of. . . ."<sup>19</sup> According to Whitehead the developmental dynamic of Christianity moves in the direction of a metaphysic as highly generalized as possible, a metaphysic which yet remains in fertile tension with the "concrete insights" and deeds of Christ. Yet even without better testing the fitness of this global description of the world religions, the question remains how Whitehead on the basis of this theory can succeed in reaching the idea of a cosmos-oriented piety in any strict sense. What reason is there to think that in the form of religion described by Whitehead anything more comes out than simply an individual, subjective, private conception of the world or even merely a conceptual generalization of the "personal" view of things? Why should there be anything more in Whitehead's characterization of religion as a simultaneous coming out of individualization and world-loyalty than merely the formation of "personal worlds" or even private world-less projections? And is this suspicion not further strengthened by the still widely-accepted view that it is precisely the world that religiousness does not reach; that it builds loyalty only to "one's own" world or to a world "beyond" and so in fact contributes instead, quite logically, to a conscious desire to flee the world, to flee objectivity and general commitments, and head for the backwoods?

Now while we are in the fortunate position of being able to respond to this criticism by simply pointing to the more-or-less successful religious communication, cooperation, and agreement that does in fact occur in observable religious activity, such an answer is not enough for Whitehead's position since it jeopardizes his key distinction between social and cosmic religiousness. By maintaining that the individualization process and its complement, the universalization process, are the chief constituents of religiousness, he cannot follow the obvious path that uses social religiousness as the guarantee for the objectivity of the religious perception of the world. But how can he avoid either losing the concreteness of individuality within a metaphysic or else having the private viewpoint of the individual swallow up the universalization of religiousness? Once again, if it is not possible for him to take the social religiousness route, how can he avoid landing in merely "personal worlds" and "world-less projections"?

16. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 50.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 50, 52; also pp. 49ff.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 56; see also pp. 49ff.

The attraction and power of Whitehead's theory is due largely to the fact that he asks these questions of himself. Indeed, it is just these questions that fire his interest in religiousness and it is to them that his thesis of the scientific and cultural inevitability of cosmic piety responds.

## II. Going Beyond the Individual Relative World

That the inquiry into the trans-individual, actual, and objective world can turn into a religious question for Whitehead is not only demonstrated in the theory of religion and of religiousness developed in *Religion in the Making*, but is also demonstrated impressively throughout the mainstream development of his thought in general. I should now like to support this latter claim by taking up some of the findings arising out of my investigation into the historical and systematic genesis of his theory as it developed from 1905 to 1929.<sup>20</sup>

Only when it has been recognized that the driving concern behind Whitehead's intellectual development is a cosmological one can it be meaningfully determined that cosmic piety is not simply one among the several themes Whitehead treats within the explicit framework of his theory of religion, but that it is itself a characteristic of his work in general and is one of the moving forces behind his thought.

This is not yet true of the early Whitehead, who, like most of us today, at first naively presupposed the idea of "the unity of the real world." His early conviction—and what else ought one to expect of a mathematician educated and interested in the natural sciences?—was that this world can be precisely and adequately comprehended and presented by the mathematically-oriented natural sciences. Yet between 1905 and 1911 ever-stronger reasons arose which caused Whitehead to doubt whether the mathematical-scientific model of the world truly fit the actual world. He went so far as to ask whether the abstract world of the mathematical model, which abstracts from our sense perceptions, was "merely but one huge fairy tale."<sup>21</sup>

Given this doubt he next chose the typically tolerant and likeable "solution" characteristic of common-sense thought, the solution that there are many principal, "somehow" equally-justified theories of the world, from the mathematical to the poetic and theological, which on their different levels of abstraction attempt to comprehend the one actual world and in so doing complement each other. The problem with this cosmological pluralism is that it quickly turns out to be scientifically unfruitful, lacking in seriousness. On such a basis Whitehead could not answer questions regarding the connections between the different conceptions of the world, let alone come up with any systematically consistent defense advocating the primacy of one or another of them—that of the mathematical formula, for example. On this basis one cannot, in principle, even distinguish between those impressions of the world that are appropriate and those that are misleading or between those statements about the world which are helpful and those which are unfruitful.

20. Cf. M. Welker, *Universalität Gottes und Relativität der Welt*. Theologische Kosmologie im Dialog mit dem amerikanischen Prozessdenken nach Whitehead (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2nd ed. 1986).

21. *Introduction to Mathematics* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 33.

Because of the enormous web of unsolvable difficulties into which his thought had become tangled, Whitehead finally found it necessary to abandon the popular, ingenuous "belief" in the one real world. He came to the conclusion that the one world is an intellectual construct. In reality we live in a stream of unordered, fragmentary experiences which we attempt to order and summarize under more comprehensive and communicative "unities" using various intellectual strategies. Among these intellectual strategies is that of the "one world," a construct designed to integrate all the series of fragmentary experiences.<sup>22</sup> Whitehead maintains that the first step towards wisdom in natural philosophy is the realization of the fundamental truth that natural science in fact starts with the "radically untidy, ill-adjusted character of the fields of actual experience."<sup>23</sup> What we have done is develop organizational forms of thought which lead us to the impression that we have immediate experience of a "neat, trim, tidy, exact world," a "world of perfectly defined objects implicated in perfectly defined events which . . . happen at exact instants of time, in a space formed by exact points. . . ."<sup>24</sup>

Whitehead's next step is to try to determine, distinguish, and relationally order the various processes in which the mathematical sciences, common sense thought, and individual feeling comprehend their respective "objects" and construct a totality of them. But all of his efforts to come up with a convincing prototype of the various ways of experiencing and their syntheses fail. In the end, in important discussions with the theories of the leading philosophers of the modern era, he argues that even an intellectually presupposed determination of the universal world must go. Metaphorically speaking, we can now determine that the one world itself as an intellectual creation also blurs and fades away.

The actual world consists of unique, passing events, or "occasions", in which it again and again concretizes itself. It is equally correct to say that the actual occasions in their turn concretize the World: "we must start with the event as the ultimate unit of natural occurrence."<sup>25</sup> The world concretizes itself in individual occasions, and so the popular thesis that every organism is a "product of its environment" is set down as a consistent and comprehensive formula. Every occasion and every series of occasions (even complex occasions such as we humans) are to be interpreted, as it were, as "conglomerations" of their world, that is, of all the other occasions forming their environment. Occasions appear, emerge insofar as their world—that is, the occasions surrounding them—concretizes, objectivizes itself in them.

Now this state of affairs can also be conceived and expressed from the other perspective: occasions emerge insofar as they synthesize, more precisely, as they appear as the synthesis of the occasions surrounding them, that is, of their

22. For the best documentation of this very important theoretical stage in Whitehead's intellectual development, especially as it contributes to a greater understanding of his difficult cosmology, see his essays in: A. N. Whitehead, *The Organisation of Thought, Educational and Scientific* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975), esp. pp. 105ff, 134ff, and 191ff.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 110.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Cf. *Science and the Modern World* (Glasgow: William Collins, 1975), p. 128.

relative world. Thus occasions can be determined as the product of their environment just as the environment can be understood as being constituted by the occasion. Every occasion constitutes its relative actual world.

This process is not to be intellectually grasped as a one-to-one relation. Whitehead occasionally formulated it in such a way for the sake of intellectual simplification, implying that the process can be conceived in terms of one-to-one relations in order that we might be able to link the idea to our familiar ways of thinking in terms of subject-object correlations. But when one does not recognize this pedagogical simplification for what it is and fails to keep it in its proper context, one winds up with some rather obscure intellectual creations which quite understandably serve to frighten people away from this theory. In contrast to conventional correlation theories, Whitehead's theory must be thought of in terms of many-to-one relations; every occasion is to be grasped as the concrescence of a multiplicity of other occasions. At the same time we must also see that this occasion which objectivizes and comprehends other occasions is itself involved as a datum in many other processes of concrescence, that it for its part is objectified by many other occasions. This, then, is the foundational structure of Whitehead's theory of occasions and their relative actual worlds: every occasion, on the one hand, objectivizes and unites many occasions in the concrescence process in which it appears—it is this union; yet on the other hand it itself is involved as an objectivized component in many other processes of concrescence of other occasions.

Every occasion not only concretizes (in subjective fashion) the other occasions as elements of its relative actual world, but is also (in objective fashion) a component of the relative actual worlds of the other occasions in which it, for its part, is involved.

The precise analysis and presentation of this process of the appearing of occasions in their relative actual worlds, or rather of the concrescence of the world in one-time occasions, is found in Whitehead's magnum opus, *Process and Reality*. This difficult work is actually nothing more than the differentiated description of the process we have sketched out here, but from a multitude of perspectives, filled with historically-oriented philosophical discussions and systematically arranged demonstrations of the scientific explanatory power of this starting point.

When we look at this fundamental structure of Whitehead's mature cosmology, grown out of a dispute with conventional conceptions of the world, we can now precisely locate the systematic place of cosmic piety in Whitehead's work. As we asked in the first part of this presentation: Can Whitehead keep his theory of religiousness from slipping into a mere conception of the hallowing of a given private world, of the hallowing of the subjective experiencing of reality and totality?

With respect to the foundation of Whitehead's mature cosmology we are confronted with the cognition that every occasion is the concrescence of its relative actual world: "Each actual occasion defines its own actual world from which it originates. No two occasions can have identical [but only related, similar, highly-similar—M.W.] actual worlds."<sup>26</sup> What then is the specific role of

religiousness, given that the co-emergence of an individual actual occasion and its relative actual world makes up the foundation of everything "real"?

In Whitehead's view it is exactly religiousness, or more precisely, cosmic piety that overcomes the fundamental individuality and relativity of the experience of the actual world without thereby destroying individuality itself. The actual, concrete world is the world objectivized by an actual occasion, or rather the concretized relative world in an actual occasion. At the level of anthropology and of our daily experience this is to say simply that no one sees with another's eyes, that no one lives another's life. Even though we experience many things as being common to us all, each of us lives in his or her own world. Religiousness in a special way drives beyond this experience, as Whitehead explains by comparing it with the strategy of world-objectification through the natural sciences.

The natural sciences also provide operations by which the private nature of the experience of the world can be gone beyond. But these operations abstract from the uniqueness of the actual world and the actual occasion; they distort the perception of the concrete world and are necessarily destructive insofar as they interfere with the physical reality. In contrast to these, religiousness develops conceptions of the trans-individual universal world in which the subjective actual occasions along with their relative actual worlds are preserved. This trans-individual world, however, cannot be comprehended simply with the help of the old-European part-whole schemata. The relative actual worlds of the actual occasions are not simply "parts" of a "greater whole," a whole which it is the task of religion to comprehend or indeed claim. The most all-encompassing whole, beyond which nothing greater can be experienced, remains, rather, for each occasion its own relative actual world, the world it concretizes. Yet in this actualization, the occasion is steered by an envisioning of God, by an actual, objective, universal concrescence of the world which, however, does not thereby destroy individual perspective, relativity, and finiteness.

This force continuously driving beyond the experience of individual finiteness, this power leading to an intensification of individual life and of the possibilities for integration and participation, is to be understood as cosmic piety. The solitariness of perfection and of evanescence on the one hand and the full utilization and exhaustion of the individual relative world, the going beyond this world and the energetic subjectivity on the other—this process determining all that is actual can, in Whitehead's view, be equally comprehended as a cosmological phenomenon or described as a religious occurrence.

It would not be sufficient to describe this concrescence of the world which Whitehead calls "God" only as something that "goes beyond" the actual occasion and its relative actual world. In a banal, if thoroughly appropriate sense, one can call each occasion that objectifies another the "transcendence" of the objectified occasion. When you respond to these remarks by shaking or nodding your head, you are as transcendent to me in this sense as a flower is to the water it has absorbed or as children come of age are to their parents. Every occasion that objectivizes an antecedent occasion (as an element of its relative actual world) in this connection exhibits transcendence. Now it is

26. *Process and Reality*, Corrected Edition (New York: Free Press, 1978), p. 210.

important to note once again that occasions not only concretize many other occasions. In this their "objectification"—Whitehead also speaks of their "publicization"—they seem to become disrupted. Insofar as occasions or series of occasions, insofar, for example, as "we" are objectified and transcended by other occasions, as we are included as elements in many other relative worlds, our subjectivity and our relative actual world is superseded, objectified, and decomposed. Whitehead speaks quite deliberately about "perishing," about the perishing of occasions in a subjective sense. Yet this occurrence of subjective perishing, this end of subjectivity, its objectification in other concrescences of the world, must still be distinguished from the preservation of the occasion in its uniqueness and individuality in a trans-individual world. This unity of the world that preserves individuality Whitehead called "deified world" or "God." Cosmic piety is directed towards this objective, universal actual world. Without it there would be, in Whitehead's view, no alternative in principle to relativism, arbitrariness, and hopelessness.

According to Whitehead, if we understand this world which is objective yet preserves the concrete individual—more precisely, the pluralism of individual concrescences—as being itself a concrete entity we may then speak of it as "God." More precisely: depending upon whether it is this concrescence, the therein concretized world, or the cosmological function that is visualized, Whitehead can speak of "God," the "kingdom of heaven," or the "world which can be called God." Now whether this way of speaking is also satisfactory in the perspective of Christian theology—and I am of the opinion that it is not, that Whitehead has confused God with a very complex and fruitful understanding of "heaven"—whether one has theological scruples in opposition to his talk of God, systematically-speaking, Whitehead's conception is admirably consistent.

The individual concrescences of the individual whole and completed worlds, worlds that in other perspectives are only relative actual worlds, are directed from a religious perspective which—without abolishing individuality, finiteness, and thus actuality—drives on beyond the respective concrescences. This perspective does not function alone as the stimulus to broaden the individual world-perspective, to intensify and deepen the individual concrescence, though this is certainly one aspect of cosmic piety as it appears in Whitehead's work.<sup>27</sup> More important is the perception that without this cosmic piety the unity of the concrete and the objective world—a unity that common sense thought naively presupposes and in cases of conflict cannot defend—would be without ultimate justification. In Whitehead's view it is only the intellectually-defensible idea of cosmic piety that allows us to deny that in the end "each one of us lives in our own world" and indeed that it is only over fictions or violations of the individual that we attempt to break this isolationism of the actual. Cosmic piety, which holds fast to a universal, trans-individual world in which all individual concrescences of the world are preserved without having their individuality and actuality destroyed, does not ignore our experiences of chronic solitariness and of being chronically in danger of living in illusions in real life.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 144ff.

Precisely in these experiences it upholds the faith in the indestructibility of the transitory actual, the faith in the indestructibility of the one-time concrete and individual along with its relative actual world. And it strengthens the faith in the principal trustworthiness and solidarity of the universe in the face of the recognized unavoidability of subjectivism, relativism, and the frailty of the finite. As Whitehead puts it in the final words of *Process and Reality*: "In this way, the insistent craving is justified—the insistent craving that zest for existence be refreshed by the ever-present, unfading importance of our immediate actions, which perish and yet live for evermore."<sup>28</sup>

28. *Ibid.*, p. 351.