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Both process philosophy and key forms of philosophical personalism aim to harmonize the flux of reality, especially of organisms, with cosmic values and human meaningfulness. This is because both must face our mortality. This paper makes four suggestions for considering further the connection between these two approaches. First, that process philosophy can supply for personalism a thoroughly reasoned ground for non-reducible complexity. Second, that process thought borrows from personhood its model for cosmic creativity. Third, that both approaches share strong notions of the interdependence of all parts of a relational universe. And fourth, that they differ in respect of moral philosophy: process philosophy having virtually none, whereas personalism centers it and the obligation to act publicly and privately for justice. Finally, both lines of thought have fraught and unresolved opinions on panpsychism; and yet panpsychism is not only a destination of both but also bears on moral matters. Throughout, the role of memory and history as constituting the real functioning of things, particular of personal moral lives, is emphasized, as both arose from the revolution in philosophy of time at the turn of the twentieth century.

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Thinkers who are drawn to process philosophy regard it with joy. It promises a pluralistic reality, changeful, featureful, and colorful real worlds. It abolishes stolid essences and their turgid hierarchies. The maddening binaries of the one and the many and the repetitive rounds of the subject fighting for a place with the object fall away. Usually it brings us no God waiting to clobber us for our mistakes and faults. Instead, God rides warmly with us in the processual cosmos, and with all living beings, maybe with all things. Process philosophy tells us that we are at home in the universe, without resorting to either the thudding vociferations of realist ontology or the embrangled, straining wish-casting of much of idealist ontology. Process philosophy is high-altitude thinking, yet it seems to avoid aridating the world we experience and love.

Notwithstanding these pleasing prospects, one is obliged to recognize a different side of this matter. I stand in the philosophical tradition of personalism. In what follows, by “personalism” I mean the two most developed contemporary versions: “American” (or “Boston”) Personalism, initiated by Borden Parker Bowne (1847–1910), which launched my interest in this way of thinking, and Thomistic personalism (currently best expounded by John F. Crosby and Robert Spaemann). Within this way of thinking, widely ranging variations, often mutually unreconcilable in many respects, occur, including my own approach. But one point they do all share behooves a philosopher sharing in this line of thought to ask a specific question. This question is the first of five that I consider in this essay. It starts my examination of the cousinship of personalism and process philosophy, proximate to each other since both began at the founding of modernism. It also is prior to any other philosophical questions about the processual universe. I hold this to be the case not only for a personalist thinker because of her personalism but also for all thinkers on the basis of their higher order commitments. My claim is an initial operating force in the argument here, and at the same time it also is the outcome of the analysis of the relations of personhood and process that I will present.

Under contemporary personalism, Person (the person, any person, personhood) is the ultimate *explanans*. Because no intelligibility exists without consciousness, that intelligence (however defined) which distinguishes personhood from everything else is the starting-point. [1] Apart from conscious intelligence there is neither processuality nor non-processuality; and the conscious intelligence called Person «can never be construed as a product or compound; it can only be experienced as a fact» (Bowne 1908, 264). Everything we can think about is thought about person-wise. It is the very heart of making sense of things through an intimate relationship to the universe. The impersonal is always approached through Person, or personhood.

[1] I use the notions “consciousness” and “intelligence” here merely provisionally. I will explicate what is more deeply at stake in them later in the essay.

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Therefore, this *first* question is: what is it like to be a person existing in processual reality?

The limits of the extent of personhood form a vaster question than this paper can address. Persons may be human, animal, other-than-human, more-than-human, or immaterial. But for present purposes I must consider the question as it applies solely to human persons. For human persons are the kind of persons I know best. They are probably the only kind of persons about whom I know much of anything at all.

Incessant change poses the threat of survival to any living being. Of this death is the ultimate marker. Fear of every decay, loss, and injury leading to suffering or to the end of life, as well as the end itself, motivates human cognition and production—our technology, art, and love; war and peace; religion, regret, and pity; striving, planning, persisting, hoping. Some people these days claim to think that disruption of our settled forms of life is itself a good. By this claim these disruptors, who often are plutocrats, mean that disrupting your life is good for their benefit—this is now an operating principle of hyper-capitalism. Everything does change, but for the individuals in the biosphere and for the biosphere itself the biggest change is death. Whitehead recognized «perpetual perishing» as «the ultimate evil» (Whitehead 1978, 340).

In the face of our mortality, every process philosopher recognizes their personal relation to finitude, just as personalists do. This unites us all and everyone else; we are all just humans. All of us are persons and parts of processual reality. Both process philosophy and the personalist tradition confront this in their cognate, but different, ways. Personalism applies this to all kinds of theory.

Most people feel the need to shape their lives. That order and disorder are imputed by persons to the world external to them might make these categories seem to be meaningless in the impersonal empiricist or scientific senses of the meaning and the meaningless. But those and similarly positivist positions cannot defeat the truth that person-imputed order and disorder and gains and losses have at least one kind of reality. Let us call this reality meaningfulness (as opposed to falsifiable meaning and semantic meaning). We shape our lives for meaningfulness. Even when we decline to do so, we are giving a certain sort of definite meaning to a life characterized by our abjuring conceptual or affective shaping. Also, we need object permanence for our capacity to predict by means of rational operations, which are requisite for survival. Even these activities rely on our self-identity as having a shape we can at least partially control, that we contemplate, and for which we strive. Sometimes people find it beneficial not to fuss much with such self-understanding for some period or all their lives. Indeed, relaxing that drive can be a good. There is no quantifying how well this works. But we commonly think that persons deeply alienated from their own core constituents of temporal coherence and meaningfulness are disordered. In any case, part of the skill that can shape our lives is the ability to comprise the dynamism of the world in tandem with the more enduring affects that make for meaningfulness, which struggles against but also along with alteration. This is an old theme in process thought: Heraclitus referred to the lyre and the archer's bow as examples of the tension between holding and letting go (Heraclitus 2016, 161, fr D49).

A flame is a symbol of «permanence in fluency and of fluency in permanence» (Whitehead 1978, 347). In his meditation on a candle's flame—a

metonym for the Heraclitean processual universe—Gaston Bachelard, a founder of process thought who also contributed to phenomenology, notes the difference between an oil lamp and an electric light. For him, in his own life, oil lamps were familiar and dear from his childhood, as opposed to the electric light that he never can consider to be “his.” Speaking more broadly of objects on the memory and presence of which one shapes one’s character, he observes:

The lived companionship of familiar objects leads us back to life that passes slowly. Close to them, we are caught up once more by a reverie that possesses its own past but is nevertheless fresh time and again. Objects kept on the whatnot shelf, in that tiny museum of beloved things, are the talismans of poetry.... What a disaster it is for reverie when the names, the old names of objects begin to change, to become attached to things completely different from the good old things on the old what-not shelf! (Bachelard 2012, 63)

We must take him as not pointing merely to his nostalgia for flickering light from smokey wicks or for bibelots and trinkets. He means more than these. He fears losing the freedom from mechanism, as Bergson might have put it, with which we create the worlds we hope to dream into being. The projection of feeling, through the massive power of human memory, onto objects and any sort of thing that fills remembrance, so deeply characteristic of the human, steadies the personality for perseverance through contingent life. Our “whatnots,” in any sort of form, represent the concepts and emotions, the drives and forces, the fears and hopes that attach us to the world. We belong here amidst change by keeping some finger-hold on the chthonic in ourselves. This means that the things we make in the most human ways—as the oil lamp we coax into life was for Bachelard, though this holds true even for electronic objects—expresses the human in the ways that other humans recognize. As he puts it, every lamp is « *the lamp of the other person* » (Bachelard 2012, 71; author’s italics).

I emphasize our psychic reliance on stable and even primitive reference-points in part for the purpose of balancing processuality from the point of view of human personhood. But this serves a further purpose here, connected to the first purpose. Like “society” and “nature,” “person” is an extremely polyvalent noun. It is put to use to further many different conceptual and practical goals. Personhood, just like the words representing it, exists in a fluid reality. A desire to dispel the mists of theological and moral speculation that infest the word impelled John Dewey (followed by others) to argue for confining “person” to strictly legal meanings (Dewey 1926). [2] He founds his argument on

the principle known as “extensive abstraction”, and assumes this form: ...what really matters to science is not the inner nature of objects but their mutual relations, and that any set of terms with the right mutual relations will answer all scientific purpose as well as any other set with the sort of relations. (Dewey 1926, 661)

[2] On “essentially contested concepts” and “meaning finitism,” see Kusch (2014). Dewey in writing about the particular topic of corporate personhood and Kusch in writing about group agency in social ontology (referring to Dewey) are valuable illuminations of the broader subject of the meaning of personhood that a vast literature debates.

The quoted definition is from C. D. Broad’s 1923 *Scientific Thought* (39) who pointedly notes that « the idea and the name are taken, however, by

him from A. N. Whitehead » (Dewey 1926, 661 fn. 7). This approach to names is both pragmatist and processual. Whitehead came eventually to hold that the path to understanding the manifold of process lies through what I provisionally called, above, “conscious intelligence,” that he called “concrescence of an actual occasion,” and that Isabelle Stengers describes as «a subjective process of self-production» (Stengers 2008, 103). This is the part of the way I stipulate to “Person” relevant to present purposes. Personhood amidst process, taken in a pragmatist way that differs from Dewey’s, taken not as formal nominalism but as humanly real, exists both in its vulnerability to dissolution and in the efforts of consciousness to retain identity for the sake of meaningful living.

The sense of being a person existent in the cosmic process is that of a self-consciousness that seeks some sort of stability and yet is blown back in this search by ceaseless change. Of these two sides of cosmic process both personalist and process philosophical traditions seek a unified understanding under different concepts of “unity.” There might be other important contrasts between the two, but this is the one for the study of which this essay makes some suggestions. Even within Bowne’s work a difficult tension between stability and activity, or identity and flux, drives his conception of personhood (Futch 2024; Prust 1997). I have no space here to resolve this for personalism, though I think it resolvable. Nor is my present purpose to harmonize the personalist and processual approaches to existential philosophical questions. My purpose is, instead, to think about just some of what each offers to the other and to each of us in our burden of making sense of the situation we are in.

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I am not hallucinating that personality is stable. Rather, I want more truly to understand change with continuity. I am pointing out that retention is as much a part of personhood as change and loss is. I am looking at these elements in living persons rather than in the fundamentals that conventional ontology seeks, even if the fundament is perpetual change. [3] The point is to remove definitions not only from metaphysical speculation but from essences intended to override the flux of things. Instead, we will take the full range of phenomena without materialist or idealist reduction. Here we stumble into the conflict between the shaping that human persons generally require in order to flourish and the ontological picture of ceaseless dynamics summed up by Whitehead in this slogan: «...actuality [is] in its essence a process» (Whitehead 1933, 355).

[3] More broadly, as a personalist I hold that the ontological level is a displacement of what is more truly personal; thus, the metaphysics of tension and harmony or unity and multiplicity are pale reflections of the actuality of stability and change in persons.

Reflecting on this conflict, my *second* question arises: what can personalism take from the basics of process philosophy? On what aspect(s) of process should a good understanding of personhood rely? There are, perhaps, several process concepts that are good for personalism. But I shall focus on just one.

There is a reason that the thing-ontology and substance metaphysics against which process philosophy pitches itself exists. No problem in Western thought is more primitive than the struggle to reconcile the One and the Many. We know quite well without any fancy tutoring

that our world is a world of Becoming, and it also is easy to find motives for seeking stable Being. For Heraclitus, both, like life and death, «are inextricably and indivisibly one» (Porter 2024, 51, 74). The tension in the “back-stretched” bow and lyre he describes represent the continuum that includes all the stopping-points and all the moving-passages among them, and thereby all things and objects, that make up existence for the living in a cosmos that itself is living (Porter 2024, 78, 88). Kant gave us a good part of the reasons for these non-processual approaches: the human mind is constituted so as to seek unities. Patterns are crack and catnip to our brains. We seek and find them innumerable times in every day. The philosophical employment of personhood as the chiefest category must both satisfy the desires and actual practice of persons in pursuit of what unity gives to meaningfulness and at the same time include our wayward inward selves existing in the fissiparous real universe.

For Plato, citing Heraclitus (*Symposium* 187a4–6), the image of harmony as reconciliation of opposites and of unity in diversity becomes a primary cosmic and ontological metaphor. Plato’s account of Heraclitus’ concept suggests that beings are alienated from themselves (“pulled away”) and then reconciled to themselves (“pulled together”) but that they cannot be in both states at the same time. Processual thinking holds that they can be in both states and the same time and also that all dis-alienation, if any, occurs in the becoming. It thereby overthrows the contradiction that Parmenidean thinking cannot allow to being. Process philosophy suggests that the danger of substance ontology to personhood is that it imposes an intolerably rigid lock-down that leads to alienation. The answer it offers to personalism is its well-grounded defeat of reductionism.

Personhood in personalism must be seen as virtually infinitely complex. I use the phrase “virtually infinitely complex” as a synonym for the non-reducibility of personhood. In this frame personhood cannot be reduced to any of its aspects. For personalism, personhood cannot be reduced to things of any sort; Person must not be seen as wholly formed by the actions of external forces; no person can be correctly and exhaustively accounted for by any of her parts; and the features pertaining to persons, individually or in groups, cannot exhaustively explain them. Persons are not “truly” their age or circumstances, economic, or sociological, or psychological, or neurochemical, or evolutionary, or temporal, or spiritual, or any other aspect privileged as the ultimate category for understanding. This position supports the claim of the ultimate and ineliminable worth and dignity of every person. And yet this claim is merely sentiment or moral intuition. The empirical or constructive claims of reductionist theories can render our sense of self-worth defenseless. Or worse: reduction of persons becomes instrumentalization of persons. The reducer identifies personhood’s parts, picks the useful bits, and then uses them as things rather than as whole persons. There is only a hair’s width of distance between reductionism and transactional abuse of persons and of nature.

Process thinking is rigorously non-reductive. The first step to this was the powerful widespread turn to time that inspired Western thought an art around the turn of the twentieth century (Kern 2003; Lebovic 2024). Process philosophy was one of its outcomes. Time differs from space by allowing for novelty and creation. Since there always is novelty

in the universe, we must say that at any one moment the universe is incomplete. This incompleteness is temporal, not spatial, because novelty occurs in successive moments. Duration is the reality of the activity of entities in their incompleteness. «To be is to be incomplete,» Paul Weiss writes (Weiss 1966, 211); and to miss the consequences of this principle is to fall into what he calls «the fallacy of essential completeness» (Weiss 1966, 208–209). A thing without activity is not an entity. [4] This activity, constitutive of being, is cumulative through the diachronesis of each entity and that of all reality. As Whitehead puts it, «it belongs to the nature of a ‘being’; that it is potential for every ‘becoming’» (Whitehead 1978, 22). Each new unity joins all its predecessors. Therefore, as he unforgettably puts it, «The many become one and are increased by one» (Whitehead 1978, 21). This forever unceasing, all-inclusive accretive pulling-together is what the finite is in its incompleteness and the infinite is in its inclusion of all aspects of all existents. [5]

If «to be an actual thing is to be limited» and if «all the facts of the world» (Whitehead 1926, 150–151) process into an infinity of new realizations, what is the force that pushes limited actualities into unlimited creativity? It is memory, which keeps the already-actual facts of the world available for novel actualities and which is the cradle of relations. For Whitehead, perception is a function of memory, which actuates the prehension of all occasions, that is, all experience (Hartshorne 1972, 125). For Deleuze, «Virtual objects belong essentially to the past» (Deleuze 1994, 101). It is through memory that subjects pull past experience forward, and all subjects refer themselves to other reality through memory (Hartshorne 1972, 125, 14). In this way infinite relationality inhabits all subjects (Hartshorne 1972, 14). [6] A self just is this process, a «megaprocess» in Nicholas Rescher’s word (Rescher 108). In process theory, memory is not a transcendental agent. It is, instead, «the always momentary stream or sequence of acts» (Hartshorne 1962, 201). It is the succession of ephemeral acts, each built upon all its predecessors by «sympathetic inheritance» (Hartshorne 1972, 16), which is the universal historical process, compounded of infinitely many sub-compounds into an infinitely complex cosmic compound. Because every subject is made up of and adds to the virtually infinitely extensive society of existents, no entity is reducible to selected dominant or valorized parts. Its history is too deeply that of interdependence, in which each relationship ramifies and reflects the rest of its temporal course. Pluralism, that society required by the incompleteness of things, is the path to infinitely complex, irreducible holism.

Memory is essential to time and to any turn of theory toward temporality. Process philosophy, rooted in the great renovation of the understanding of time in Western thought, generally extends the sentience of memory into a cosmic force. [7] For personalism, this is a large-scale proof of the non-reducibility of intelligence and thereby of the virtually infinite complexity of persons. Certainly there are other ways to provide a rigorous account of Person that cannot be dissolved into things, that can allow us to avoid reifying social forces and

[4] Cfr. Bowne (1910, 16–17).

[5] Gadamerian hermeneutics might, it seems, share a notion of processive growth on its own linguistic level with Whitehead’s conscence on his ontological level.

[6] The concept of growing omni-relationality in process philosophy grew from C. S. Peirce’s idea of monistic universal continuity that he called synechism.

[7] My centering memory in reading Whitehead somewhat anthropomorphizes Whitehead’s idea of concretion. I do this for the purpose of developing personalism. Whitehead’s panpsychic tendency attributes active self-creation to all subjects in the universe. From my point of view,

psychic drives, and in this justify our moral intuition of the worth of sentient life. One of the values of the explanation I propose that personalism take from process philosophy is that through memory it refers us to history, which has a unique importance for personalism, as we will see.

The relational nature of personhood grows from its irreducibility. To put it another way, the virtually infinitely complex character of personhood makes persons relational. The strand of process thought I have outlined is one way to account for complexity as a function of a relational universe.

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The *third* question turns in the direction opposite to the second question: what does process philosophy take from personalism?

I ought to acknowledge the conventional qualification “if anything.” I do not use it, however, because this question comes with an answer that familiarity with personalism intuitively sees. This answer is: the image of creativity that most canonical process thinking uses is modeled on the image of personhood. We have no direct observed model of an agentive intelligence that creates other than that we see in human persons. Several lines of contemporary thought, inspired in part by process philosophy, extend this to non-human entities. In the case of some animals, empirical evidence supports and advances this ascription, while extension of it to what is traditionally considered inanimate is much more speculative and still dependent on theory. But such theory itself has context and history. So we look to the story of process philosophy, which has been a stimulant to speculative ontology of this sort, for the sources of its own stimulation. Whereas my second question considered an argument personalism might borrow from process in order to sustain the validity of one of its core notions, this third question not only reverses the order of the borrower and the lender but likewise turns from validity to genesis, that is, to historical origin and influence. Tracing this requires describing the inner systematic need for a concept of creativity and some guesses (in section 4) at the intellectual history by which what was needed was supplied.

In much of process thought, all of time is creativity. The passage of time is the creation of novelties; and past time, or history, is the flow of creation. Bergson says that if time is anything, it is creativity. Whitehead says that “the creativity for a creature becomes a creativity with the creature” because “the temporal world is an essential incompleteness” that each entity feels and responds to through adding itself to the history of creation (Whitehead 1926, 92). Thus existence itself for Whitehead is self-determined creation. Time is not a process or *durée*; rather, the actual history of events, including the passing present moments, is the flow that we inaccurately consider to fill time.

Process thought broadly uses anthropomorphic terms to describe cosmic creators. Whitehead says there is nothing apart from experience and feeling (Whitehead 1978, 167), every feeling thing is a subject, such subjects in process form societies. His interpreters in processual accounts of creativity (and he as well) refer to self-determination, emotion, ecstasy,

the past is active solely through the intelligence of persons in their capacity as moral agents. For Whitehead, the past is both an attained and therefore passive actuality, or *concretum*, and as well an energetic cause in the continuous creation of its and all other subjects, the past indispensably imposing itself onto the present. This non-personalist idea is the key issue in drawing an axiology out of Whitehead's system (Henning 2004, 43-65). But by emphasizing memory in this matter, I am drawing agency, history, and value together in a personalist direction.

satisfaction, achievement, contribution, decisions, values and valuing, beauty, enjoyment, morality, “personality” itself. One could say that the first task in understanding Whitehead is to penetrate his boundary-crossing use of these terms we ordinarily use in considering human affairs so deeply as to see how he is describing all existents. Even for speculative ontologists and process philosophers of much later date words and ideas on the human model are both assigned to the non-human and serve as propaedeutics to understanding reality apart from humans.

Robert Spaemann (Spaemann 2015, 77–96) makes a useful point by stipulating anthropocentrism to be the humanly blinkered inability to understand anything without putting ourselves in the middle of it and anthropomorphism to be the inescapable fact that we can perceive and reflect from no point of view other than the human. This does not mean we cannot stretch our understanding beyond what we are equipped to do best. In fact, Spaemann argues that we transcend our limited selves by all the recognitions of the non-self. We make ourselves real by the necessary anthropomorphizing of other persons, beings, and entities we must undertake in order to have relations with these others. Starting from here is our only way to go to there. This is how we as human persons know to act from within, that is to create our history of novelties. This is subjectivity for us, and it is what Whitehead and other process philosophers ask us to do in order to grasp subjectivity as reality itself. Without doing this, process would be merely mechanical and valueless. There would be no point to process philosophy in the absence of anthropomorphism in the sense of our capacity to discern value in all reality. As post-Cartesian subjects, we cannot leave the universe to dead thinghood. Instead, we might see subjectivity as everywhere the product unique to life and perhaps constituting the processive cosmos itself (Kohn 2013, 76).

That processual creativity is anthropomorphically modeled on human personhood is a reasonable inference. Personalism centers being, or reality, on personal consciousness, so that personalist thought might have helped to build creativity as an element of process philosophy. But there is also a conceptual need internal to the system Whitehead developed that obliges at least some process thinkers to posit something personalistic.

To create something is to produce elements of and for a creation that the creator chooses and not to choose or to use other elements. A vaster array of possibilities face the agent than the agent can possibly use. The context and the focus a creator (or producer) brings to the task make it impossible to choose some elements and necessary to choose others, but the rejected elements are impossible only in the sense that the agent’s desires guide her actions. They are all possibilities in the broader sense that we apply to cosmogony and to the nature common to all productive processes in time. When not actualized, these possibilities are in the past. In what manner do these past unrealized possibilities exist? This question belongs to the larger field of the weird ontology of the past, which in turn is part of the yet larger problems of our natural, moral, and ontological relations to the past comprising both actual eventual past and all possible pasts.

Process philosophers in various ways understand these possible pasts as a part of all reality. An infinite being might comprehend them all; whether and how such a being might do so has become one of the thorny brambles of process theology. But of the existence of finite beings, such as

human persons (and animal persons, if any), disused possibilities are a necessary feature. Their creative acts require discarding possibilities in order to proceed. Whitehead called the possibilities that no longer effect or constitute the present negative prehensions. Adapting his terms, creativity is not personal if negative prehensions are dismissed or excluded; and it is not impersonal if negative prehensions are not dismissed or excluded (Auxier and Herstein 2017, 265–266). [8] To the extent that this binary schema is correct, for an impersonal creative being the past is relatively simple, perhaps uniform, perhaps even without parts. But under the same proviso, for persons history is fraught. Recollection, forgetting, deletion; complicated antagonisms, psychic processes; the presence of the absent, the cunning of context and causality, the zigzag of temporalities—these make for the only creativity we as human persons know.

[8] The issue of whether negative prehensions exist for God is treated in all its complexity by Auxier & Herstein (2017, 240–280). I follow their insight that any personal divine being must have negative prehensions, expanding this is the claim that deleting them is a part of the relation of persons to history. See also Auxier (2023).

This richly featureful historical consciousness specific to persons and the personal is, I propose, the experience that process philosophers take, knowingly or not, as the taproot of the cosmogonic creation required by their vision of reality as fully processual. The horizon of personal and collective memory that is the sum of all our behavior and experience, which we call history, is part of the continuity of creative activity. One way to understand the harmony informing cosmic creativity according to process philosophy is on the model of the integration of past and present features we find in personhood. For persons, that is, for every intelligible perspective, the actual universe is complex but integrated.

5

While my second and third questions relate, in part, to the present and past of process philosophy, the fourth and fifth questions bear on its future and that of personalism. My *fourth* question is, what connects these two lines of thought? What do they share? The answer, something other than what each might take from the other, is the reason for connecting them in this paper.

The proximity of these two lines of thought began with the launching of their modern forms amidst the revolt of the nineteenth century against its own era. Both were reactions against the dehumanized and disenchanting civilization arrayed by the great tide of new thinking that began around 1890 and smashed up against World War I but did not stop. They saw being as temporally dynamic and effective activity. One historian calls them “soulmates” from the start because they both see intelligence as a first principle of ontology (Burrow 1999, 232–233). [9] And yet, as Randall Auxier points out, their affinity is « a tangled problem » that has not been fully addressed (Auxier 2001, 100).

[9] William James was a concrete link between them. Late in life he told both Bowne and Bergson that his views had turned closely toward theirs.

One clear source of their affinity is their rejection of ontologies of material substance because these atomize reality, making independence primary both for persons (as in Locke’s idea of personal identity) and for change in general (Henning 2004, 29–31). Both hold that Descartes misunderstands subjectivity as a thing over against object-things. Whitehead makes « universal relativity » a principle

whereby every entity is present in every other entity (Whitehead 1978, 50) because reality is a «continuous stuff» (Whitehead 1978, 79). The cosmic creativity for which he argues requires nothing less relational. Substance ontology strongly tends to deflate the role of anything like conscious intelligence. From the start of its modern forms, personalism has seen personhood in wholly, deeply relational terms—terms in which the persons cannot live or even exist apart from the society of others. Bowne’s «invisible dynamic system» (Bowne 1908, 233–234) is «one in its manifoldness and manifold in its oneness» (Bowne 1908, 262). Persons embody the intelligent agency without which any ontology is mere assembly and “classification” (Bowne 1908, 237). According to Thomistic personalism, «personhood as such arises only in plurality» (Spaemann 2006, 39). Personalism is not about who we are or what we are, as if it described a substantial essence by its parts. Instead, it concerns an irreducible term; and process philosophy similarly replaces the old questions with its notion of the irreducible process of which the human is a part.

This vast relationality makes for the passage of time informing both personhood and process. John Dewey, who had a foot in each camp, says that «temporal quality and historical career are the mark of everything» (Dewey 1999, 107). The relation of humans to their history is commonly called “historicity.” This term is used in many ways, of which quite a few of them are senseless or careless. I have argued elsewhere (Gilbert 2020) that the aspect or content of this concept that is most important, comprehensive, and relevant to philosophy and culture now is interdependence. The actual content of history is the relations of persons to one another, especially in large collectives, and to all the beings of the world. Any understanding of the world is an understanding of the interdependence of all things and of time as the history of interdependence. Future time and the way life might continue in it, as well, a question of interdependence: never more so than in the Anthropocene Age when we must develop our awareness of the inescapability of interdependence into an essential feature of human planetary civilization.

Personalist thought and process philosophy, having spread through many channels, into the sciences and the arts, foreshadowed what must become a key to our governance of ourselves if we are to survive. They share this concept, this distinction, and this future. The future of their linked possibilities for guiding culture and civilization lies, then, in the twin directions of moral philosophy and also in the philosophical issue of panpsychism.

6

I will address these two directions in my final question by looking at what separates process and personalist philosophical approaches. The *fifth* question is, how do they differ? In considering their joint and several futures, this is not less important than the question as to what they share because the gap between them marks a part of the path ahead. I have in mind two disconnections between them.

The first is that personalism, in the major forms considered here, is strongly oriented toward effective moral action in the world. This is not merely a matter identifying Being and activity, as do both Bowne (Burrow

1999, 96) and Thomistic philosophical theology. It is by no merely ontological point and by no coincidence at all that the two most famous personalists of the last century, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Karol Wojtyła, later Pope John Paul II, led two of the liberation movements of the century most consequential for billions of humankind. Wojtyła's most important work is called *The Acting Person* (Wojtyła 1979). It is even found in Marx's unity of theory and praxis both because actions affect the well-being of persons (Macmurray 1933, 25–63). [10] This disposition toward sparking philosophers into action is wholly missing from canonical process philosophy.

[10] Macmurray's own major work is called *The Self as Agent* (Macmurray 1957). Marx holds this view also because as a theorist he holds actions more "real" than ideas. He took a large measure of this view from the controversy over the personhood of God that dominated the post-Hegelian atmosphere of his early period (Breckman 1999). One of my most heterodox opinions is that Marx's own thought has strong personalist elements.

The second difference is closely related to the first. At its best, personalism develops concepts needed for ethical activity. Process philosophy has been weak in axiology and hence in moral philosophy, with some exceptions (Henning 2004, 198–199, n. 64). The first work in this direction was published in 1983 (Gray 1983), unless one counts Bergson's 1932 *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*. Whitehead clearly thought that value was «at the base of existence,» there being no valueless reality (Henning 2004, 3). This view is part of his *dicta* that all things have agency and that there is subjectivity at the heart of becoming (Henning 2004, 37). But in this case value is not anthropogenic (Henning 2004, 58). [11] Personalism, on the other hand, has had a vital moral purchase from the start that is fundamental to the role of conscious intelligence in the universe. In Boston personalism, this is the effect of the human person—sometimes excluding external intelligence as a binding force, sometimes making it all human work when in its most idealistic moods, and most always based in some way or another on the intelligence of the divine person. But in all cases, as the lives of King and Wojtyła show, the ethics of how we are to relate to the manifold of which we are apart and to political society in particular is uppermost. Setting aside process theology, there is nothing of this sort in process philosophy. The notions of "personality" in Whitehead and any social ontology in this approach have a long way to go.

[11] Henning's own book, *The Ethics of Creativity*, is a processual approach to ethics, as is Daniel Dembrowski's *Process Philosophy and Political Liberalism: Rawls, Whitehead, Hartshorne* (Edinburgh University Press, 2019).

Now, both personalism and process have a natural interest in the relation of the present to the past. This can be a matter of ontology, but it is also deeply a matter of the moral relations between past persons and present persons—that is, between all of us and the lives and deeds of our predecessors. Study of the processive function of memory in pushing possibilities into actualities ought to mature into the ethics of historicity, and the interest of personalists in the relations of the individual to the group and of an I to a Thou ought to grow in the perspective of the vast Other of past persons. All this is especially true if, as Auxier notes, processuality can plumb a richer relation of persons to the past than personalism can (Auxier and Davies, 113). Our moral life is what Wojtyła calls «the dynamic reality of the acting person» (Wojtyła 1979, 196).

Throughout this discussion, the issue of panpsychism has flitted in and away. Personalism may approach it, depending on how far or not it takes the intelligence, of which human persons are conscious, to be a cosmic force. Process philosophy may approach it, depending on how

complexly or reductively it comes to see subjectivity as a comic governor. William James, as usual, got the heart of the matter for the future of philosophy:

Here, then, you have the plain alternative, and the full mystery of the difference between pluralism and monism, as clearly as I can set it forth on this occasion. It packs up into a nutshell:—Is the manyness in oneness that indubitably characterizes the world we inhabit, a property only of the absolute whole of things, so that you must postulate that one-enormous-whole indivisibly as the *prius* of there being any many at all...—or can the finite elements have their own aboriginal forms of manyness in oneness, and where they have no immediate oneness still be continued into one another by intermediary terms—each one of these terms being one with its next neighbors, and yet the total “oneness” never getting absolutely complete? (James 1977, 147)

We are now coming to find the vision that his idea of neighborly but never unifying “intermediate terms” previews: the dynamic, quantum, cosmopsychic, maybe re-enchanted understanding of reality toward which the biological and physical sciences seem to be taking us. Much of this was initiated in its personalist and processive forms by the moves at the turn of the twentieth century made by the philosophers of that time most prominently mentioned here. It is part of the future of these lines of thought to analyze the place of the lives of human persons but also to guide our well-being—as individuals, as societies, and as species amidst nature—in such a panpsyche.

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