

Anyone

Angular Perspective; Or, How Concern Shapes the Field

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Erin Manning is a choreographer of thoughts in the act and a philosopher who places acts at the heart of thinking. Her wide-ranging work fuses a unique repertoire of radical thinkers (A.N. Whitehead, Henri Bergson, Gilles Deleuze, Gilbert Simondon, Spinoza) and aesthetic practices (David Spriggs, Dorothy Napangardi, William Forsythe, Arakawa and Madeline Gins). In congruity with her fusion of theory and practice, the following essay feels written on the move, as if while dancing.

Here, Manning calls us to embark on an adventure within Whitehead's "process philosophy," which has sent shockwaves through the fields of philosophy and science since the early 20th century, in arguing that reality is *not* made of autonomous entities like atoms and particles, but by a continuum of movements and events *all the way down*. Much is at stake for architecture in encountering Manning's Whitehead. A process-based approach has the power to force us rethink our formalist givens, object-centric misconceptions, and never-ending pleas for nonrelational autonomy – as if we need reminding today of how depressing isolation in neatly sealed silos can be. Beneath Manning's explication of Whitehead's philosophy lies a compelling alternative: she invites us to challenge our default predisposition toward frozen forms and, instead, to reconceive the nature-architecture continuum as a moving, pulsating field. – GK

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The central concern of Erin Manning's work is the expansion and reconstitution of the problem of *sentience*. What this means is not only to rescue sentience – the insight accessed through feeling – from its false "ghettoization" in the body and the presumption of its separateness from other neural activity such as thought but also to rescue it from its segregation in narrowly human and subjective experience and to generalize it across the entire spectrum of the natural world.

To sense is no longer simply "to receive stimulus" but rather *to cast, sculpt, partition, and shape* both the life inside us and the life external to us in what we call the universe or world, or in the context of the more intimate relation of practical concern, our environment. The way we structure our psychological and somatic postures, how we adjust and modify this endless relation with the world, is the cocreation at the basis of "reality" and nature. All that we "make" enters into, and in turn makes, us.

Now, *to think* is nothing other than a way of extending sentience ever further into both the physical universe that surrounds us and into our own apparatuses of apprehending the world – into our nervous systems, or as Whitehead calls it, our "souls." *To think* is essentially an excitation, *neither explicitly or intrinsically inside us nor in the separate world that we think of as outside*. It is an excitation at once of matter and spirit that calls for a new arrangement, a new settling of things, a new equilibrium. In architecture, we might refer to this perpetual

Angular Perspective; Or, How Concern Shapes the Field

We've been moving for a long time, but the land moves with you like memory. An Urban Indian belongs to the city, and cities belong to the earth. Everything here is formed in relation to every other living and nonliving thing from the earth. All our relations. [Buildings, freeways, cars] are they not of the earth? . . . Being Indian has never been about returning to the land. The land is everywhere or nowhere. – Tommy Orange, *There, There*

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Nature as the force that moves through us. Nature not as "a" place, but as quality of experience that worlds. To be "of the land" is to let nature world.

Simple Location

A nature, an indefinite and yet singular attestation to what moves us into being. A nature, a parastratum, a textured transversality that refuses, at all costs, any binary with culture. A nature, not *the* nature, not natureculture with nature always on the side of the primitive, the prelinguistic, the land: no sequestering of nature "out there," no assumption that nature can be located, contoured, framed, once and for all. A nature as a way of reminding us, from the very outset, that we are always of *a* nature, that we nature, that nature is us.

But first: simple location. Simple location is the belief, deeply held within Western philosophical lineages, that nature is "composed of permanent things, namely bits of matter, moving about in space which otherwise is empty" (Whitehead 1938, 128). Nature as the empty vessel through which culture moves. Nature as that which contains matter, movement reduced to a property of preexisting form.

When matter is understood as the substrate of nature's expression, the presupposition is that movement is added from without. What moves is not the world in cocomposition but the objects in it, mobilized by external forces. This presupposes that space and time are external to experience: we enter into them. Such a Kantian account of spacetime

achievement as “form” (but only after jettisoning a vast set of biases ingrained in retrograde traditions of thought).

In Manning’s way of casting the world, and in no small part through her engagement with the thought of Whitehead, the practice of living/acting/sensing/thinking is cast as a single multidimensional unfolding. We are no longer forced to differentiate outer “form” from interior life. In this, I would argue, we find not only a deeper neo-Spinozism but also the possibility for a new framework for thinking about design, about the social-physical system in which we are embedded and how as both designers and citizens we can imagine entire new ways to conceive of our relations to it, how we might deploy our own energies and excitations as worldly (unseparated) circuits themselves.

Central to this new posture is the Whiteheadian notion of “ingression,” whereby each and every (worldly) point and occasion enters into every other, such that each such ingression constitutes a unique expression, insight, or “meaning.” In Manning’s text the (often) Whiteheadian terms for this are *contrast*, *occasion*, *concern*, *agitation*, *differential attunement*, and *perspective*, all of which fall under the more familiar umbrella of *process*, a term that we hope will be approached with both reserve and respect for its nuances (this is not always the case) and for its role in characterizing the mode of presence of nature within and around us.

What is at stake here is a broadened approach and understanding of the spontaneous mechanisms of creation with which all human (and other) invention engages. This is why the problem of “angles” is important, precisely because it is no longer an attribute of a visual geometry, but rather a material and experiential one. The principle of “oscillation” is central here – Manning deploys her own term, *foregroundbackgrounding*, in order to describe the foundational principle of a vibratory nature (between *private* and *public*, as Whitehead describes nonlocalized or distributed expression of attributes that endlessly concern us) with which we moderns must finally now come to terms.

Of particular note here is the insistence on the action of “perishing” as a productive act that extends “eternally” as a deposit or residue of ever-recoverable potential for invention. Our natures, and all of the natures outside us, beyond us, and yet to come, are essentially integrative: they are hellbent on *resolving*. This is where a wonderful new understanding of time is presented in Manning’s text, as a perpetual “piecing together” (what in other places she refers to as “chunking”) of particles, pieces, and parts that connect, but never seamlessly, always allowing for – indeed compelling – further emendation or “play.” As if that were not enough, this perpetual activation of gaps is presented as *the space of life* – what she, in concluding, calls “wonder,” which is probably intimately related to the experience of nondivision, union, maybe even *ecstasis*. – SK

reinforces the acculturation of matter in the logic of simple location. What matters is not how things collide in an ecological interplay. What matters is the epistemological evaluation of a count already presupposed. Alfred North Whitehead's critique of simple location contests this view, a refusal of the notion that matter is somehow "self-sufficient with the simple location of the region which it occupies" (1938, 139).

A disembodied account of matter "taking place" in nature suggests that matter is a simple fact, "just there, in that region where it is" (1938, 139). This extracts experience from the field, making it individual. To reduce experience to the individual, to say matter is "just there," is to posit an account devoid of relation, empty of ecology. Experience is not individual in the Whiteheadian account. It is cosmological. Ecology must be understood in this cosmological angle as relation itself. Experience is how the world shifts into a shape, and how that shape *has concern for the field*. Experience as ecology means concern for the field is never reducible to "my" concern. That would return us to nature overcoded by culture. Concern for the field is attunement to the singularity of how nature makes itself felt, how it *matters*.

What matters in the story of matter simply located is not matter but the external valuation of reason over ecology. In this humanist logic, whiteness prevails: power is held by those who invented the count.¹ The culture-nature binary facilitated by the overcoding of nature by culture requires that movement extract itself from experience so that matter can remain inert. Nature: nothing more than a site for that which has already come into form. No attunement here for the complex interplay of force taking form.²

A process philosophical account of nature begins in the mattering itself. Movement matters. Indeed, everything matters here. "Any local agitation shakes the whole universe" (1938, 138). Matter in process philosophy is always expressivity, not simply form. Matter is movement.

Nature

A nature is a moving field, actualized through the quality of its everchanging expression. The indefinite makes a difference: it refuses simple location. A nature finds itself in continuity with Gilles Deleuze's *a* life,³ the force of life-living⁴ that exceeds the shape of *this* life. A nature as the quality of the impersonal "it is raining" (*il pleut*). Linguistically confusing perhaps, but forceful in its refusal to be sited, once and for all.

1. For a more detailed account of whiteness in the context of the colonial effects of simple location (particularly in relation to neurotypicality), see Erin Manning, *For a Pragmatics of the Useless* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020). Whiteness is also at work in the above plea from Orange that his indigeneity not be refused due to a lack of "land" knowledge. "We know the sound of the freeway better than we do rivers, the howl of distant trains better than wolf howls, we know the smell of gas and freshly wet concrete and burned rubber better than we do the smell of cedar or sage or even fry bread – which isn't traditional, like reservations aren't traditional, but nothing is original, everything comes from something that came before, which was once nothing. Everything is new and doomed. We ride buses, trains, and cars across, over, and under concrete plains" (11). The coupling of indigeneity with land (reservations) serves only to bolster the nature-culture binary, keeping indigeneity on the side of nature (without culture).

2. For a more detailed engagement with the force of form, see Erin Manning, "Constituting Facts," in *Relation-scapes: Movement, Art, Philosophy* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009).

3. See Gilles Deleuze, *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, trans. Anne Boyman (New York: Zone Books, 2005).

4. In my *Always More Than One – Individuation's Dance* (Duke University Press, 2013), I write at length about the concept of life-living: "Life is always about a double-capture – on the one hand, it is the force of life-living that exceeds this or that life, and on the other, it is the monadic event of a singular set of conditions in momentary collusion. Life is always between. . . . Life is life-living, an act, replete with the indefinable force of a life coursing through it. Life is a complex of feeling, an ecology not reducible to its data, to its content or its form-takings. Life is the plurality of becoming as felt, a plurality not of many parts – this would place the plural below the category of being – but a plurality at the very level of becoming, a multiplicity in act" (22).

In this cosmology the concept of matter has already deviated toward a mattering, the conditions for how the matter moves as vital as the form it takes. For here there is no longer static location or passivity of spatio-temporal relations. Instead there is agitation “fused into its environment” (1938, 138). For a “detached, self-contained local existence” is a simplification of a much more complex set of relations wherein “the environment enters into the nature of each thing” (1938, 138).

In this relational cosmology the field is agitated by all that moves it. This is not to say that the agitation is perceptible all the way down. Or, to put it differently, it is not to say all perception can be reduced to us, to *our* view of the world. The shaking of the universe is felt in the most minute of ways by a universe altered by the agitations of experience. What is experienced is the effect of force taking form, immanent movement expression. “The distant effects are minute, but they are there” (1938, 138). To conceive of such minute alterations in existence is to shift the perspective of the universe from the self-contained subject to the field of experience itself.

That all has been altered is a perspective of the universe on the occasion at hand. The world is shifted by all that comes to be. What has come to be has altered how the world conceives of itself.

This account of nature as all that has come to matter in the agitation of a locality underscores the force that accompanies actualization. Every mattering shifts the conditions of the world. In its entry into the nature of each thing, the environment takes on a new contour. This contour may be barely perceptible in its difference. Nonetheless, change has made itself felt in a universe of activity.

A nature is movement. In the act. “It is nonsense to conceive of nature as a static fact, even for an instant devoid of duration. There is no nature apart from transition, and there is no transition apart from temporal duration. This is the reason why the notion of an instant of time, conceived as a primary simple fact, is nonsense” (1938, 152). *A* nature is the expression of all that moves (us), the more-than of life’s sited expression.

Actuality

In process philosophy, actual occasions are what express experience. An actual occasion is a grasp of mattering that multiplies the universe’s perspective. Directed by a prehension – a hold on an angle of experience – an occasion comes into itself – produces its completion or “satisfaction” – by consolidating around a certain precise node of existence. Such an occasion

is of indefinite scale, magnitude not its concern. To imagine it, it is often easiest to consider the most minute of grasps, but there is a danger there of reorganizing it according to external categories of space or time. An occasion is what occasions, what makes itself *actually* felt in experience. It is an event, in the sense Deleuze and Guattari conceive the term.

To come into itself as such, an occasion of experience must exclude what cannot be consolidated to its monadic expression. An occasion will be affected by what it eliminates, however, despite the elimination not actualizing. In this way, an occasion of experience carries potential even while it excludes it from *actually* participating in the consolidation of what will become the lived expression of what has been prehended.

When an actual occasion fully becomes itself, when it satisfies itself, it perishes. A half second, a millisecond, an epoch. What matters is that it passes, and what remains of it is not the occasion as such, but the ways in which it agitated the universe. To understand the agitation, to feel the force of the mattering, it is vital to recognize that the occasion itself cannot be changed once it has come to be. The occasion is itself, it is what it is. But in the having-been, it is already shifting what else it can become in the grasping that is now being consolidated into a new satisfaction. This greening, oriented around leaves on a tree, and then that force of coloring in the dusk that shifts the green to gray. A series of occasions, no single one the same as the other, and yet colored across their having come to expression to produce an expanse of green-to-gray that *trees*. Form and force forever in relational interplay, the question of how the world makes itself never to be reduced to one or the other as though they could be fully separated.⁵

The perishing of the occasion leaves potential in the world. This potential, a field of relation agitated by all that comes to be, is what Whitehead calls the extensive continuum. Despite its allusion to space, the extensive continuum is not space or spacetime. It is a field of potentia that, when taken up by an actualizing occasion, produces spacetime. The extensive continuum is a nexus of virtual expressions for life-living.

The extensive continuum could be described as the contributory tendencies for *a* nature. Continuum in the sense of movement potential, the extensive continuum carries the “objective immortality” of all that has come to expression, a contribution to all that may newly express itself.

To resist turning the extensive continuum into an ideal form, it is necessary to recognize that the world is not *actually* made of the extensive continuum. The world is made of

5. For an architectural account of how force and form cocompose the work of Greg Lynn, see Brian Massumi, “Form Follows Force,” in *Architectures of the Unforeseen – Essays in the Occurrent Arts* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2019).

actual occasions. But since the occasions are forever perishing, the extensive continuum cannot but be alive with the minor matterings of what has come to actual expression. This naturing of nature can be felt as a thresholding of actuality and potential. Not a body yet, but a bodying, a mattering. When Whitehead says that “the continuum is present in each actual entity, and each actual entity pervades the continuum,” he is reinforcing the fact that it is through actualization that process makes itself felt, but that at one and the same time, the potential that makes it courses through it (1978, 67). In the texture of the relational field, actualization is an inflection, a vector.⁶ Despite carrying the form of the expression, this vector is but an orientation in a thickly textured field of process. To give the inflection eternal form is to overstate the power it has to shape conditions. As inflection, the actual is a peaking, an intensification, of all that stirs. Process is everywhere active in the orientations it contours for experience in the making.

In the interplay of actualizing and perishing, of inflection and process, spacetime is made. Spacetime is another way of articulating the differential field of relation produced at the interstices of actuality and potential. To come to be is to make time, to take space. This taking and making is a naturing. In the naturing, worlds are made.

The naturing made and taken is an act of experience. Much has been discarded for something to emerge just as it is, a something that will now affect how other somethings can become what they will become. This orientation on a becoming is what Whitehead calls perspective. The how of an occasion becoming is replete with the extension of all that potentially moves through it. “The many become one, and are increased by one” (1978, 21).

The many that become one are the potentials subtracted into a unity. The one that increases is the gift the occasion has made to experience. Of course, this may be a poison gift. To change the world is not necessarily good. That the many become one is simply to state a bald fact: to come to be is to have shifted the conditions of what was by subtracting from the welter a singular expression of existence.

Whitehead writes: “The extensive continuum is that general relational element in experience whereby the actual entities [occasions] experienced, and that unit experience itself, are united in the solidarity of one common world” (1978, 72). When Whitehead speaks of a “common world” in relation to the many and the one, it is important not to understand by that a world that is somehow divorced from experience

6. For more on architecture, site, and inflection, see Bernard Cache, *Earth Moves*, trans. Anne Boyman, ed. Michael Speaks (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995).

7. See Denise Ferreira da Silva, "On Difference Without Separability," in *Incerteza Viva (Living Uncertainty)*, catalogue of the 32a São Paulo Fundacao Biennial de Sao Paolo, 2016.

8. For an encounter with the concept of a perspective of the universe in relation to the architectural writings of Arakawa and Gins, see Erin Manning and Brian Massumi, "Alfred North Whitehead and Arakawa and Gins," in *Thought in the Act: Passages in the Ecology of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

making itself. For what is common to the world is that it acts, that it expresses, that it changes and moves. That it is one or common is necessary for its being, at the core, different. That is to say, differential relations are what power this so-called unity. Any other solution would require an external force directing the world, a transcendent power. Process philosophy refuses any notion of external power. What moves the world is how it comes into relation: difference without separability.⁷

Édouard Glissant writes: "Difference is not what separates us. It is the elementary particle of all relation. It is through difference that what I call Relation works" (2010, 91). Difference is at the heart of process philosophy. The unity of its universe is the oneness of relation. This oneness of relation is differential – every shift alters the whole, reorienting it in the interplay of existence, thereby shifting all valuations of what counts. That is to say, experience cannot be externally measured by dividing it into parts. Experience is the eruption of difference that necessitates new forms of valuation at every turn. Process philosophy is a philosophy of emergent encounter, of shifting ground, of differential attunement. More-than.

A nature is a call for a differential attunement to the more-than that courses through life-living. In the Whiteheadian vocabulary, it is an engagement with the force of the continuum that carries it to expression, a force that extends into the nexus of occasions where it continues to modulate what comes to be. "Nature is never complete. It is always passing beyond itself. This is the creative advance of nature" (1978, 289).

Perspective

For Whitehead, how the universe moves through the occasion refers to "what the universe is for that entity either in the way of accomplishment or in the way of potentiality" (1938, 66). He calls it "the perspective of the universe for that entity" (1938, 66). "For example, these are the perspectives of the universe for the number three, and for the colour blue, and for any one definite occasion of realized fact" (1938, 66). The perspective of the universe for an occasion "arises from the sense of positive achievement within the finite, combined with the sense of modes of infinitude stretching beyond each finite fact. This infinitude is required by each fact to express its necessary relevance beyond its own limitations. It expresses a perspective of the universe" (1938, 78–79).

A perspective of the universe⁸ that travels through the occasion of experience puts perspective in the event rather than in the subject. There is no external subject here that

could be excised from the occasion. *A* nature is not subject, it is event. Perspective is how the event comes into its actualization, not how “I” see it.

Subject, for Whitehead, is never pre-given. It is composed: of the occasion, carried by a perspective that forms around it as it comes to be.

The grasp – the prehension – that occasions an event is spurred by feeling. The feeling is not felt by a subject. The subject is made by the feeling. “Feeling is the agent which reduces the universe to its perspective for fact” (1938, 10). Fact here is what moves toward a mattering. Fact is the potential actualizing. “It follows that in every consideration of a single fact there is the suppressed presupposition of the environmental coördination requisite for its existence. This environment, thus coördinated, is the whole universe in its perspective to the fact” (1938, 10). Fact is activity consolidated. Perspective is the angle on that consolidation from within its coming to be.

The angle on consolidation gives us *a* nature. Perspective is not point of view so much as emergent orientation in the feel. “Perspective is the outcome of feeling; and feeling is graded by the sense of interest as to the variety of its differentiations” (1938, 10). Perspective is the expression of feeling-felt. Perspective is the angle of that motoring, an angle expressive of a differential field of relation.

Perspective has nothing to do with vision here. It is feeling-felt, in the orienting toward what accentuates experience, inflecting it, giving it an angularity that reshapes the field.

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro writes of Amerindian perspectivism in ways that texture Whitehead’s account: “Amerindian ontological perspectivism proceeds along the lines that the point of view creates the subject” (de Castro 1998, 6). In the Amerindian cosmology, perspectivism similarly refuses simple location: “The opposition between being and becoming, in Amerindian thought, is not equivalent to that between ‘structure’ and ‘process’ (much less to that between ‘essence’ and ‘appearance’ or ‘reality’ and ‘representation’), but rather to that between univocal identity and plurivocal multiplicity” (de Castro 2015, 288). Here, perspectivism refers to a process of becoming that occurs between humans and animals whereby an emergent reconsolidation of experience shifts the species line: a jaguar in a predatory relationship to the human will become the human in that particular relation. The status of the body is emergent in perspectival orientation. Human is not baseline. Naturing nature

is, that is to say, life–living expressed from that perspective of the universe.⁹

In the metamorphosis of emergent relation, the transformation is not from one thing to another, from jaguar to human, or human to jaguar, as though there could be a clear starting and endpoint that occurs on a flat, simply located ground of existence. Rather, the becoming is an instantaneous reorientation of the field, a new perspective on experience. Becoming is movement of ground, angle on grasp. “Transformation or becoming is a ‘quality,’ not a process – it is an instantaneous shift of perspectives, or rather the entangled, nondecidable coexistence of two perspectives, each hiding the other in order to appear, like those figure–ground reversals we are familiar with, or like the flipping over of the front and back halves of the ‘two-sided species’” (2015, 288). There is no stable ground from which identities have shifted. The coming into perspective is the act that natures beings. “In the act of becoming what changes is not the subject, but the world” (2015, 287).

Viveiros de Castro calls this approach multinaturalism. Multinaturalism refuses multiculturalism as the leading motif of diversity. Enough of culture’s imposition on nature! Multinaturalism recognizes the differential in and of nature, its intrinsic capacity for difference. Hence, where our modern, anthropological multiculturalist ontology is founded on the mutual implication of the unity of nature and the plurality of cultures, the Amerindian conception would suppose a spiritual unity and a corporeal diversity – or, in other words, one “culture,” multiple “natures.” (2015, 59). Multinaturalism refutes the kind of relativism typically found in accounts of “diversity” in multiculturalism, accounts that always return to individual perspective.

The Amerindian multinatural perspective is an account of singular-infinite *a* natures. Nature is not generalized here, overlaid by culture’s Enlightenment principles. Nature is the differential force of all that comes to be. Nature is *how* the world expresses itself.

A nature is both absolute and indefinite. It is absolute in that its bodying expresses a character of existence that matters, here–now. It is indefinite in that it carries the continuum, the perspective of the universe always an immanent orientation in what comes to be. This immanent orientation keeps it in the moving, in the differentiating, in a becoming of continuity (not a continuity of becoming) (Whitehead 1978, 35). Each actualization shifts the conditions of nature’s naturing.

The indefiniteness of *a* nature is also its impersonality. That is to say, nature persons, persons don't have a nature. And in the naturing, what foregrounds itself is always an incompleteness: "Nature is never complete. It is always passing beyond itself" (1978, 289).

Creativity

A nature is creative, its operations always in excess of themselves, incomplete, replete with potential. This potential is expressed by what Whitehead calls "contrast." Contrast is the felt reverberation of potential in the actual, the quality, perceived in the relation, of a backgroundingforegrounding.¹⁰ Think pulse, reverberation: backgroundingforegrounding is how *a* nature reveals itself, never one, never image, never site.

The danger is to invite the substantive to return, to welcome matter as simple location, to solidify a personing of the subject as the central perceiver. These are the fallacies of misplaced concreteness, the condition under which creativity cannot subsist.

A relational texturing is always a movement. In the backgroundingforegrounding, what appears is contoured by what has just retreated. To reduce this to a visual image would be to flatten it: care must be taken to allow the expression of difference to retain its relational interplay. A Whiteheadian perspectivism is thick with feeling, less front-back than interwoven zigzag.

Whitehead speaks of this in terms of the private and the public, referring to the ways in which occasions face their absolute actualization and their immanent relations, both-and, at one and the same time. When an occasion of experience actualizes, it carries into its consolidation the quality of expression that makes it what it is. This quality of expression – a redness, say – is private to the degree that its reference can be traced directly to the prehension that oriented it in just this way. Redness is of the occasion, and in this way, private. And yet it is public in the very same gesture because it is of the world, the redness already a perspective of the universe, offering itself to the world's incipient grasp. In its accomplishment – its satisfaction, as Whitehead would say – redness as expressed just this way has introduced a singular quality to a world reshaping itself around it.

The vacillation, in and of the occasion, between the public and the private, its backgroundingforegrounding, draws attention to the fact that experience is contrast. That is to say, nothing emerges into the world that is not vibratory, that does not backgroundforeground, that is not contrast. All that expresses is more-than *itself*.

10. For a more detailed exploration of backgroundingforegrounding, also in terms of an ethics of relation, see Erin Manning, "backgroundingforegrounding," in *For a Pragmatics of the Useless* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020).

11. For an account of the minor gesture, see Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

Certainly, the more-than can be muted, and it often is. *A* nature is often reduced to *the* nature, to simple location and its fallacy of misplaced concreteness. Hard and fast facts are mobilized to overpower the nuance of a nature naturing. That doesn't stop the process of the world making itself, however. It just mutes its power of differentiation. This power is the force of feeling that motors experience, a force always in excess of the forms things take. To reduce activity to simple location is to parse out the feeling from the act.

With respect to Amerindian cosmologies, Viveiros de Castro writes that "the body, as the site of differentiating perspective, must be differentiated to the highest degree in order to completely express it" (2015, 265). This excess of differentiation is the expression of *a* nature's infinite complexity. *A* nature is the bodying in excess of form. Body as site of differentiating perspective is the embodiment of contrast. No representation here: "The body as an implication of the very concept of perspective" (2015, 37).

Concern

Perspective is another way to express concern for relation. Concern is internal to the process of the world's expression. "Each occasion is an activity of concern" (Whitehead 1938, 167). Concern is the motor of feeling's carrying of occasion from force to form. "It is the conjunction of transcendence and immanence" (1938, 167).

The occasion's concern for consolidation is not a concern for form. It is a concern that the more-than remain expressive, a concern for all that exceeds the form actualization will take. "The occasion is concerned, in the way of feeling and aim, with things that in their own essence lie beyond it; although these things in their present functions are factors in the concern of that occasion" (1938, 167). The occasion's concern is with the perspective of the universe, with the how of a relational fielding.

Concern is what animates the process of creativity in the contrasting field. Concern is the conduit that facilitates the carrying across thresholds of what matters. If actualization always involves subtraction, concern is the care for what is left over, for the more-than that cannot in itself be consolidated.

Concern for the universe in its actualization through the occasion sounds grand. In fact, concern works at another level altogether, in the inner variation of a process. Concern is of the quality of a minor gesture¹¹ – it has to do with motor-ing the edges of what cannot quite conform, of mattering

that motoring. It is important in process philosophy to refrain from generalizing across occasions, asking instead, each time anew, how a singular process creates conditions for life-living. Process philosophy is always and only exemplary: case by case.

What matters in the concern is that the occasion is buoyed not by an outside constituency but by an inner logic recrafted for each inflection of the field. This logic belongs to the occasion, and its mode of naturing will come from that singular way of becoming. *We* will become from that singular way of becoming.

Objective Immortality

An ethics of emergent relationality, of multinaturalism or perspectivism, requires an attention to what moves the world in potentia. Whitehead speaks of that which perishes as having “objective immortality” (1978, 137). What has affected the world by actualizing is never known again as such, but it does remain in potentia as a quality of experience. It remains as a potential perspective of the universe, a relational essence to be grasped by occasions to come. This is what Whitehead means when he speaks of the objective immortality of the perished occasion.

The making and taking of spacetime in the occasioning of experience requires a certain attunement to antecedence and futurity. What comes to be is affected both by the call of what was and by the pull of what will come to be. “The only intelligible doctrine of causation is founded on the doctrine of immanence. Each occasion presupposes the antecedent world as active in its own nature” (1978, 226). The medium of the occasion, its naturing, is colored by the force of what immortally makes up its immanent surrounds. Time bends in this account of nature naturing. *A* nature is born of those edgings into occurrence.

Objective immortality relies on what Whitehead calls “contemporary independence.” Contemporary independence, he says, provides “elbow room in the universe” (1967, 195). Two occasions are not mappable on each other. Without contemporary independence of actual occasions everything would be gridlock – all would connect to all, no cracks, no play. Experience would be reduced to piles of simple locations. Objective immortality is a reminder that all occasions – contemporary as they may be – are imbued with the relational field. They hum with the immanence of a world information, their force of form always in excess of the shape they take. This force-for-form includes their pastness, their historic routes, their incipient futurity. To think cosmologically requires the mutual inclusion of process *and* form.

Contemporary independence means that there is no matrix whereupon the occasioning rests, no continuous line of experience. No continuity of becoming, as Whitehead's refrain goes (1978), but a becoming of continuity, a reshaping in the encounter.

Occasions of experience "take," and in their taking a world is altered. This altering of the world makes them irreversibly what they are. What is relational is not the occasion itself. What textures the relational web of existence is not the actual, but what reverberates in the contrast, its perishing facilitates.

Objective immortality is the fresh air of the system, the potential for new operations activated by the in-act of experience casting new angles on the world. For there to be difference, something has to take. For something to take, it has to differentiate itself.

In one and the same movement, something and everything expresses. Something is the expression of difference through which the consolidation of experience in this actual occasion will divert from existing modalities, even if only in the most minute of ways. Everything is the quality of concern that accompanies the comings into relation of the field of experience expressing itself. Something and everything in each occasion, in excess of each occasion.

The something and everything is the one and many of Whitehead's "the many become one and are increased by one." There is never simply something; something always carries the echo of all it could become in the agitation of everything in its perspectival focus on that something. *A* nature lives here, in that contrast.

Wonder

Process philosophy is an activist philosophy (Massumi 2011, 1–28). It asks of the world that it participate in the creativity of its potential. This is not a human-driven cosmology. The force of transformation is never in what I have elsewhere called the volition-intentionality-agency triad.¹² The field of *a* nature is not reducible to me, to my agency, to my volition. It is *moved*. What moves experience is not a preexisting subject. What matters is the concern for the field – its own immanent orienting. Difference without separability directs the action, an ethos always yet to be invented.

A nature is a mode of existence that defies preexisting coordination. Perspective is immanent to the event, and in that qualitative orientation, an emergent field beckons. Wonder lives here. "We are in the world and the world is in us" (1938, 165).

12. For a more detailed account of the volition-intentionality-agency triad and its commitment to neurotypicality, see my "Carrying the Feeling," in *The Minor Gesture*.

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