

# WIEMAN'S MISUNDERSTANDING OF DEWEY: THE *CHRISTIAN CENTURY* DISCUSSION

by Marvin C. Shaw

*Abstract.* An important issue in the development of the American school of philosophy known as critical naturalism was whether the naturalistic vision implied a humanistic or a theistic interpretation of religion. Is the divine a creativity within nature but more than human effort, or is it the human vision of ideal possibilities and the effort to realize them? This issue is clarified through a study of the concept of the divine developed by the leading naturalist John Dewey in *A Common Faith*, the misunderstanding of this book by Henry Nelson Wieman, and the discussion of this misunderstanding in the pages of *Christian Century*. The essay concludes that Wieman's misunderstanding of Dewey is instructive in that it reveals unintended possibilities in Dewey's thought.

*Keywords:* critical naturalism; John Dewey; naturalistic theism; Henry Nelson Wieman.

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Yet nature is made better by no mean  
But nature makes that mean; so, over that art  
Which you say adds to nature, is an art  
Which nature makes.  
—William Shakespeare, *A Winter's Tale* IV.4

Those who are involved in interpreting the bearing of science on religion must deal with the claim that is sometimes made that science implies, or at least is most compatible with, a naturalistic metaphysics. Some who have accepted the naturalistic view of reality interpret it as involving the denial of theism. Yet the possibility remains that theism might be reconceived within a naturalistic framework; in this view, the divine might be defined as "the grace within nature." The problem of the relation of naturalism to the concept of the divine can be clarified through a study of a discussion which occurred within the American school of philosophy known as critical naturalism.

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During the third and fourth decades of this century, the American naturalists dealt with the issue of whether the naturalistic vision implied a humanistic or a theistic interpretation of religion. Is the divine a creativity within nature but more than human effort, or is it the human vision of ideal possibilities and the effort to realize them? The following essay is a study of an especially important and revealing phase of the discussion of this question among the naturalists. It examines the concept of the divine developed by the leading naturalist John Dewey (1859-1952) in his book *A Common Faith* (1934), the misunderstanding of this book by Henry Nelson Wieman (1884-1976), and the discussion of this misunderstanding in the pages of *Christian Century*.

#### THE BASIS OF WIEMAN'S EXPECTATION: DEWEY'S CRITICAL NATURALISM

When Dewey turned somewhat late in his career to the task of interpreting religious life and thought, Wieman and other religious naturalists were predisposed to expect him to develop a form of naturalistic theism rather than the religious humanism which he did in fact present. This is because of the tendency of Dewey's critical naturalism to stress the continuity of human life with the natural forces on which it depends.

The stalemate of idealism and materialism in nineteenth-century thought was the problem which generated critical naturalism. Materialism claimed that reality is simply matter in motion; thus the complexities of the human world are reduced through analysis to factors which are themselves devoid of value or meaning. Idealism was a defense of the uniquely human experiences of subjective interiority, moral choice, artistic creativity, and religious insight against the claim that they are ephemeral and not genuine disclosures of reality. Philosophical interpretation was thus divided between an anti-scientific and reactive celebration of human cultural creativity, and a scientific mechanism which lacked the ability to understand the uniquely human on its own terms.

George Santayana (1863-1952) was the first to develop a critical or nonreductive naturalism which would combine an acceptance of scientific method and its results with an appreciative interpretation of human culture. This was to be the "new naturalism."

In the five volumes of *The Life of Reason* (1905-1906) Santayana set about to give an account of human culture as the development of our organic impulses operating within the natural world; his project was "the naturalizing of the imagination" (Randall 1954, 50-52). He portrayed mind as the epiphenomenal product of natural forces, related to them as is the foam to the waves; mind is a product of nature, but it

merely reflects and evaluates the show of nature and does not operate as a participant intervening in the flow of events. It is an incidental product of nature which bestows value on an otherwise meaningless machine. Human ideals are imaginative projections of the fulfillment sought by animal impulses, visions of the satisfaction implied in interests; they function as standards of valuation by which natural events are judged and given meaning. However, the actual satisfaction of interests depends solely on the operation of natural causes. While we should have “piety” toward the natural process on which life depends, the higher element in religion is “spirituality” which is the contemplative ordering of conscious life according to the vision of the ideal. Indeed, the divine element in experience is the human ideal; God is “the ideal synthesis of all that is good” (Santayana 1905, 212), the comprehensive vision of life as it ought to be, by which life as it is is ordered and given value. This conception of the divine amounts to a somewhat Platonic religious humanism.

Most of those committed to the new naturalism concluded that Santayana was its Moses in that he saw the promised land but did not enter it (Randall 1931, 647-48). It is true that he accepted the vision implied in the science of his day and that this served as the causal background for a sensitive and nonreductive account of the uniquely human; but spirit and nature remain for Santayana two distinct realms, one the order of causes and the other the source of value. His older colleague at Harvard, Josiah Royce, characterized his intent as the systematic separation of essence and existence (Vivas 1940, 350). He seems to have accepted both the mechanist’s vision of the world as a meaningless machine, and the idealist’s desire to isolate imaginal products from contamination by the material. Thus there is a lingering dualism in his philosophy.

It came to be accepted that the fulfillment of the project of critical naturalism must stress to a greater degree the continuity of the human and the nonhuman. Many felt that this was best embodied in the thought of John Dewey of Columbia University, especially in his *Carus Lectures* published as *Experience and Nature* (1925; revised 1929).

The root metaphor of much of Dewey’s thought is the biological image of the organism interacting with the environment; this in turn generates the concept of the event as a basic category in Dewey’s naturalistic metaphysics. In the event of interaction there are two poles, the human and the nonhuman, and the emergent character of the event as a whole is the result of the interpenetration of these two. We notice that every interactive event has a qualitative aspect as well as causal relations with other events. Dualistic thinking normally says that this qualitative character is contributed by the sensitive organism; but

just as it would be an error to say that qualities are simply *in* objects themselves, so it is a mistake to say that they reside solely in our reactions; they are neither merely subjective nor objective, but contextual. Experiences of quality therefore reveal genuine traits of nature; that is, qualities are traits which nature comes to have in interactions with sensitive organisms.

This reveals the "fallacy of intellectualism," which is Dewey's term for the tendency to select one aspect of complex events and to explain the whole through this part, which alone is regarded as "real." Here a selection made for some purpose is transformed into a definition of reality, whereas the real is in fact the complex whole itself. Both idealism and materialism do this, but in contrasting ways. Materialism selects for attention the causal connections between events because it is by virtue of these that one event may serve as an instrument for influencing another; this aspect then is taken as "the real" and the qualitative richness of events is reduced to "mere appearance," a subjective imposition on events. But the qualities of events are just as "natural" as their mechanistic traits. Thus aesthetic and moral experience reveal nature just as surely as does our rational-instrumental experience. It is the ignoring of the qualitative aspect of events and the treating of their instrumental aspect as alone real which yields the distorted view of nature as dead mechanism.

Note that this is a criticism both of nineteenth-century materialism, the old naturalism, and of Santayana's attempt at a new naturalism. A further difference between Santayana and Dewey is seen in the interpretation of the ideal. Human ideals are for Dewey imaginative visions of possible perfectings of natural tendencies; they are like the anticipation of the eighth note when nature has sounded the first seven of an octave. When once imagined, the ideal then functions as a guide to action in which humans intervene in the flow of events to reconstruct experience. As to their origin, ideals are not just projections of desire but also the discovery of natural possibilities relevant to them; they are not subjective but contextual. And as to their function, they are not objects of contemplation but plans of action. In the process of the reconstruction of experience guided by the ideal, human and nonhuman factors interact, nature suggesting the possible perfecting of its tendencies and providing forces and materials, and the human community providing the vision of possibilities and the coordination of nature's resources.

To grasp what Wieman expected to find in Dewey's treatment of religion, we must understand the contrast between Santayana and Dewey, and this can be clarified further by a glance at Santayana's review of *Experience and Nature* in the *Journal of Philosophy* (1925) and Dewey's reply (1927).

Santayana understood naturalism as the primacy of the order of causes. Therefore, he saw *Experience and Nature* as a reduction of nature to the terms of human experience, a retreat from naturalism to idealism. Against this, Santayana claimed that we must see nature itself, as the great background of human life, and not as it appears from the perspective of the human foreground. When we adopt some privileged perspective from which to view things, we have metaphysics, and this will be of different sorts depending on what occupies the foreground, whether logic, moral striving or religious insight. To Santayana, Dewey's "naturalistic metaphysic" is just the latest way of making the human foreground dominant. "His naturalism is half-hearted and short-winded. It is a specious kind of naturalism" (Santayana 1925, 680). The result is, according to Santayana, that nature is seen as having the values which it only receives through human acts of valuation. However, when nature is humanized through the dominance of the foreground, it is misunderstood. Values are not revelations of nature, but of human interests. Only that view is naturalistic which sees nature without adopting a privileged perspective.

Dewey replied that Santayana's view was "broken-backed naturalism." According to Dewey, Santayana fails to see human experience as a disclosure of nature; that is, he has failed to see the human foreground as the foreground *of* nature. His naturalism is "broken-backed" because it is "the structural dislocation of non-human and human existence" (Dewey 1927, 63). Dewey grants that there is no privileged perspective for interpreting nature and that human life is merely one perspective; he merely wants to claim that every perspective would reveal some potential of nature.

To summarize, Santayana seems to claim that human life cannot be understood apart from its rooting in nature, but somehow nature is to be understood apart from its power to produce human life and values. Dewey believes that we have not understood nature if we ignore its manifest capacity to generate human life and culture. If we portray nature without reference to its potential to produce acts of valuing in human life, we must see it as valueless and meaningless. Dewey accuses Santayana of the intellectualist fallacy in that he has given attention to the instrumental relations of events in characterizing nature, and has depicted their qualitative aspect as unnatural and humanly imposed. It is true that Santayana is not a reductionist, for he does not deny the reality of the excluded aspect; but he is a dualist because he does not see this aspect as a genuine disclosure of nature's character.

Santayana had identified the divine with one aspect of his dualism of spirit and nature; the divine is the human ideal, a projected vision of the fulfillment of human life. This is a humanism in the style of Ludwig Feuerbach. We might expect Dewey as the critic of Santayana's linger-

ing dualism to propose a different interpretation of the divine. Would not a naturalistic theism be possible on the basis of Dewey's emphasis on the continuity of the human and the nonhuman? For Dewey had said that through the interaction of the human and the nonhuman the ideal arises as a vision of possibilities latent in natural conditions; and it is through the interaction of nonhuman materials and intelligent effort that there is the growth of good. The divine might then be defined within this sort of naturalism as that interaction in which life moves toward fulfillment. This might even seem more characteristic of Dewey than an emphasis on the human element alone. Since this interaction includes but transcends human effort, to identify it as the divine element in nature, the source of life's fulfillment, would be a naturalistic theism. This possible interpretation of Dewey's naturalism was in fact anticipated by Wieman in an article in the *Journal of Religion* before Dewey's *A Common Faith* was published (Wieman 1931); and it accounts for Wieman's misunderstanding of Dewey's lectures on religion when they came forth.

#### THE OBJECT OF WIEMAN'S MISUNDERSTANDING: DEWEY'S CONCEPT OF THE DIVINE

Dewey's study of religion is found in his Terry Lectures delivered at Yale University in 1934 and published later that year. His announced purpose was to emancipate the unifying and motivating power of religious life from dependence on beliefs about the supernatural. He defined the religious experience as the unification of the self and the concomitant harmonizing of life with its natural context. This actually occurs, he maintained, through our being conquered and claimed by the ideal, through devotion to a comprehensive vision of the good. The religious experience is thus "the unification of the self through allegiance to inclusive ideal ends" (Dewey 1934a, 33). God is for Dewey the symbol for this inclusive ideal; God simply means "the unity of all ideal ends arousing us to desire and action" (Dewey 1934a, 42).

This view of the divine clearly is derived from Santayana's thought. Indeed, even though the naturalists rejected Santayana's attempt to work out a new naturalism, again and again when they come to religion they simply repeat his view rather than make a fresh analysis. However, in the above formulation of the concept of the divine, we must recall that for Dewey the ideal is not merely the human dream of a life which would satisfy impulse, but the vision of the completion of tendencies in nature which are relevant to life's fulfillment. In forming the ideal, we do not impose our imaginings on a valueless world but we discover possibilities of transformation which inhere in natural conditions when they are viewed from the human perspective.

Therefore, Dewey expands his definition of the divine to make clear its relation to nonhuman factors.

This idea of God, or of the divine, is . . . connected with all the natural forces and conditions—including man and human association—that promotes the growth of the ideal and that furthers its realization. We are in the presence neither of ideals completely embodied in existence nor yet of ideals that are mere rootless . . . fantasies, utopias. For there are forces in nature and society that generate and support the ideals. They are further unified by the action that gives them coherence and solidarity. It is this *active* relation between ideal and actual to which I would give the name “God” (Dewey 1934a, 50-51).

Whether one gives the name “God” to this union, operative in thought and action, is a matter of individual decision. But the *function* of such a working union of the ideal and actual seems to me to be identical with that force that has in fact been attached to the conception of God in all the religions that have a spiritual content; and a clear idea of that function seems to me to be urgently needed at the present (Dewey 1934a, 52).

Thus Dewey’s amplified conception of the divine is as the active relation of ideal and actual. The divine is the symbol for the ideal understood in its natural context, “a clear and intense conception of the union of ideal ends with actual conditions” (Dewey 1934a, 51). This contextualist view contrasts with Santayana’s view of the divine as the ideal alone. Yet the activity which relates ideal and actual is, after all, human vision and effort. Dewey understands that there are two poles in the interaction in which visions of the good arise and grow toward fulfillment, but it is clear that for him the creative, coordinating role is played by intelligent action. The divine is the active relating of ideal and actual which occurs through human thought and work.

Dewey criticizes supernatural theism because it claims that the ideal is realized already in a realm beyond nature. He felt that this made the concept of the divine dependent on a dubious metaphysic and therefore rendered it powerless for an increasing number of people. In addition, he felt that for believers it represents wishful thinking which undermines enthusiasm for efforts to improve actual conditions in this world. But he was also critical of a certain type of Promethean humanism which divorced ideal and actual, and portrayed nature as indifferent or even hostile to human ends. “The essentially unreligious attitude is that which attributes human achievement and purpose to man in isolation from the world of physical nature and his fellows. Our successes are dependent upon the cooperation of nature” (Dewey 1934a, 25).<sup>1</sup> An example of this irreligious humanism from that time might be the early essay of Bertrand Russell entitled “A Free Man’s Worship.” Dewey chose to use the term God in order to suggest the relevance of nature’s powers and potentialities to the growth of human good, and to inculcate that humility and trust which are necessary to a knowledge of and adjustment to natural conditions.

Of course for Dewey, the divine does not include nature as a whole, but aspects selected by their relevance to human good. The divine “. . . selects those factors in existence that generate and support our idea of good as an end to be striven for. It excludes a multitude of forces that at any given time are irrelevant to this function. Nature produces whatever gives reinforcement and direction but also what occasions discord and confusion. The ‘divine’ is thus a term of human choice and aspiration” (Dewey 1934a, 53-54). The divine symbolizes the cooperation of human and nonhuman forces in the growth of human good; it includes the dependence of the sought-for fulfillment on natural conditions and the creative role of intelligent human effort. Thus Dewey’s interpretation of the divine element in human experience integrates Santayana’s piety and spirituality into one rational-emotive movement, whereas in Santayana the two look in different directions; for Santayana, piety is directed toward our roots in nature and spirituality is the contemplation of the human ideal, but for Dewey both have a single object, the divine as the coordination of ideal and actual in human striving. Nevertheless, Dewey is a religious humanist and not a naturalistic theist; while the interaction of human and nonhuman in the fulfillment of life is clearly stated, the emphasis is on the unifying role of human action.

As will be seen, religiously interested naturalists seemed to feel that it was more consistent with the naturalistic vision to insist on the dependence of the human contribution itself upon the total natural context in which it occurs. This would constitute a naturalistic theism.

#### THE CHRISTIAN CENTURY DISCUSSION

In November of 1934 there appeared in *Christian Century* a review of Dewey’s *A Common Faith* written by Henry Nelson Wieman of the University of Chicago which interpreted Dewey as a naturalistic theist. In December *Christian Century* carried a criticism of Wieman’s interpretation by his colleague E. E. Aubrey, and a note from Dewey confirming Aubrey’s interpretation of the book. In the same issue Wieman replied to both Aubrey and Dewey; he abandoned the position that Dewey *intended* a theistic view but maintained that such a view was a warranted conclusion on the basis of his philosophic vision as a whole. Later in December the editor of the journal, Charles Clayton Morrison, reviewed the discussion between Wieman, Aubrey, and Dewey and suggested that Wieman in fact had developed implications in Dewey’s philosophy which were not obvious to Dewey. A letter from Wieman’s colleague Charles Hartshorne was printed in a subsequent issue stating that, while Wieman’s interpretation of Dewey might have been in error, the thesis that Dewey’s thought can be used in the development of a



naturalistic theism is sound. In early January Dewey declined the editor's invitation to respond. A closer analysis of this interesting exchange will show that Wieman's misunderstanding of Dewey was revealing and significant.

Wieman's review of *A Common Faith* emphasized Dewey's recognition of the forces in nature and society which lie beyond and beneath human intelligence and imagination, to the extent that Dewey's actual intention of stressing the creative and active role of human thought and action is obscured. Wieman at first did not perceive Dewey's intention of stressing the human pole in the interaction which gives rise to the ideal. Thus according to Wieman, Dewey has defined the activity which unites ideal and actual as the interaction of human effort with natural conditions, and not merely as conscious, intelligent effort. In this interaction the controlling power is not the human aim, but the interaction itself, for human purposes are deflected and reshaped in their interaction with conditions.

According to Wieman's interpretation of Dewey, insofar as this interaction is the source of the growth of the good, it is the rightful object of supreme devotion, the divine. This interaction which connects ideal and actual is not supernatural, but it is superhuman, in the sense that it is more than human intelligence and action. It is not superhuman in the sense that it can operate wholly apart from human life, or that it is itself intelligent and purposive; but it does transcend human imagination, in that it is this interaction which creates human personality and its ideals, and which generates possibilities of value beyond those which human imagination can envision apart from such interaction. The generation and realization of ideal ends is dependent on our submitting ourselves to this supreme good, to receive that which it can bestow. Thus Wieman's interpretation of Dewey stresses the total context of the interaction of human imagination and natural conditions in the growth of the ideal. He considers Dewey a naturalistic theist rather than a humanist. The question of whether this interpretation is an improvement on Dewey's actual position remains for later consideration; at this point it is sufficient to say that insofar as Wieman felt that his view was Dewey's intended opinion, Wieman was in error (Wieman 1934a).

In reply to Wieman, Aubrey pointed out that such a position is not present in *A Common Faith*. He suggested that Wieman had read into Dewey his own view. The phrase "forces in nature and society which generate and support ideals" is interpreted by Wieman as meaning the "more than human principle of progressive integration operative in the cosmos and partly in man," according to Aubrey. However, for Dewey the phrase is taken "as affirming the power of corporate human intelligence to draw the actual given of nature and the projected ideals

of the human imagination together in a plan of directed activity" (Aubrey 1934, 1550). Human intelligence is, according to Dewey, the integrative power relating actual and ideal. Dewey wishes to point to the creativity of human intelligence, and while he allows for the role of natural conditions in the growth of the ideal, it is not these conditions that are creative. Aubrey concludes that no counterpart of the transhuman principle of integration in Wieman's thought can be found in the Terry Lectures.

Wieman's reply to Aubrey continued the emphasis on the total context of thought and action. According to Wieman, Dewey implies that there are activities going on in nature which *include* intelligent human effort, but which are more than this effort. These activities constitute the matrix in which intelligence develops. It is this matrix which gives rise to mind and ideals, and with which intelligent effort seeks to harmonize itself. Thus there is an operative system of interfunctioning activities which at best includes human thought and effort as an ingredient, and it is this community of interaction which includes but goes beyond human intelligence which unites actual and ideal (Wieman 1934b).

Dewey's contribution to the exchange settled the question of the interpretation of *A Common Faith*, but it may not have settled the broader question of whether human action or the total context in which it functions is appropriately assigned the creative role in a naturalistic philosophy of religion. Dewey pointed out that it was his intention in *A Common Faith* to state that the term God might be applied to the role of human imagination in grasping the "union of ideals . . . with some natural forces that generate and sustain them" (Dewey 1934b, 1551-52). The unification of the various forces and conditions which generate and sustain our ideals is the work of human imagination and will. The efficacy of natural conditions depends upon the work of intelligence in discovering them and adjusting to them. The matrix in which ideals arise is the life of the human community, not nonhuman nature. Nature supports evil as well as good, and the selection of those forces fostering good is the work of human thought and will.

Wieman then admitted his error in interpreting *A Common Faith*, but continued to argue the question as to whether that which unites actual and ideal is human creativity, or a transhuman process which includes and extends beyond it.

According to Wieman, human imagination is only one of many activities which make possibilities of value realizable. Before human intelligence existed, its emergence was a possibility of value in the then existent world, and its emergence is the result of the action of processes beyond it. "Possibilities of value are rooted and grounded . . . in a system of activities which interact in such a way as to make these

possibilities practicable goals of endeavor when humans discover them. So likewise, human choice and action are activities shaped and sustained by many other activities which reciprocally shape and sustain them in a total system of interacting activities" (Wieman 1934b, 1552).

Wieman states that it would be consistent with Dewey's view to affirm this, and that it is the position one would expect to find in the light of the passages in which Dewey speaks of the natural basis of ideal projections and the dependence of human life on natural conditions. Dewey clearly denies that human activities stand in isolation from nature; thus Wieman expects that he should affirm that human activities are part of a community of processes which so interact as to unite the actual and the ideal.

Dewey had said that the selection and coordination of the manifold natural factors which generate and sustain ideals is the creative task of intelligence. Apart from this imaginative unification, the natural conditions relevant to human ideals are a mere collection of unrelated items. Thus that which actually gives rise to idealizations of nature and coordinates the factors relevant to their realization is human thought.<sup>2</sup> Against this, Wieman states that there is an inherent unity in these conditions whereby they interact to make ideals discoverable and realizable; the manifold natural conditions relevant to ideals are unitary with respect to their performance of one function. They will cooperate to perform this function apart from any human knowledge of their operation. "All activities that interact in such a way as to carry the highest possibilities of value, constitute a unitary system of interaction with respect to this one function of generating and sustaining these highest possibilities" (Wieman 1934b, 1553).

When we imagine ideal possibilities in unity with their natural conditions, we create neither these possibilities nor the relevance of natural conditions to their growth. Thus human efforts are among the processes which work together in the growth of good, and they together with all other processes which serve this one function constitute a unity which has the value of the divine. It is the functioning together for possibilities of human fulfillment which makes these activities a unity; they are one in their effect, and when this unity is made explicit in human thought it is a discovery and not a creation. Against Dewey's emphasis on the creative role of human effort, Wieman is asserting that even this contribution must be seen as part of a larger matrix of natural factors upon which it is dependent.<sup>3</sup>

In reviewing the course of this exchange between Dewey and Wieman, the editor of the journal observed that Dewey made all of the affirmations necessary to Wieman's thesis in his book and in his reply to Wieman's review. That is, quite apart from Dewey's humanistic intention, a naturalistic theism is possible within the terms of Dewey's

analysis of religion. In a letter, Charles Hartshorne made essentially the same point. Wieman's initial interpretation of *A Common Faith* was in error, according to Hartshorne, but the thesis that Dewey's philosophy is relevant to a naturalistic theism is sound (Morrison 1934; Hartshorne 1935).

#### AN INSTRUCTIVE MISUNDERSTANDING

Dewey's intention was to say that while conditions make ideal ends possible, human efforts make them actual, through their unifying, integrating, coordinating function. He wished to include the idea that human efforts work upon preexisting materials merely in order to remind us that we can expect a supportive response to our efforts only if our goals and our means are intelligently conceived and thereby take account of the context of action. Perhaps the reason for his choice of emphasizing the human pole of the interaction which leads to good is his energetic participation in the optimistic progressivism of his day; his humanism seems to reflect the interest in social reconstruction and the impatience with tradition which characterize the liberal reformers of that era.

Yet it is possible within naturalism to identify the creative factor in the growth of human good with the total situation of interaction; indeed, such a naturalistic theism which identifies the divine with the superhuman but not supernatural creativity upon which the good of human life depends might be more consistent with Dewey's picture of human life as embedded in nature.

A few years after the *Christian Century* discussion Charles Hartshorne suggested that Dewey's most important contribution to the reconstruction of religious ideas may not lie in his avowed humanism, but in his inadvertent suggestion of the possibility of a naturalistic theism. "Great men, it seems, do modify the course of history, but it is well said that they seldom do so in just the direction they intend. Professor Dewey has sought to lead men from supernaturalism to a not too egregiously atheistic naturalism. It is possible that, somewhat indirectly at least, he may prove a principle creator of what may appear as the twentieth century's supreme theoretical discovery—theistic naturalism" (Hartshorne 1937, 56). Thus, Wieman's misunderstanding reveals that Dewey unintentionally provides materials for a naturalistic theism; therefore, it is an instructive misunderstanding, one which elucidates that which is misunderstood.

#### NOTES

1. Elsewhere, Dewey refers to the sense of dependence in the theology of Schleiermacher as the heart of the religious attitude (Dewey 1929, 307). Again, he writes that

"goods are by grace not of ourselves" (Dewey [1925] 1929, 43). "The fact that civilization endures and culture continues—and sometimes advances—is evidence that human hopes and purposes find a basis and support in nature. As the developing growth of an individual from embryo to maturity is the result of interaction of organism with surroundings, so culture is the product not of efforts of men put forth in a void or just upon themselves, but of prolonged and cumulative interaction with environment" (Dewey 1934c, 28).

2. Dewey had stated this argument prior to the present exchange (Dewey 1933). Dewey's humanistic intent had been manifest in his signing of the "Humanist Manifesto" in the winter of 1932-33. Cf. *The Humanist*, Mar.-Apr. 1953, 13:58-61.

3. Wieman remained faithful to the naturalistic theism expressed in this exchange with Dewey, in that he always insisted that human effort must submit itself to transformation by a creativity which is more than conscious human effort. However, in specifying the nature of this creativity in the forties and later, he developed the concept of "creative interchange" as a certain kind of interpersonal communication; while creative interchange transforms the mind as conscious intention cannot, it is nevertheless something which occurs within human life. This may be seen as a move somewhat in the direction of humanism. For this development, see my essay "Two Phases in Wieman's Thought: Wieman's Concept of the Divine" (Shaw 1981).

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