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# A Critique of Robert S. Hartman's 'Four Axiological Proofs of the Infinite Value of Man'

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Raymond M. Pruitt entitled "A Critique of Robert S. Hartman's 'Four Axiological Proofs of the Infinite Value of Man.'" I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Philosophy.

Rem B. Edwards, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

John W. Davis, Dwight Van de Vate, Jr.

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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November 16, 1971

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Raymond M. Pruitt entitled "A Critique of Robert S. Hartman's 'Four Axiological Proofs of the Infinite Value of Man.'" I recommend that it be accepted for nine quarter hours of credit in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Philosophy.

*Rem B. Edwards*

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Major Professor

We have read this thesis  
and recommend its acceptance:

*John Davis*

---

*Wright Vance Sale*

Accepted for the Council:

*Hilton A. Smith*

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Vice Chancellor for  
Graduate Studies and Research

A CRITIQUE OF ROBERT S. HARTMAN'S  
'FOUR AXIOLOGICAL PROOFS OF  
THE INFINITE VALUE OF MAN'

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Council of  
The University of Tennessee

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

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by  
Raymond M. Pruitt  
December 1971

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine Professor Robert S. Hartman's notion that the individual human person is of infinite value. In a recent paper he attempts to establish his concept by arguments which are founded upon four axiological definitions of man: epistemological, logical, ontological, and teleological.

The thesis is concerned with the validity of the arguments, their applicability to the existing human person, and whether or not Professor Hartman has made unwarranted assumptions.

I conclude that his arguments tend to be circular, and there are too many assumptions. I believe he has made a good case for the uniqueness of the human person, but the notion that man is infinite has not been sufficiently clarified.

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## CHAPTER I

### A BRIEF REVIEW OF ROBERT S. HARTMAN'S

#### SYSTEM OF FORMAL AXIOLOGY

##### I. INTRODUCTION

Robert S. Hartman's Formal Axiology is a scientific system designed for the exact measurement of value, resulting in the same mathematical precision that is now used in the physical sciences.

Formal axiology is based on the logical nature of meaning, namely intension, and on the structure of intension as a set of predicates. It applies set theory to this set of predicates. Set theory is a certain kind of mathematics that deals with subsets in general, and of finite and infinite sets in particular. Since mathematics is objective and a priori, formal axiology is an objective and a priori science; and a test based on it is an objective test based on an objective standard.<sup>1</sup>

Since formal axiology is concerned with the pure form of value, the axiologist does not value but analyzes value. He must be professional and expert in value, having mastered "the fundamental principles and general laws that underlie all valuing."<sup>2</sup> The axiom which provides the foundation from which formal axiology evolves is that value is the degree in which a thing possesses the set of properties corresponding to the set of predicates in the intension of its concept.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Robert S. Hartman, "Formal Axiology and the Measurement of Value," Journal of Value Inquiry, I (Spring, 1967), p. 39.

<sup>2</sup>Robert S. Hartman, The Structure of Value (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967), p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>Robert S. Hartman, "The Logic of Value," The Review of Metaphysics, Vol. XIV, No. 3 (March, 1961), p. 389.



Meaning, then, is value, i.e., the meaning of a thing becomes the measure of its value. Meaning is richness of properties. According to Hartman, there are three kinds of sets of attributes, depending on the number of attributes in question:

. . . finite sets, denumerably infinite sets, and non-denumerably infinite sets. The three kinds of sets determine three kinds of concepts: finite sets are intensions of synthetic concepts, denumerably infinite sets are intensions of analytic concepts, and non-denumerably infinite sets are intensions of singular concepts. The fulfillments of the three kinds of concepts give rise to three kinds of value, systemic value, extrinsic value, intrinsic value.<sup>4</sup>

Hartman adds,

Finite intensional sets measure systemic value, denumerably infinite intensional sets measure extrinsic value, non-denumerably infinite intensional sets measure intrinsic value.<sup>5</sup>

Or, to put it another way, there are three kinds of concepts: constructs, abstracts, and singular concepts. Correspondingly there are three dimensions of value: systemic value as the fulfillment of the construct, extrinsic value as the fulfillment of the abstract, and intrinsic value as the fulfillment of the singular concept. Constructs are of finite, abstracts of denumerably infinite, and singular concepts of non-denumerably infinite content. The dimensions of value form a hierarchy of intensional cardinalities  $\aleph_0$ ,  $\aleph_1$ , and  $\aleph_2$ , respectively. Systemic valuation is the model of schematic

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pp. 389-390.

<sup>5</sup>Hartman, Structure of Value, p. 19.

thinking, extrinsic valuation that of pragmatic thinking, intrinsic valuation that of emphatic--and empathic--thinking.<sup>6</sup>

## II. THE MEASURE OF VALUE

Just as we have universal laws in the physical sciences and in music, Hartman demonstrates the possibility for axiological laws which would structure value. Since physical science and music are applied mathematics, mathematics is then a more universal form than either the physical sciences or music. But mathematics is not itself so fundamental, or absolute, as rational thought, or logic. Just as physical science and music are applied mathematics, so mathematics is applied to logic.

Thus, on the highest and absolute plane, rational beings can communicate by means of the system of logic itself. The fundamental relation of logic--that of class membership (Bertrand Russell, The Principles of Mathematics, Cambridge, 1903, p. 26)--is the relation of rationality itself: the relation between concepts and objects. If there are beings that combine concepts in their minds with objects in the world then we have rational beings. This capacity of relating conceptual meaning to objects is the definition of rationality.<sup>7</sup>

Just as rational beings everywhere can communicate on the basis of this fundamental relation of rationality, so ethics when it is founded on this universal relation between concepts and objects, may be understood by rational beings everywhere in this or any other world.

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<sup>6</sup>Robert S. Hartman, "Formal Axiology and the Measurement of Values," p. 44.

<sup>7</sup>Robert S. Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs of the Infinite Value of Man," Kant-Studien, (1964) Vol. LV, No. 4, p. 428.

Formal axiology, the science of value, is a form of rationality which enables us to systematically understand that complex and varied part of our lives which cannot be defined by physical science alone. It is the art of finding the correspondence between fact and value, a distinction as tenuous and straightforward as it is tremendous and penetrating. It

. . . arrives at a Copernican inversion of fact and value: rather than value being a kind of fact, fact is a kind of value; rather than value being the norm of fact, fact is the norm of value; rather than fact being real and value unreal, value is real and fact is unreal. Value is the reality of which fact is the measure.<sup>8</sup>

The difference between the science of nature and the science of value is the difference between logical extensionality and intensionality. "As the science of nature details the experience of spatio-temporal events, so the science of value details the meanings of these events,"<sup>9</sup>

In extensional logic a thing is described in terms of the schema within which it is an instance of the concept, as a particular. Intensionally, it is seen in terms of itself alone. Thus, the individual is a continuum in space and time, and has no definition, since "definition" is the isomorphic pattern of attributes possessed by the members of a class. But the individual can be understood only by a complete description or depiction of itself,<sup>10</sup> since it is itself and not an abstraction of a set of attributes.

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<sup>8</sup>Hartman, Structure of Value, p. 220.

<sup>9</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 429.

<sup>10</sup>Robert S. Hartman, "Singular and Particular," Critica (Mexico, 1968), Vol. II, p. 16.

As we have seen, value is measured by the description or enumeration of the properties which a thing possesses "corresponding to the set of attributes in the intension of its concept."<sup>11</sup> Or, to repeat the key phrase in formal axiology, "Value is meaning."

When we say that life has meaning we mean that it has value. The richer its meaning, the richer its value. When we say that life has no meaning we mean it has no value. The poorer its meaning the poorer its value. A meaningless life is a life without value.<sup>12</sup>

Because of the importance of understanding his use of measure in formal axiology, I am including a rather extended quotation from Professor Hartman on the subject:

A standard of measuring is a set of units, arbitrarily selected, which is applicable to certain phenomena and by comparison with which these phenomena can be numerically determined. Thus, the standard of length is the meter composed of centimeters as units. We measure the length of phenomena by seeing either how many times they fit into a meter or how many times a meter fits into them. Thus, if we could measure value by meaning we would have to use meaning as a measuring rod which we fit to a thing and from which we could read off the number, as it were, of the value of the thing. It so happens that not only is meaning a measure ("meaning" and "measure" have the same etymological root, men-("mind", "thought")), but value is of such a nature as to be fitted precisely to being measured by it. Obviously, one can only measure things by a standard that is fit for them. One cannot measure weight by meters, or virtue by seconds. In which way, then, is meaning a standard of measurements fitted for value? In the following simple way, which is exactly analogous to the way in which a meter is a standard of length or a gram one of weight.

A meaning is, logically, a set of words--of predicates--indicating the properties of something.

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<sup>11</sup>Hartman, "The Logic of Value," p. 389.

<sup>12</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 429

Anything, however, that is a set can be used as a measure, for a set is something that can be numbered, "1, 2, 3, . . ."; and a measure is, as we have seen, a device by which number can be applied to something, counting off the units of the standard. . . . The units of a meaning are the predicates contained in it; and they are counted off one by one. A full or "real" chair is measured by a full meaning and is one that has all the properties contained in the meaning of the word "chair" just as a length of a full meter is one that has all 100 centimeters. (The centimeter had by the length is different from that in the meter; and the property had by the chair is different from the predicate in the concept. The latter is the name of the property). Such a "full" or "real" chair is what we call a "good" chair. Thus, a thing is good if it fulfills its meaning, that is to say, corresponds to the full measure of its value. If it does not, it is not quite so good, or bad; as a chair that lacks a seat or a back or both. The words "good," "bad," etc., thus are terms of measuring meaning, logically no different from the words "meter," "pound," "hour," "dozen," "degree," which measure length, weight, time, amount, intensity, respectively.<sup>13</sup>

Hartman concludes then that value theory is at least as logical as logic itself or mathematics. In fact, when meaning is the standard of value it is a criterion more universal than the meter, or pound, or hour, or any other physical measure, including number itself.

. . . For number is based on our 10 digits and the meter on the circumference of the planet Earth, and both would have to be explained with great care to the Martians--whose system of number may be based on a much more general, indeed, a universal set, such as the number of particles in the universe, and whose standard of length may be equally universal, taken perhaps from the radius of the universe, or at least of the solar system. But the standard of value will appear quite natural to the Martian, for he will be using exactly the same standard; the meaning of a thing to measure its value. He will call "good" a thing that fulfills its meaning--the intension of its concept--and "bad" one that does not. And it makes no difference what kinds of things there are. When the Martian says, "przik has got it all" we know he means przik is good--it's got all it's got to have. And when he says that each Martian tries to be good, we know

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 429-430.

exactly what he means, that each Martian tries to be all he can possibly be, to develop himself to the full, to live up to his own measure of himself. Indeed, since ethical measure is more universal than physical measure, we may well be able to communicate with the Martian ethically before we can communicate with him in terms of physics. The development of the new science of formal axiology may therefore be a precondition to cosmic communication, as it may be a precondition to cosmic survival.<sup>14</sup>

In summary, Professor Hartman advances from G. E. Moore's position that "good" is not itself a descriptive property, though it is dependent upon the existence of descriptive properties as a necessary condition. When Hartman demonstrates that goodness is "concept fulfillment," and gives this idea a logically structured statement, he brings into focus a science which had been latent in philosophy all along.

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<sup>14</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 430.

## CHAPTER II

### THE INFINITE VALUE OF THE HUMAN PERSON

#### I. GENERAL

Having looked at Professor Hartman's formal axiology in a general survey, we now focus on his elaboration of value measurement as it is applied to man in four axiological proofs of the infinite value of the human person. The proofs will be labeled epistemological, logical, ontological, and teleological, based on four well-known definitions of "man."

The relationship between value and individuality is a relationship of intensional logic. Hartman believes that the individual human person must be valued intrinsically if he is to be valued adequately.

As we have seen, within the system, there are three distinct but related kinds of value - systemic, extrinsic, and intrinsic - and these have corresponding value terms respectively: "perfection," "goodness," and "uniqueness." Systemic value is the fulfillment of the mental construct of a systemic, or logical, thing, such as a geometric circle or triangle. All systemic things have the value of perfection; they must have all the properties of their concepts, a finite and definite number of properties, for they come into being by definition. If the concept is not fulfilled by the object, then it is not merely imperfect; it just is not that thing. A circle, for example, must have all the properties of "circle," i.e., a plane.

closed figure bounded by a curved line everywhere equidistant from the center, or otherwise it is not a circle. There are no faulty circles. Therefore, to value something systemically is to value it as an element of a system. Hence systemic valuation is inadequate for valuing the singularity of the individual human person.

Extrinsic valuation values a thing not as an element of a system but as a member of a class. It is the value of an empirical thing according to its fulfillment of an analytic concept. Where we arrive at the systemic concept by a mental construction, we find the intension of an analytic concept for extrinsic valuation by abstraction of the common properties of a group of things. By abstraction, we get a class definition. But things valued extrinsically have more properties than just the definitional ones--otherwise the abstraction is not an abstraction. So, in extrinsic valuation we add expositional predicates to the definitional predicates. For example, in order for a thing to be a horse it must meet certain minimal descriptive properties. For valuation, we add expositional properties which will define horseyness. Such abstractions can be carried on ad infinitum. "The intension of the analytic concept consists of a denumerably infinite--and indefinite--number of attributes."<sup>15</sup> Consequently, in contrast to the intension of the synthetic, or logical, concept with its finite number of attributes, which is characterized by the number  $n$ , the intensional structure of the analytic concept is characterized by the transfinite number  $\aleph_0$ .<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Hartman, "The Logic of Value," p. 393.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.



Unlike systemic things, an empirical thing does not have to have all the attributes of its concept in order to be a member of the class designated by that concept. Professor John W. Davis, in discussing this notion, gives the following example:

A horse . . . may be a horse and not have all the properties of the concept "horse." It could be a knock-kneed, one-eyed, maneless horse, fit neither for the plow nor the Kentucky Derby, and still be a horse--a horse, but not a good one.<sup>17</sup>

We do not value with all of the predicates belonging to the analytic concept of a thing, but the more of them we know, the more penetrating will we be able to value.

Intrinsic value differs from the other two types of value in that here we are considering the thing as unique, i.e. its intension is the singular concept (or better, "unicept"). Its extension is the individual. In this usage, a singular concept is not a concept in the usual sense. Instead of being a mental entity which brings together the common features of a group of individual things, it is rather "a 'unicept', and experiential entity representing one thing in its uniqueness."<sup>18</sup> The "concept" then and the thing are one and the same. Professor Hartman quotes Edmund Husserl on this point: "Object itself is nothing but the idea of the object's completely fulfilled sense, of its completely fulfilled meaning" ("Sachverhalt selbst ist nichts anderes als die Idee des vollkommen erfüllten Sachverhalts-sinnes, der vollkommen erfüllten Sachverhaltsmeinung").<sup>19</sup> There is

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<sup>17</sup>John W. Davis, "Is There a Logic for Ethics?", The Southern Journal of Philosophy, Vol. IV, No. 1, (Spring, 1966), p. 4.

<sup>18</sup>Robert S. Hartman, "Value Theory as a Formal System," Kant-Studien, Vol. L, (1958-59), p. 300.

a fusion not only of "concept" and thing but of the thing and the agent, and the extent to which the experience forms one uninterrupted whole or Gestalt is the extent to which the thing fulfills the intension of its singular concept. "The 'predicate' . . . of the intension correspond exactly to the 'properties' . . . of the individual."<sup>20</sup>

Hartman wants us to see then that the intension of the singular differs from the synthetic and the analytic in that the individual is a non-denumerable, rather than a denumerable, infinity.

Hartman argues that neither the systemic valuation, nor the analytic concept of extrinsic valuation could adequately account for the full valuation of the individual, for a finite set, or a denumerable infinite set, could not "correspond" to a nondenumerably infinite continuum. If this were possible, then the continuum would not be non-denumerably infinite. Therefore, Hartman believes it is necessary to have an intensional logic, which he bases upon transfinite mathematics.

Intensional logic is a comprehensive logical notion of meaning which includes all stages of meaning, from divining to the full experience of meaning in existence. "Value is meaning in its various forms of fulfillment."<sup>21</sup> Hartman points out that

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<sup>20</sup>Richard C. Leggett, "Essay on Value and Individuality," (unpublished paper, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, n.d.), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup>Discussed in detail in Robert S. Hartman's "Formal Axiology and Measurement of Value," op. cit.

. . . the relationship between systemic, extrinsic and intrinsic value corresponds to a process of continuous enrichment with definite leaps from one value dimension to the next. Thus, if I buy a package of cigarettes from a saleslady I am in a legal, a systemic relationship with her. If I take her out for dinner I am in an extrinsic relationship, and if I take her to church and marry her I am in an intrinsic relationship with her: my total being is joined with hers in a common intrinsic Gestalt. This Gestalt grew through successive enrichments, out of the first tenuous bond, the original sales contract.<sup>22</sup>

Hartman adds:

All intrinsic relationships, except those of the family, grow out of systemic and/or extrinsic relations through processes of enrichment; and such processes of enrichment are as common as is intrinsic value itself.<sup>23</sup>

The point is that we must value individuals intrinsically, because intrinsic valuation is the richest in properties and therefore the best kind of valuation. To value human persons with anything less would be a disvaluation. That is, we would be imposing a restriction on the person's individuality, and this cannot be because we understand the human person to be an infinity of necessities, possibilities, and actualities. "Man is essentially infinite-- a spiritual Gestalt whose cardinality is that of the continuum."<sup>24</sup>

Professor Hartman's conclusions regarding the value of human persons are beautiful, and we want very much to believe them. The problem is whether or not he has been successful in supporting his conclusions, and whether or not his arguments can be applied to actual concrete persons.

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<sup>22</sup>Hartman, The Structure of Value, pp. 223-224.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 224.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 118.

In the first place, there seems to be an inconsistency in Hartman's use of the term "man" in the title of this article,<sup>25</sup> This misuse of the term is particularly striking when we note his emphasis elsewhere on the distinction between the singular and the analytic concept.<sup>26</sup> Although he did justify the use of the class name for some references to individuals, his excellent distinction would seem to demand a more precise use of the term for this paper. "Man" is a general name, and the "Four Axiological Proofs" article is clearly concerned with proving the infinite value of the individual human person, not with the concept "man". "Man" does not exist except as a concept in the mind; only the individual person exists. "Man" is an abstraction, an analytic concept, and an analytic concept is never singular, since it requires that there must be at least two class members,<sup>27</sup>

While in one sense it is legitimate to refer to the individual as a schema, it is confusing to use the term "man" in the title of the "Four Axiological Proofs." Hartman notes the inconsistency of this usage elsewhere:

The question . . . is, what is the class of men. Is it legitimate to extend the extension of "man," that is, the schema, to the whole of the persons in question, which is denoted by the proper names, and say, as some logicians do, that the class of men is the class of Socrates and of Plato and of Aristotle? Obviously not . . . But how the referents

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<sup>25</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 428.

<sup>26</sup>Especially in his article, "Singular and Particular," q.v.

<sup>27</sup>This point is discussed in detail in "Singular and Particular."

of these proper names can be made the referents of the general name "man", that precisely is our question . . . . the proper name "Socrates" refers to the individual and the general name "man" refers to the schema "a man"<sup>28</sup>

As has been noted earlier in this paper, if we are to adequately value the individual person, we must value him intrinsically. Hartman argues that since the individual person is "essentially infinite--a spiritual Gestalt whose cardinality is that of the continuum,"<sup>29</sup> he ought to be valued intrinsically ( $I^I$ ), but when we subsume him under a class name we value him extrinsically ( $I^E$ )--and thus inadequately.

An empirical thing determined by an analytic concept is always a particular thing, a member of a class of at least two, and never a singular thing. The values connected with singular things are again different from those connected with particular things, due to the different axiometric structure of the singular intension. If systemic value is the value of Perfection and extrinsic value that of Goodness, singular or intrinsic value is the value of Uniqueness.<sup>30</sup>

A second problem related to Hartman's general approach to the valuation of the human person is what precisely are we valuing? The actual person? The potential person? Or, are we valuing a transcendental non-spatio-temporal self? There is some question as to whether Professor Hartman is settled in his own mind on this point. For example, in an earlier writing he discusses the epistemological proof which argues:

As there are  $\infty_0$  actions of thought capable of being thought in  $\infty_0$  levels of thought, each of these thoughts

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<sup>28</sup>Hartman, "Singular and Particular," pp. 13-14.

<sup>29</sup>Hartman, The Structure of Value, p. 118.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

and levels combinable with all the others in any permutation possible, man's rationality, in this interpretation, is of cardinality  $2^{\aleph_0} = \aleph_1$ ; which means that the characteristic number of man defined as rational being is  $\aleph_1$ . Obviously, no individual can actually think all these thoughts. The demonstration of man's infinity refers to ideal man; just as no actual line can ever be of one dimension, as the definition of "line" demands, and as no real sphere can ever touch a plane in only one point.<sup>31</sup>

It is clear in this statement that Professor Hartman's notion of the infinity of the human person refers to something like a "Pure form of man," a kind of Platonic ideal which does not actually exist concretely, any more than does the ideal line exist concretely, or the ideal sphere. If it is only the ideal person which Hartman wants to define as being infinite, then the four axiological proofs of the infinite value of man have no relation to actual existing persons. But this conclusion would seem to be contrary to what Professor Hartman wants to say about existing human persons.

In his reply to a question on this problem Hartman states:

A thing has the value which is determined by the cardinality of the number of predicates in the intension of its concept. The person in the "Four Axiological Proofs" is defined by various intensions; and it is the person thus defined which is of infinite value. I don't think that anywhere I use the notion of Pure Ego, either in that article or in The Structure of Value. I might use the notion of transcendental self, and I would identify this with the person as far as value is concerned. Thus, I speak of the person that fulfills the definitions given in the various proofs. What is of infinite value, then, is the person as fulfilling the intension by which it is defined; e.g. in the epistemological proof, the definition "Man is a rational being." Anything that is a rational being is according to this proof, of infinite value.

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<sup>31</sup>Hartman, "The Logic of Value," p. 410. Italics mine

And it says there, as also, e.g., in The Structure of Value p. 118, "that every individual person is as infinite as the whole space-time universe."<sup>32</sup>

When we join together the above quotation, it is still not clear what Professor Hartman refers to when he speaks of "the infinite value of the human person". At one point he says "the demonstration of man's infinity refers to ideal man."<sup>33</sup> At another time he says, "Anything that is a rational being is . . . of infinite value . . . , And . . . every individual person is as infinite as the whole space-time universe."<sup>34</sup> A rational being, according to Hartman, "is one who has the capacity of combining concepts with objects . . . which is really the capacity of finding one's way in the world by representing it to himself, that is, by naming material objects and inter-relating the names in question."<sup>35</sup> Surely actual concrete persons could qualify here. If this is what Hartman means by "person", then there are existing beings which are of infinite value. But if infinity refers only to the ideal man, then no such creature exists for no actual concrete person can actually think all the thoughts of  $\omega_0$  required in the definition.

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<sup>32</sup>Robert S. Hartman, letter to Raymond M. Pruitt, dated July 16, 1971

<sup>33</sup>Hartman, "The Logic of Value," p. 410.

<sup>34</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 431. Italics mine.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

It might be possible to understand what Hartman means by the infinity of the individual person, if we think of the person in terms of all his possibilities, were he not extrinsically limited by shortness of life and other extrinsic human frailties. There is no point in either of the four proofs at which we can say logically that the individual could not: (1) have one more thought, (2) make one more self-reflection, (3) add one more property to his existence, (4) or have one more moment of self-realization. So, according to intensional logic, the individual person, if he is to be a person, must have the logical, potential possibility of fulfilling the definition given in the four proofs.

But despite the friendliness of this approach to Hartman's system, he seems to have headed it off at the pass by prohibiting the intrinsic valuation of the empirical, or concrete self.

Only the empirical self is spatio-temporal. But intrinsic ethics has nothing to do with the empirical self nor does it apply the categories of cause and effect. In Kant, ethics is based on the notion of freedom from cause and effect, on the autonomous self-determination of the person, and the same is the case in formal axiology. . . . In other words, the ethics which appears when we define it as the application of intrinsic value of the individual person is existential ethics, the relation of the person to himself, in self-reflection.<sup>36</sup>

When Hartman says that formal axiology, as in Kant, is based on the notion of freedom from cause and effect, on the autonomous self-determination of the person, he still speaks of the Self ("the transcendental unity of apperception," for Kant) as a causal agent through self-determination. I think Kant was wrong in supposing that

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<sup>36</sup>Hartman, letter of Pruitt. Italics mine.



when we are determined by reason we are not determined at all. And while Professor Hartman denies that cause and effect can be applied to the self-determination of the person, he may be raising more questions than he is answering in the process. It is at this point that he presents difficulties which cannot be ignored.

Professor Edwards has put some of these difficulties in relief:

No matter what the word "value" may ultimately turn out to mean, I do not think that we human beings are able to value anything unless that thing can affect us in some way. And it is only the kind of self which can function as a cause that can have moral duties. A cause-less self could never do anything, and if we accept the "cannot implies ought not" principle, then it could never have any moral duties to do anything. In what then could moral duty consist? (And if we define moral responsibility in terms of being the originative cause of one's actions, then such a non-causal self could never be said to be responsible for anything).<sup>37</sup>

We are left with the very fundamental question as to whether Hartman's transcendental approach to valuation is really applicable to human persons at all. Hartman, of course, admits that

There is also a kind of ethics which deals with the progress of the person in space and time, namely teleological ethics, but this belongs to extrinsic rather than intrinsic value and is more psychology (extrinsic value applied to the individual person)<sup>38</sup> than ethics in the intrinsically defined sense. . . . Thus the intrinsic aspect of psychology overlaps with ethics as intrinsic value applied to individual persons. There are very subtle distinctions here, as for example in the teleology of Nicolai Hartmann in what he calls the backward determination

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<sup>37</sup>Rem B. Edwards, "Some Spurious Proofs for the 'Pure Ego'," unpublished paper, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, (n.d.), pp. 1, 2.

<sup>38</sup>The Hartmanian symbol for this valuation is I<sup>E</sup>.

from the future to the present of the three-fold finalistic nexus where intrinsic time determinations take place. But these distinctions depend on the distinction between intrinsic time and extrinsic time and is not discussed in any of my published writings.<sup>39</sup>

When the valuation of the human person is based upon a transcendental basis in the Kantian sense, it is doubtful whether we can speak of "person" or "self" at all. It is the nature of transcendental logic to be concerned with the content of knowledge only in so far as that content is form. In other words, transcendental knowledge is meta-knowledge, knowledge about how knowledge is had, and the supreme principle of this meta-knowledge is the unity of apperception: "The synthetical unity of apperception is, therefore, the highest point with which all employment of the understanding, and even the whole of logic, and afterwards the whole of transcendental philosophy, must be connected; ay, that faculty is the understanding itself."<sup>40</sup>

In saying that the faculty of apperception is actually the understanding itself, Kant is giving the formal element of experience, i.e. those conditions which any object must meet in order to become an object of knowledge. We cannot say, however, that apperception is a self; it is just a universal epistemological principle. We cannot say that Kant posits a personal self which performs a synthesizing act;

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<sup>39</sup>Hartman, letter to Pruitt

<sup>40</sup>Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, translated by F. Max Muller, Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company, Garden City, New York, 1966, p. 78.

but only that self-consciousness necessarily arises out of the synthetic processes generative of experiences and can therefore be postulated as a condition without which de facto experience could not be possible.<sup>41</sup>

Even if we could say that transcendental philosophy refers to a "self", it must be a non-personal self which arises out of the synthetic activities which produce experience, or we could say, out of the encounter of the faculty of apperception with the world as appearance.

Kemp Smith elaborates on this aspect of the problem;

Mental processes, in so far as they are generative of experience, must fall outside the field of consciousness, and as activities dynamically creative cannot be of the nature of ideas or contents. They are not subconscious ideas but non-conscious processes. They are not the submerged content of experience but its conditioning grounds. Their most significant characteristic has still, however, to be mentioned. They must no longer be interpreted in subjectivist terms, as originating in the separate existence of an individual self. In conditioning experience they generate the only self for which experience can vouch, and consequently, in the absence of full and independent proof, must not be conceived as individually circumscribed. The problem of knowledge, properly conceived, is no longer how consciousness, individually conditioned, can lead us beyond its own bounds, but what a consciousness, which is at once consciousness of objects and also consciousness of a self, must imply for its possibility.<sup>42</sup>

Professor Hartman seems to waver between a Kantian and a Kierkegaardian notion of the self. The former seems more difficult to reconcile with the Hartman system than the latter. This latter concept will be considered in the discussion of the epistemological proof,

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<sup>41</sup>Richard C. Leggett, A Critical Analysis of Jonathan Bennett's Treatment of Kant's Notion of Synthesis, Unpublished master's thesis, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1968, p. 57.

<sup>42</sup>Kemp Smith, A Commentary to Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason', The Macmillan Company, New York, 1950, pp. 273-274.

## II. THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL PROOF

The epistemological proof has its ground in the definition of man as a rational being. "Rational" meaning for Hartman the capacity of combining concepts with objects, which is really the capacity of finding one's way in the world by representing it to himself."<sup>43</sup> According to this definition, in order for a man to be a man, he must be able to "combine concepts with objects."<sup>44</sup> and this then becomes the intension of the individual human person, for he is able to correlate thought with things. If we call each concept a thought, the intension of the individual human person now becomes "thinking thoughts."<sup>45</sup> Professor Hartman notes:

In order for this intension to be a measure, we must spell out the set it consists of. This is the set of "thoughts", meaning the thought items a man must be able to think in order to be a man. Fully elaborated, the intension of man is: "thinking thought s and thinking thought t and thinking thought u and . . . etc." Since each thought is the name of a thing, the number of thoughts a man must be able to think in order to be a man must correspond to the number of things. According to a theorem of transfinite mathematics, any collection of material objects is at most denumerably infinite, that is to say, can be put, at most into one-to-one correspondence with the series of rational numbers. The cardinality of this series is  $A_0$ . We are using "A" for the Cantorian "aleph". . . . Hence, the number of thoughts, in the sense defined, that a man must be able to think, is at most denumerably infinite, or  $A_0$ . This does not change if we add, to the names of things, the names of actual such sets--of situations--must again be

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<sup>43</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 431.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

definite and hence denumerable; and the sets of logical such sets--of classes--must be definite and hence denumerable (even though, under another viewpoint, it must be regarded as non-denumerable).<sup>46</sup>

Up to this point in the epistemological argument, the intension of man is a denumerably infinite set of predicates, and accordingly, man is a denumerable infinity; the cardinality of his value as such is  $A_0$ . The number of items in the intension of a concept is called the characteristic number of the corresponding thing, a term coined by Leibniz precisely for the purpose of signifying the cardinality of an intension.<sup>47</sup> However, the definition of "man" involved more than this definition indicates. These thought items s, t, u, etc., must also be thought both extensionally and intensionally.

Extensionally understood, the set in question becomes what Dedekind called meine Gedankenwelt, my world of thoughts, the set of possible objects of thought of a thinker. . . . Each of the  $A_0$  items may be thought, that is, it may be thought that they are being thought: and it may be thought that the latter thoughts are being thought, and so on ad infinitum. Each thought can be thought as thought  $A_0$  times: the item s can be thought as thought, and the thought that s is thought, s' may be thought as being thought; and so on to  $A_0$  "primes". Similarly t, t', t'', t''', t''''. . . ; u, u', u'', u''', u''''. . . . Since there are  $A_0$  thought items thus capable of being thought, each such thought combinable with every other, the total of my Gedankenwelt is  $2 \cdot A_0 = A_1$ . The characteristic number of "man" is then  $A_1$ . Man, as a rational being, is an infinity of cardinality  $A_1$ , a thought continuum, a spiritual Gestalt.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 432.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

Continuing, Professor Hartman writes:

Intensionally understood, the thinking of each of the  $\aleph_0 (A_0)$  thought items of the original set gives rise to the same cardinality. "Thinking" here means not only thinking that, but thinking what. Each of the items is not only a name denoting a material object but also a concept connoting it, and each concept has its own intension consisting of the predicates signifying the properties of the thing, or things, in question. If these things are at least two, these properties must be common to, abstracted from, the things as members of the class in question. The larger the number of class members, the smaller the number of predicates; the smaller the number of class members, the larger the number of predicates. With a class of two members, the number of common properties that may be abstracted is infinite. The cardinality of this infinity is  $\aleph_0 (A_0)$ , since, as we have seen, each of the common properties must be abstracted one by one. While the process of abstraction is potentially infinite, the totality of common properties abstractable is actually infinite. Understood intensionally, my Gedankenwelt, consists of  $\aleph_0 (A_0)$  concepts each of which may contain  $\aleph_0 (A_0)$  intensional predicates. Hence, again, the intension of man, in this definition, consists of  $2 \aleph_0 = \aleph_1 (2 A_0 = A_1)$  items. Man is essentially infinite--a spiritual Gestalt whose cardinality is that of the continuum.<sup>49</sup>

The cardinality, then, of the individual person is also that of the entire space-time universe itself--a point made by such thinkers as Augustine, Pascal, Bergson, and Unamuno. Hartman believes he has here demonstrated the argument axiologically, his demonstration being adapted from Dedekind's proof for the existence of infinite systems, which was earlier used by Josiah Royce to demonstrate the infinity of the self.<sup>50</sup>

It is impossible that a concrete, finite self could think the denumerably infinite number of thoughts which Professor Hartman seems

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<sup>49</sup>Hartman, "The Structure of Value," p. 118.

<sup>50</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 433.

to be saying he must think "in order to be a man." None of us would qualify as men according to this definition! We do not have the capacity to produce a separate thought corresponding to each of the infinite number of items in the spatio-temporal world. Furthermore, there would not be time enough for the concretely existing person to do that much thinking in a lifetime.

Professor Edwards points to basic difficulties in the epistemological proof:

No individual human person can do what Professor Hartman suggests that we all can do in constructing a thought world. This obvious point is disguised in Hartman's writings beneath two fundamental ambiguities, the shift between the concepts of potential and actual infinity, and the absolutely devastating equivocation between the notion of the concrete individual human person and the ideal essence of the abstraction "man."<sup>51</sup>

If Professor Hartman has shown only that each person is potentially infinite in thought properties, then each person is only potentially of infinite value, according to this proof. It is physically, intellectually, and temporally impossible for any concrete person to actually fulfill the intension of his concept as set forth in this definition. Professor Edwards notes that, "None of this is even real potentiality for any of us. It is at best a potentiality in the abstract. And if ~~life-after-death~~, in which all these deficiencies are removed, is being assumed here, it needs to be said explicitly and defended."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>Rem B. Edwards, "The Value of Man in the Hartman Value System," unpublished paper, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1971, p. 4.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

It is conceivable, and I believe it to be the case, that Professor Hartman is trying to bridge the gap between the finite and the infinite self in the Kierkegaardian sense.

Only in reaching God by Faith is our inner Self fulfilled. Our self, thus, stretches from the finite to the infinite; and Kierkegaard shows how we can--and must--stretch it so. For only by reaching the infinite, do we become connected with the ground of our existence, and do we become transparent to ourselves--do our Selves become themselves.<sup>53</sup>

If Hartman is following Kierkegaard's concept of the self in his value system, then by uniting finiteness with infinity, he could speak of the potential and the actual at the same time in the valuation of the human person. However, I am not convinced that the epistemological proof is applicable in this context. (I shall return to this point shortly.)

Since Professor Hartman has defended the Kierkegaardian concept of the self in his articles and seminars, it would be in order to give a brief review of how Kierkegaard handles the seeming contradiction of combining finiteness with infinity in the same concretely existing person. I rely on the excellent work of Reidar Thomte for this task. According to Kierkegaard, the finite self unites with the infinite self in two movements:

. . . first the infinite resignation, then the movement of faith. The infinite resignation is the break with the temporal. . . . In the infinite resignation, the individual becomes conscious of his eternal validity, and only for the person who possesses such a consciousness can there be a question of grasping existence by means of faith. The infinity resignation is regarded as the last stage prior to faith.

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<sup>53</sup>Robert S. Hartman, "The Self in Kierkegaard," Journal of Existential Psychology, #8, Spring, 1962, p. 1.



In the infinite resignation the individual resigns the love which is the content of his life (cf. Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac) and reconciles himself to the pain. Then the miracle happens. He makes the further motion; he says, I believe that by virtue of the absurd I shall receive back that which I surrender, for all things are possible to God. The absurd must not be regarded as a factor within the compass of the understanding. It is not identical with the unexpected, the improbable, or the unsurmised. When the man of faith makes the infinite resignation, he is convinced humanly speaking of the impossibility of any escape. The only salvation is by virtue of the absurd which he seizes by means of faith. He recognizes the impossibility, and at the same time he believes the absurd. . . .

In order to gain a real understanding of Kierkegaard we must keep the distinction between resignation and faith clearly in mind. The distinction is set forth in the following passage: 'For the act of resignation is my eternal consciousness. . . . In resignation I make renunciation of everything, this movement I make by myself. . . . By faith I make renunciation of nothing, on the contrary, by faith I acquire everything. . . . By faith Abraham did not renounce his claim upon Isaac; but by faith he got Isaac.'

The infinite resignation, or the infinite surrender, consists in that the individual severs all ties which bind him to the temporal world. . . . Through the second movement, that of faith, the individual is again brought back to the temporal (thus Abraham regained Isaac after he surrendered him), but now the individual lives in the temporal or the finite only by virtue of his God-relationship.<sup>54</sup>

According to Kierkegaard--and Hartman--the individual who has made the two movements would be living in both finiteness and infinity at the same time because of his God-relationship, thus the self is both finite and infinite at once.

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<sup>54</sup>Reidar Thomte, Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion, Greenwood Press, Publishers, New York, 1948, pp. 57-58.

But the problem of making this concept of the self fit with Hartman's epistemological proof remains, since he has the person engaged in quantitatively thinking a nondenumerably infinite number of thoughts, an activity which is only logically possible at best. Clearly, the concrete person can not actually fulfill this requirement. In the second place, what Professor Hartman calls an epistemological proof is not the normal nature of epistemological problems. Traditionally, epistemological problems have been concerned with the content and validity of thinking, not with the possible number of thoughts which can be thought. I think it might be asked whether this proof can legitimately be called an epistemological proof, or whether the term is merely used to label the activity of thinking thoughts.

Professor Edwards states that the quantity of thoughts thought does not necessarily place men at a higher level than some other things.

Furthermore, we may be able to use the Hartman value system to show that men are of less actual value than computers. If the actual value of an entity depends upon the actual number of discrete thoughts which it can in fact think, then computers should be much more valuable than men, since they can far out-do us all in this respect, though they are still finite. Why would this not be a legitimate application of the Hartman value system? If we disagree with this outcome, could it be because we think that value depends upon kind of properties possessed rather than upon number of properties possessed?<sup>55</sup>

When we limit persons and computers to the actual process of thinking thoughts, Professor Edwards has a point

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<sup>55</sup>Edwards, "The Value of Man," p. 7.

Other writers have argued that there are close similarities between the functions of the brain and the computer's ability for quantitative thinking.

If there is any kind of definite cause-and-effect relationship between the lifelong sequence of electric pulses leaving the brain and the lifelong sequence of pulses entering the brain, it can be precisely implemented by a switching network of the type that is known to underlie the design of all electronic digital computers and that at least appears to underlie the design of the brain.<sup>56</sup>

Professor Edwards argues further that the application of the epistemological argument to actual existing men not only shows that they are of finite value, but it also shows that they are of unequal value.

The actual and potential thought worlds of existing men vary immensely in complexity. Men are limited by the languages they speak, and some men speak and thus think more complexly than others. Thus, the epistemological proof as applied to actual persons shows that men are of unequal value, though Hartman himself hopes that he has found a philosophical proof of the equality of all men based on the equivalence of infinities of a given order.<sup>57</sup>

Hartman does not distinguish between the capacities of individual concrete men in his article, but in other writings he indicates that different individual persons have achieved different levels of selfhood, which would suggest that he does value the person according to the Gestalt which he is, ranging in degree of finiteness

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<sup>56</sup>Dean E. Wooldridge, Mechanical Man - The Physical Basis of Intelligent Life, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1968, p. 92.

<sup>57</sup>Edwards, "The Value of Man," p. 7.

and infinity. The more intrinsic one becomes, (IS)<sup>I</sup>, i.e. the more he identifies himself with his thoughts, the more he lives to himself "and creates himself as an intrinsic universe within himself."<sup>58</sup> Why such an intrinsic universe is necessarily infinite is a point which Professor Hartman has not successfully defended. Why could not an intrinsic universe be finite, and yet be intrinsic and unique?

Professor Hartman would probably say that Professor Edwards is making an extrinsic valuation of an intrinsic thing (I<sup>E</sup>); however, the problem remains as to whether a concretely existing person can think a non-denumerable infinity of thoughts. If denying the truth of this entails extrinsic evaluation, then Edwards, and other critics of this notion, would reply that it indicates a weakness in the system, not in the criticisms of it.

It seems to me that the crux of the issue lies in the fact that while the critics of Hartman's system tend to speak only of the concrete person, Hartman refers to the person as a spiritual Gestalt, in the general sense of that used by Kierkegaard, Berdyaev, and somewhat in the sense of Plato's relation of the individual person to the ideal form of the human person.

In regard to the measuring of infinity, Hartman argues that it cannot be done with a finite measuring instrument. For example, "From the point of view of infinity, there is no difference between

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<sup>58</sup>Hartman, letter to Pruitt.

2, 2<sup>10,000</sup>, 2<sup>50,000</sup>, 2<sup>1,000,000</sup>, or any other finite number. Mathematical infinity ( $\aleph_0$ ) only begins "after" the last countable number."<sup>59</sup> It is in this way that Hartman tries to avoid having to account for individual differences and the unequal value of persons. By treating each human person as "a spiritual Gestalt whose cardinality is that of the continuum,"<sup>60</sup> then each person would be equal to every other person, for all persons would be infinite. This is what Hartman attempts to do. The problem with this effort is that he seems to assume what the "Four Axiological Proofs" paper is attempting to prove.

Professor Edwards presses Hartman's argument on to its logical implications and asks if the individual could do what Hartman says he must be able to do "in order to be a man," would this not make him equal with God? He thinks Hartman has given us an epistemological proof for the infinite value of God, not man. Theology holds that "an actual infinity of thought properties belongs properly only to Omniscience."<sup>61</sup> Therefore, to attribute infinite value to man, on this basis would be a sacrilege in the view of traditional theology.

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<sup>59</sup>Hartman, The Structure of Value, p. 318.

<sup>60</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 433.

<sup>61</sup>Edwards, "The Value of Man," p. 7.

### III. THE LOGICAL PROOF

The logical proof considers man as "the being who has his own definition of himself within himself."<sup>62</sup>

Human individuals are considered to be infinitely more valuable than other things since they have the concept of themselves within themselves, that is, the human individual is self-defining. The individual person depicts the intension of his own proper name when he can define himself, attributing to himself all the properties which are uniquely his own and can say, "I am myself;" or when he can say "I am not myself," in which case he means that the actuality of his "myself" is imperfect in terms of his definition of his "self." It is this capacity to understand oneself in terms of oneself which is the distinctive characteristic of rational human beings, and merits for them the category of "persons," and shows that the human person is more than a mere individual.<sup>63</sup>

A chair certainly does not know that it is a chair, nor does a computer know that it is a computer, but I know that I am I. Even Frieda the cow does not know that she is uniquely herself for she is unable to reflect upon herself. But Hartman argues, as a human person I am not only able to reflect upon myself, "I can reflect upon my reflection of myself, and upon my reflection of my reflection of myself, and so on ad infinitum."<sup>64</sup> Logically, this successive

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<sup>62</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 433.

<sup>63</sup>Hartman, "Singular and Particular," p. 10.

<sup>64</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 433.

reflection of oneself could go on infinitely, and since each such reflection is itself a definite item of thought, the series is enumerable, and thus the whole succession of thought items is an infinite denumerable series with cardinality  $A_0 (\aleph_0)$ .<sup>65</sup>

Although the series of reflections, and reflections upon the reflections should continue ad infinitum, the human person who is doing the thinking is always himself differentiated from his reflections of himself, so that his reflections never cover the totality of his person. There is always remaining the Self which does the thinking. It is at this point that Hartman introduces his employment of the theory of types, a maneuver, the validity of which some critics have questioned.

According to the fundamental axiom of the theory of types, whatever involves all of a collection must not be one of the collection; the thinker must not, logically, be part of the set of his possible thought objects, in particular, nor of the set of his autoreflections--the set of his reflection upon the reflection upon . . . the reflection of himself. That which thus refers to all of a collection is of a higher logical order than the collection.<sup>66</sup>

According to this logic, if the collection itself has the cardinality of  $A_0 (\aleph_0)$ , the higher order, i.e. the Self which does the thinking, would have the infinite value of  $A_0 (\aleph_1)$ .

Professor Edwards criticizes Professor Hartman's attempt to get more metaphysical mileage out of the theory of types than Russell would have imagined possible. For as previously noted, Hartman argues

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

that the thinker of the denumerable series of reflections cannot himself be a member of the series, this being forbidden by the theory of types, the self that does the thinking must be of a higher logical order. This higher order, Edwards argues is a meta-self, and that if one must belong to a second order of infinity in order to think about the first order of infinity, then it should follow that he must belong to a third order before he can think about a second order, and a fourth order in order to think about a third order, and so on to ad infinitum.<sup>67</sup>

Similarly, if I must be non-spatial in order to think or talk about the whole of space, and non-temporal in order to think about the whole of time, would not the same pattern of reasoning prove that I must be non-real in order to think about the whole of existence, beyond being to think about the whole of being? What is the difference between being non-real or beyond reality, existence and being and just plain unreal or non-existent? Does the proof show finally the non-existence of the Self?<sup>68</sup>

If this criticism cannot be answered, then it would seem that Hartman's line of argument necessarily generates an infinite regress of Selves or Thinkers.

Can the Self or the Thinker have any knowledge of or thoughts about himself at all? If not, then it can never be known, as required by the theory of types, so why worry about it? If so, then an infinite regress of Selves seem to be generated. In a self of second order infinity is required before I can talk or think about a self of first order infinity, then this process can be repeated to infinity, and an infinite series of selves, meta-selves, and meta-meta-selves is generated. Somewhere along the way, we seem to have lost all contact with the concretely existing individual human person.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>Edwards, "The Value of Man in the Hartman Value System," p. 8.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 10. Italics mine.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid.



Hartman's explanation and possible escape from the seeming necessity of an infinite regress of meta-selves may be found in his argument that the properties by which a person is measured are at the same time properties within the person, thus eliminating the need for meta-selves, since all concepts of the self belong to the one self. He has attempted to show in his study of belief as a value property<sup>70</sup> that while the second-order properties (also called higher-order properties), such as the contents of belief, while they cannot define identity, are always the value properties. As we have seen, in the Hartmanian system, it is the value properties which make the difference, and these higher-order properties, even though they are not part of the definition of the identity of two things, yet are properties of the things.

It is a value property of myself to believe that the world is good or that it is bad; in the first case I am an optimist, in the second a pessimist. Indeed, as Jesus, Kant, and others have held, the content of certain of my beliefs defines my morality. These examples only confirm what is logically probable, that higher-order properties of a person are value properties; that it seems certain that contents of belief are value properties of the believer.<sup>71</sup>

Using the well-known example of Epimenides the Cretan, who said that every Cretan is a liar, Hartman explains,

As the saying of Epimenides is a property of Epimenides but refers to the totality said, so the belief of Epimenides is a property of him and refers to the totality believed. It cannot, therefore, be a part of that totality. Rather, the

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<sup>70</sup>Robert S. Hartman, "Belief as a Value Property," unpublished paper, Centro de Estudios Filosóficos Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

totality, precisely by being both sense and reference of the belief, qualifies the belief, which in turn qualifies the believer. Hence the content of the belief is a secondary property of the believer. And as such it is not the kind of property that defines identity.<sup>72</sup>

If this be true, then it is not the case that self-reflection necessitates the existence of meta-selves which reflect upon reflections, since the content of a reflection does not contain him who believes, but is contained by him as a secondary property (a value property).

Edwards argues that even if we grant Hartman's argument up to this point, we still are not forced to conclude that the self is infinite in thought properties, appropriations, choices, reflections, self-realizations, etc.

For any actual concrete human being, the given thought world always will be finite, the acts of appropriation will be finite, the range of choices will be finite, the real potentialities for self-realization will be finite--however immense or indefinite. And the self of a logical order higher than such a finite set need only to be a still higher finite order of logical entities in order to satisfy the requirements of the theory of types. Furthermore, there may still be a sense in which individual persons are 'richer in properties' and thus 'better' than things and systems, even if men are finite.<sup>73</sup>

Professor Edwards asks if it isn't possible to give a temporal account of self knowledge which satisfies the requirements of the theory of types, without following Hartman in looking for an infinite self, and goes on to explain that Charles Hartshorne and others influenced by Whitehead have given alternative notions of the nature

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>73</sup>Edwards, "The Value of Man," pp. 10-11.

of the self which make it possible to refer to one's self without the necessity of introducing an infinite self.

Hartshorne contends, for example, that the self of the present moment, in the strictest intelligible sense of the 'present moment,' can never literally know, talk about, or think about itself, since all introspective reflection is actually retrospective reflection on the immediately past states of the present self, and since the self which in time begins to think the thought 'my present self' is already in the past by the time that this thought is completed.<sup>74</sup>

Hartman would not argue with this notion so long as it is remembered that here is one of three ways of relating oneself to one's own thoughts.

A person may have, to his own thoughts, all three value relations, systemic, extrinsic, intrinsic. He may just think about his thoughts, or he may classify them or he may identify himself with them:

$$(IS)^S, (IS)^E, (IS)^I.$$

The latter is the intrinsic experience of one's own thoughts. The more one does this the more one lives in oneself and creates himself as an intrinsic universe within himself.<sup>75</sup>

According to Hartman, Professor Hartshorne's analysis would be the second  $(IS)^E$  value relation to one's self, i.e., an extrinsic valuation of one's self. In intrinsic valuation  $(IS)^I$ , one would unify or synthesize, the infinite moments of one's existence. So, instead of finite passing moments, one is a Gestalt, an intrinsic universe. Thus, for Hartman, it is a richer valuation. In fact, he considers the logical proof with its definition of self-reflexivity

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<sup>74</sup>Ibid., p.11.

<sup>75</sup>Hartman, letter to Pruitt.

one of the stronger arguments for the infinity of the human person.

The infinity of the person rests in the last resort on its self-reflexivity, that is, the definition of the person as that being which has its own definition of itself within itself. From this follows everything. The predicates, therefore, by which the quality of the person is measured are at the same time properties within the person - as is not the case with a non-reflective thing.<sup>76</sup>

This capacity of the person for determining himself the predicates by which he is measured is Hartman's answer to critics such as Mueller who asks what is the relationship between a thing and its intension, i.e., its expositional predicates.<sup>77</sup> Mueller wants a list of those predicates to be set up and justified outside the person so that he might be measured by that concept, whereas in Hartman's valuation, the predicates by which the quality of a person is measured are at the same time properties within him. The person is singular and cannot be adequately measured in the usual conceptual sense. His definition is "a 'unicept', an experiential entity representing one thing in its uniqueness."<sup>78</sup>

#### IV. THE ONTOLOGICAL PROOF

The ontological proof considers man as "the mirror of all things"<sup>79</sup> in that he is the interpreter of his environment, the determiner of his destiny, and the builder of his world.

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<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

<sup>77</sup>Robert W. Mueller, "The Axiology of Robert S. Hartman: A Critical Study," The Journal of Value Inquiry, I (Spring, 1968).

<sup>78</sup>Hartman, "Value Theory as a Formal System," p. 300.

<sup>79</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 434.

Hartman uses an extended quotation from Giovanni Pico della Mirandola to express his concept of man the mirror of all things:

At last it seems to me I have come to understand why man is the most fortunate of creatures and consequently worthy of all admiration and what precisely is that rank which is his lot in the universal chain of Being. . . . God . . . had already built this cosmic home we behold. . . . But when the work was finished, the Craftsman kept wishing that there were someone to ponder the plan of so great a work, to love its beauty, and to wonder at its vastness. . . . He therefore took man as a creature of indeterminate nature and . . . addressed him thus: 'Neither a fixed abode nor a form that is thine alone, nor any function peculiar to thyself have we given thee, Adam, to the end that according to thy longing and according to thy judgment thou mayest have and possess what abode, what form, and what functions thou thyself shalt desire. The nature of all other beings is limited and constrained within the bounds of laws prescribed by Us. Thou, constrained by no limits, in accordance with thine own free will, in whose hand We have placed thee, shalt ordain for thyself the limits of thy nature. We have set thee at the world's center that thou mayest from thence more easily observe whatever is in the world. We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and molder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lower forms of life, which are brutish. Thou shalt have the power, out of thy soul's judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms which are divine. (Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Oration on the Dignity of Man, The Renaissance Philosophy of Man, Ernst Cassirer et al., eds., Chicago, 1948, pp. 223ff.)<sup>80</sup>

This definition portrays man as the creature who transcends the totality of all other created things. He involves it all in that he "ponders," "praises," and "observes" the "completeness" and the "finality" of creation. He has the freedom and the capacity for change: he has himself as his task to be fulfilled, i.e. to determine his axiological value by appropriating, or making himself into,

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., pp. 434-435.

whatever level of creation he desires. By his own will he may constitute himself "as any combination or permutation of the intensional properties of created things,"<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, it is he who values created things, giving them status in terms of himself.

Professor Hartman argues according to the theory of types, that since the totality of intensional properties of created things, as well as the things themselves, is at most, of cardinality  $A_0$  ( $\aleph_0$ ), then the human person who is of a higher logical order than the totality of created things and their properties, must be at least of cardinality  $A_1$  ( $\aleph_1$ ). Man's value is therefore that of a non-denumerable continuum, a spiritual Gestalt, equal in value to the whole universe of space and time.<sup>82</sup>

In this context, the human person is logically and potentially unimpeded, "so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and molder of thyself; thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer."<sup>83</sup> But since the issue of freedom for the concretely existing person is far from settled, and if Hartman were applying this argument to empirical persons in their finiteness, we could justly accuse him of making an unwarranted assumption. But, Hartman, seeing the person as a singular thing in all of his possibilities, wants to apprehend the singular in the fullness of its

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<sup>81</sup>Ibid., p. 435

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.

<sup>83</sup>Ibid., p. 434.

concretion, in its total Gestalt,<sup>84</sup> thus, the human person has the ontological capacity of making himself into whatever type of person he wants to be.

Professor Dwight Van de Vate, along with others, has presented alternatives to Hartman's notion of unlimited freedom for the individual. Van de Vate's argument is that the person's mirroring of all things in his experience is determined to a large degree by his environment, that is, "being a person is a reciprocal affair. . . . The dependence of the individual person on others is absolute: his being a person is conferred on him by them. At the same time, however, each of them is equally dependent upon him."<sup>85</sup> When we say that a person is the mirror of all things, in this context, we are saying that he reflects his conditioning, and in this sense, he could not be said to be free and wholly in control of his "self-determination." "Self-determination" from this perspective would be a misnomer. If it could be proved that man's mirroring is simply his reflection of his conditioning, then the individual is finite, not infinite.

Hartman, of course, valuing intrinsically (I<sup>I</sup>), would say that Van de Vate's analysis of personhood is an extrinsic valuation of an intrinsic thing (I<sup>E</sup>). Hartman sees the person as being autonomous, standing outside his environment, and even outside the properties by which he makes up his own character - much the same as

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<sup>84</sup>Hartman, "The Logic of Value," p. 408.

<sup>85</sup>Dwight Van de Vate, Persons, Privacy, and Feeling, Memphis State University Press, Memphis, 1970, pp. 113-114.

one stands outside other things and persons and evaluates them according to the intensions of their concepts.

The question whether we make a distinction between the individual and the properties of the individual is the old question of Berkeley, and it refers to anything, e.g., a chair. Do we make a distinction between the chair and the properties of the chair? I think we do. The chair is the subject of which the properties are predicated. The individual is the subject of which its properties are predicated. The properties are that which is had by the subject. Since there is a difference between the properties of the thing and the predicate in the intension of the thing's concept, the thing possesses value in the degree in which it has the properties that correspond to the set of predicates in the intension of its concept. A chair may not have the properties of a chair, and a person may not have the properties of a person, e.g., a moron, or a criminal who defines himself as "I am a non-rational being" or "I am not I". Depending on how many or how few properties the person or the thing has, he may be a good, a so-so, a bad, or a no-good person or thing.<sup>86</sup>

Hartman is close to Berdyaev who has shown that the human person as he is known to biology, psychology, and sociology, is a natural, social being; he is the offspring of the world and of the processes which take place in the world. But

. . . man as a person, is not a child of the world, he is of another origin. And this it is that makes man a riddle. Personality is a breakthrough, a breaking in upon this world; it is the introduction of something new. Personality is not nature, it does not belong to the objective hierarchy of nature, as a subordinate part of it. . . . Man is personality not by nature but by spirit. . . . Personality is a microcosm, a complete universe. It is personality alone that can bring together a universal content and be a potential universe in an individual form.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Hartman, letter to Pruitt.

<sup>87</sup>Nikolai Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, translated from the Russian by R. M. French, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1944, p. 21.



Hartman distinguishes between the extrinsic category of the concrete human person and the axiological category of the person as a "spiritual Gestalt whose cardinality is that of the continuum."<sup>88</sup> As these are different ways of valuing, so only intrinsic valuation is adequate for the axiological category. Going further in his discussion of this distinction, Berdyaev adds:

Personality is an axiological category, a category of value. Here we meet the fundamental paradox in the existence of personality. Personality must construct itself, enrich itself, fill itself with universal content, achieve unity in wholeness in the whole extent of its life. But for this, it must already exist. There must originally exist that subject which is called upon to construct itself. Personality is at the beginning of the road and it is only at the end of the road. Personality is not made up of parts, it is not an aggregate, not a composition, it is a primary whole. The growth of personality, the realization of personality certainly does not mean the formation of a whole out of its parts. It means rather the creative acts of personality, as a whole thing, which is not brought out of anything and not put together from anything. The form of personality is integral, it is present as a whole in all the acts of personality, personality has a unique, an unrepeatable form, Gestalt.<sup>89</sup>

The extrinsic category of the individual is the common, outward adherent universal. The extrinsic aspect of personality is generic, belonging to the human race, to history, tradition, society, class, family, heredity, imitation. But the intrinsic, the inward universal personality "must perform its self-existent, original, creative acts, and this alone makes it personality and constitutes its unique value."<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>89</sup>Berdyaev, p. 23.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

## V. THE TELEOLOGICAL PROOF

The teleological proof is based upon the definition of the individual person as a self-actualizing being.<sup>91</sup> Here the Self is an "aim," a "task," a "choice," to itself. This notion is expounded with some variation by such psychologists as Goldstein, Rogers, Angyal, Murphy, Allport, and Maslow. In philosophy, Kierkegaard is perhaps the leading exponent. His ethical definition of man shows him in the "transparency" of his teleological self-determination. Hartman quotes Kierkegaard's definition of the ethical as a paradigm of the concept of self-actualization: The ethical is seen

. . . as that by which a man becomes what he becomes. The ethical then will not change the individual into another man, but makes him himself. . . . It is essential to a man who is to live ethically that he becomes so radically conscious of himself that no adventitious trait escapes him.

He who has ethically chosen and found himself has himself as he is determined in his whole concretion. He has himself, then, as an individual who has these talents, these passions, these inclinations, these habits, who is under these influences, who in this direction is affected thus, in another thus. Here, then, he has himself as a task, in such a sort that the task is principally to order, cultivate, temper, enkindle, repress, in short, to bring about a proportionality in the soul, a harmony, which is the fruit of the personal virtues. Here the aim of his activity is himself, but not as arbitrarily determined, for he has himself as a task which is set for him, even though it has become his by fact that he has chosen it. But although he himself is his aim, this aim is nevertheless another, for the self which is the aim is not an abstract self which fits everywhere and hence nowhere, but a concrete self which stands in reciprocal relations with these surroundings, these conditions of life, this

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<sup>91</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 435.

natural order. . . . The ethical individual so lives that he is constantly passing from one stage to the other. If the individual has not originally understood himself as a concrete personality in continuity, neither will he acquire this subsequent continuity.<sup>92</sup>

The self as a task which is to be actualized is the ideal self, and the self which actualizes it is the concrete self. The self knowing itself, is action. Self-realization, or the synthesis which results when the self constitutes itself, is a process, fulfilling definite states.<sup>93</sup> The individual person "is at once the actual self and the ideal self which the individual has outside himself as the picture in likeness to which he has to form himself and which, on the other hand, he nevertheless has in him since it is the self. Only within him has the individual the goal after which he has to strive, and yet he has his goal outside him, inasmuch as he strives after it."<sup>94</sup> The self which the individual knows is the concrete self, but it is also the ideal self, or the pattern according to which he is to mold himself. As a pattern it lies in a sense outside of the individual, yet it is part of him as something which is his possession, his self.<sup>95</sup> "Man is a being who surmounts and transcends himself. The realization of personality in man is this continuous transcending of self."<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>Soren Kierkegaard, Either/Or, Vol. II, translated by Walter Lowrie, Princeton, 1944, pp. 212, 219.

<sup>93</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 436.

<sup>94</sup>Kierkegaard, Either/Or, Vol. II, p. 217.

<sup>95</sup>Thomte, p. 49.

<sup>96</sup>Berdyayev, p. 29.

Hartman argues that each moment of this self-realization is a moment in the life process of the person; and no matter how small these moments may be determined, they are still enumerable, so according to the theory of types, the process of self-realization is a series of cardinality  $A_0$  ( $\aleph_0$ ), but as Hartman interprets the theory of types, the Self which chooses and becomes the totality of these moments is of a higher logical order; therefore, his cardinality is  $A_1$  ( $\aleph_1$ ).<sup>97</sup>

Mueller accuses Hartman of inconsistency when he writes of self-fulfillment, but does not give an "objective criterion" by which one may know whether or not he has achieved the level of "a good man," for we know from Hartman not what fulfills a person, but only that it is better for a person to be fulfilled than not to be fulfilled."<sup>98</sup> Mueller's criticism would indicate that he has not grasped the distinctions between the various kinds of goodnesses in the Hartmanian system. The expression "objective criterion" is not in Hartman's system. "A criterion is always something of application and thus cannot possibly in my system be objective."<sup>99</sup>

There are all kinds of goodnesses of man: "A man is a good man" is entirely different depending on whether man is regarded as systemic, extrinsic or intrinsic value. If it is an extrinsic value . . . then good is meant axiologically but not morally; and the same would be the

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<sup>97</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 436.

<sup>98</sup>Mueller, p. 26.

<sup>99</sup>Robert S. Hartman, letter to Professor Robert W. Mueller, dated October 28, 1969.

case, only more so, in a systemic notion of man, for example as homo sapiens. But if "man" is meant intrinsically, that is, morally then we have (1) to define man as a person, (2) a person as that being which has its own definition of itself within itself, (3) this definition being "I am I," and (4) the fulfillment of this definition as a person actually being himself, i.e., honest, sincere, genuine, etc.<sup>100</sup>

The valuation used in this fourth proof is, of course, intrinsic. The person will be the more moral the more he fulfills his concept of his Self. The kind of ethics that results from formal axiology is that of Kant, Kierkegaard and Scheler. "The majority of traditional ethics do not belong here but into the fields of value psychology, sociology, and metaphysics."<sup>101</sup> As we have seen, intrinsic value is the value of a thing that fulfills a singular concept. A singular concept, or a proper name, is not a concept in the usual sense, for it is not a mental entity that grasps together the common features of several things. It is rather "a 'unicept,' an experiential entity representing one thing in its uniqueness."<sup>102</sup>

What Mueller seems to demand is what Hartman, following Kierkegaard, says is impossible, i.e., that no extrinsic ethical norm could predicate for the individual what he ought to do, or be. An extrinsic value system is applicable to individual persons only when we see each person as a class of functions, as in psychology.<sup>103</sup> A

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<sup>100</sup>Ibid.

<sup>101</sup>Hartman, The Structure of Value, p. 308.

<sup>102</sup>Hartman, "Value Theory as a Formal System," p. 300.

<sup>103</sup>Hartman, The Structure of Value, p. 307.

systemic value system can be applied to human persons only if we consider the individual as a system, as in physiology, in all of its aspects, "from the study of the human body to that of robots."<sup>104</sup> An objective value system which could be applied to the individual person is impossible when he is seen in his singular uniqueness, for singular or intrinsic value is the value of uniqueness. To insist on valuing the individual in terms of extrinsic or systemic norms is to mistake the nature of the individual and his ethical requirements. Such logic does not actually come into vital contact with the real individual person, only with the schema of man. There is only one reality to which an infinitely existing person may sustain more than a cognitive relation, and that is his own reality or the fact that he exists. To every other reality he stands in cognitive relationship.

Hartman and Kierkegaard are close in their understanding of the self as being derived, not from society, but from God.<sup>105</sup> Therefore, the task of self-realization is not to develop a self as defined, or determined, by one's environment, but to fuse the finite with the infinite, thus the self knows its own self. A truly systemic view of the human person belongs only to God, "for only He can embrace within His eternal vision the breadth, temporal span, and secrets of existence and becoming."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup>Ibid., pp. 309-310.

<sup>105</sup>Cf. Hartman, "The Self in Kierkegaard, p. 1;" also, Thomte's Kierkegaard's Philosophy of Religion, esp., pp. 204 ff.

<sup>106</sup>James Collins, The Mind of Kierkegaard, Henry Regnery Company, (Chicago, 1953), pp. 128-129.

For Hartman, as with Kierkegaard, self-actualization cannot be separated from faith. In discussing the realization of one's true self, Hartman refers to Kierkegaard's last stage which is called faith and defines it as "the self relating itself to its own self-- (and not to the mind or its object, the world)--and being willing to be itself, thus being transparently grounded in the Power which constitutes the self. In other words, the self being knowledge, when it loses the object of its knowing, is pure knowledge, transparent awareness resting without any worldly object without striving or activity, in what is left after the world is blotted out--'Lord, give us weak eyes for the things of the world'--namely in God's true reality, the power which constitutes the Self, which pervades it and creates it and of which the self is a part."<sup>107</sup>

The key to self-actualization is subjectivity, but subjectivity in the Kierkegaardian sense, not as it is understood in European philosophy before Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard called that type "the untruth of subjectivity."<sup>108</sup> The untruth of subjectivity disappears if man is able to stand before God as an individual, "as a person en face de Dieu, as den Enkelte."<sup>109</sup> For such a person, subjectivity becomes the saving agent, for then God, "the power which constitutes

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<sup>107</sup>Hartman, "The Self in Kierkegaard," p. 9. Italics mine.

<sup>108</sup>Valter Lindström, "The Problem of Objectivity and Subjectivity in Kierkegaard," in A Kierkegaard Critique, eds. Howard A. Johnson and Niels Thulstrup, (Harper and Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1962), p. 230.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid., p. 234.

the Self, which pervades it and creates it and of which the self is a part,"<sup>110</sup> is the absolutely compelling subjective principle. The infinite self in all of its inwardness chooses itself.

When I choose absolutely, I choose the absolute, for I am the absolute. But in complete identity with this I can say that I choose the absolute which chooses me, that I posit the absolute which posits me; for if I do not remember that this second expression is equally absolute, my category of choice is false, for the category is precisely the identity of both propositions.<sup>111</sup>

A famous passage in Kierkegaard describes this action of the finite self choosing the infinite self:

So when all has become still around one, as solemn as a star lit night, when the soul is alone in the whole world, then there appears before one, not a distinguished man, but the eternal Power itself. The heavens part, as it were, and the I chooses itself--or rather, receives itself. Then has the soul beheld the loftiest sight that mortal eye can see and which never can be forgotten, then the personality receives the accolade of knighthood which ennoble it for an eternity. He does not become another man than he was before, but he becomes himself, consciousness is unified, and he is himself.<sup>112</sup>

From the foregoing discussion we must conclude that Hartman's notion of self-actualization cannot be understood apart from faith. It is impossible that the person could reach the fulfillment of himself apart from his reaching God by faith. The person who has thus expanded his spirit to infinity, lives the finite as part of the infinite, fusing the two into one: "the impossible, the absurd--and

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<sup>110</sup>Hartman, "The Self in Kierkegaard," p. 9.

<sup>111</sup>Lindström, p. 231.

<sup>112</sup>Kierkegaard, Either/Or, Vol. II, p. 181. Italics mine.



at the same time the obvious and most natural--fusion that Jesus demands of us."<sup>113</sup>

If this is what self actualization means, does not Hartman base this fourth proof upon the wrong foundation? Rather than an denumerable infinity of moments in self-realization, a richer form of infinity could be found in the infinite relationships which result in the uniting of the finite with the infinite ground of our existence. To argue that the human person is infinite because he is potentially, or logically, capable of a denumerable series of moments in self-realization, is to sacrifice the human person on the altar of the theory of types. A case might be made against Professor Hartman that he has given a proof for the infinity of moments, not of the person who experiences those moments.

In its present form, Hartman's fourth proof and the others which place emphasis on quantitative, rather than qualitative infinity, would give credence to Mueller's criticism of Hartman's value calculus in that

. . . almost anything under one aspect or another is infinite. A straight line conceptually at least reaches no point at which it could not be extended. Therefore to call something "infinite" demands some qualification.<sup>114</sup>

In summary, I can follow Professor Hartman in concluding that the human person is a self-actualizing being, but I have difficulty in accepting his thesis that the human person achieves "infinity" through

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<sup>113</sup>Hartman, "The Self in Kierkegaard," p. 20.

<sup>114</sup>Mueller, p. 25.

an infinite series of moments of self-realization. It would seem that intrinsic valuation should measure the individual's uniqueness, not the infinite number of his acts of self-realization.

"Uniqueness" should be made separable from "non-denumerable infinity." Hartman has not yet clearly demonstrated that the human person is a non-denumerable infinity, nor is it necessary to prove this in order to demonstrate his uniqueness. Most philosophers agree that the human person is unique. He differs not only in degree, but in kind, from other creatures. But uniqueness does not necessitate non-denumerable infinity. I think Professor Hartman attempts to say much more about human persons than he can support. Indeed, if his definition of non-denumerable infinity is applied, then he applies to man everything that can be said about God.

### CHAPTER III

#### CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Each of Hartman's four axiological proofs of the individual human person as having the minimum cardinality  $A_1$  ( $\aleph_1$ ). "He is a continuum of concepts (a), of self reflections (b), of existences (c), and of moments (d), he is a spiritual Gestalt."<sup>115</sup>

However, it is questionable whether these proofs support the infinity of the human person who participates in these activities, or whether we have here a logical proof of the potential infinity of a denumerable series of concepts, reflections, existences, and moments. For example, in the epistemological proof (and I believe the criticism may be applicable in some degree to similar features of the other proofs), his argument seems to move inconclusively from the ability of the person to think a denumerably infinite series of thoughts about the total number of things in the world (cardinality  $\aleph_0$ ), and his ability to reflect on his thoughts, and to reflect on his reflections ad infinitum (cardinality  $\aleph_1$ ), to the statement that since these thoughts are infinite in number, therefore man is infinite.

Hartman has said in several of his articles and in classes that the infinity of the person rests in the last resort on its self-reflexivity, that is, the definition of the person as that being

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<sup>115</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 436.

which has its own definition of itself within itself. "From this follows everything. The predicates, therefore, by which the quality of the person is measured are at the same time properties within the person - as is not the case with a non-reflective thing."<sup>116</sup>

Perhaps Professor Hartman would have had stronger arguments had he followed Pascal, whom he mentions,<sup>117</sup> in basing the value of the human person, not upon his ability to think a infinite number of thoughts, but upon the unique ability of the "thinking reed" to think at all.

Perhaps it is not necessary to attempt to prove the infinity of the human person, since infinity can have many meanings and does not necessarily involve uniqueness. Mueller may be right when he says that Hartman's system could attribute a kind of infinity to anything at all.<sup>118</sup> To demonstrate the uniqueness of the human person would be to show that he differs in kind rather than in degree from other things.<sup>119</sup>

The four definitions could still serve as the basis for arguing for the uniqueness of the individual person, but would not necessitate having to posit his infinity. Though I have no quarrel with Hartman's

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<sup>116</sup>Hartman, letter to Pruitt.

<sup>117</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 433.

<sup>118</sup>Mueller, p. 25.

<sup>119</sup>The question of man's uniqueness is discussed by Mortimer J. Adler in The Difference of Man and the Difference It Makes, The World Publishing Company, Cleveland, Ohio, 1968.

description of the human person as being "essentially infinite--a spiritual Gestalt whose cardinality is that of the continuum,"<sup>120</sup> I do not believe that infinity, as used in the Hartman system, treats the human person with the singular uniqueness which Hartman really wants to establish.

Uniqueness of the human person is a prominent feature of the Hartmanian value system, and it is implicit in the four proofs; however, it is infinity which Hartman stresses. I think he means to infer that the infinity of the human person makes him unique, but this point is not very well established. If he had argued for the uniqueness of the human person in that he thinks, reflects upon himself, appropriates to himself the intensional properties of created things, and determines his own self-actualization, he may have made a stronger case for placing the human person at the top of the hierarchical scale of values.

The concluding sections of "The Four Axiological Proofs" attempt to show the individual human person as being of greater value than a collection of persons in a society, and again, I believe an emphasis on uniqueness rather than infinity could, and should, have been stressed.

What is the cardinality of the total person? Hartman says this depends on "the state of inner integration of harmonization of of the person."<sup>121</sup> According to the four definitions, he can never

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<sup>120</sup>Hartman, "Four Axiological Proofs," p. 433

<sup>121</sup>Ibid., p. 436.

be of a lower cardinality than  $A_1$  ( $\aleph_1$ ), but he may rise to cardinality  $A_2$  ( $\aleph_2$ ).

Let us define the inner harmonization of a set of  $n$  items as the actualization of all the subsets possible of this set. This totality is  $2^n - A_1$ . A person, then, which actualizes the totality of subsets of any one of its four definitional sets, rises to the cardinality  $A_2$ , for  $2A_1 = A_2$ . This cardinality does not change, even though the person may, in the sense defined, actualize each of its four definitional sets, even an infinite number,  $A_0$ , or a continuum,  $A_1$ , of them.<sup>122</sup>

The result of this equation is that the maximum cardinality of a human person  $A_2$  ( $\aleph_2$ ) which denotes the actualization of all infinite possibilities of one, or several, of its definitional infinities. Possible cardinalities for the human person ranges from a minimum cardinality  $A_1$ , to a maximum cardinality  $A_2$ . A minimum cardinality  $A_1$  means that the human person fulfills the definitional capacities as a human being, even though these may not be actualized. A maximum cardinality  $A_2$  means that he has actualized all of the infinite possibilities of at least one of the definitional infinities of the human being.<sup>123</sup>

When speaking of the maximum cardinality  $A_2$ , ( $\aleph_2$ ), does Professor Hartman refer to the individual person in a state of immortality? He has said himself that no concrete individual person can actually fulfill all of the dimensions of any one of the definitions.<sup>124</sup> If he does mean to infer something like immortality,

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<sup>122</sup>Ibid.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid.

<sup>124</sup>Hartman, "The Logic of Value," p. 410.

it still would not be necessary to argue for the infinity of man. Christian theology has traditionally taught immortality of the self, but the immortal person is still finite. Christianity has held that infinity belongs to God alone.

To return to the point of Professor Hartman's argument that the value of human society can never surpass the value of one individual person, he goes on to say,

Conversely, each individual human being has axiologically the value of all human society, meaning the cosmic society of mankind; let alone that of terrestrial society, not to speak of that of any particular - local, "national," or other - terrestrial society.<sup>125</sup>

Since the person is unique in that he is of greater value than any society of men, Hartman argues that to impose the will of any society on a human being is against the innermost nature of man in that such an action is a transposition of values, which requires the higher value to serve the lesser. Only in morally primitive societies where human persons have not yet recognized their uniqueness and infinity is it possible to impose the society upon the individual person.

Where individuals within a closed society (Bergson's terminology for morally primitive societies) recognize their infinity, there will inevitably be an explosion from within, as Boris Pasternak depicted in his famous novel. "Dr. Zhivago is he who truly lives, and an empire feared the impact of his humanity."<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>Ibid., pp. 437-438.

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., p. 438.

A political system based on other than human values are in Pasternak's words, "based on a false premise . . . pathetically amateurish."<sup>127</sup> But a political system which is based on human values ceases to be a system - it is life itself.<sup>128</sup>

There can be little objection to Professor Hartman's conclusion that the human person is at the top of the scale of values. He has made a strong case for the uniqueness of the individual person, but the argument for his infinity has yet to be adequately supported.

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<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid.



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