

Oct. 25, 1965

Professor Jose Ferrater Mora
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Dear D. Jose:

The discussion of Aristotle's metaphysical vocabulary in your very stimulating seminar has intensified my interest in some aspects of this terminology related to the problem of principle. I would appreciate your reactions about some of these aspects which seem to have a very refreshing contemporary outlook.

Is the indifference of the Aristotelic *ousia* towards *esse* related to the metaphysical level described by Zubiri as "impresion inespecifica de realidad"?

Is then the Aristotelian *esse* strictly a verbal function --attribution?

Is then the pre-predicative, *tychic* notion of contingency the closest thing to the idea of existence for the Greek mentality?

Is the idea of *esse* in Avicenna derived from his investigations in modal logic which demand a certain necessity in all that is actual --viz. being implied by another actuality?

Is *esse* in Aquinas --*actualitas omnium actuum*-- a derivation of Avicenna's idea of actuality? Is then creation used technically for the purpose of removing necessity from this actuality? (Q. Disputata De Potentia Dei: there is no secondary necessity in the world) Does not creation thus technically conceived give origin to a not clearly defined *esse-existentia*? Is this *esse-existentia-actuality* susceptible of treatment as a formal principle within the frame of the theory of physical causation? If not, and if as the term of creation --*esse creatum*-- it is understood as a pure, transcendental relation, are we not here in a closed, Neo-Kantian order-system? Is not the pure formalization of *esse* as a relation a way to fully objectivize --and give metaphysical status to--an "impression of reality", without admitting it?

Thank you in advance for your attention.
Respectfully,

Angel Medina

Att: Copy of Research Outline for The Theory of Principle

Research Project on the Theory of Principle

This project endeavors to redefine the philosophical idea of principle in three stages. First, through a historical investigation. Second, by means of a study of the transcendental order of being as the proper environment of the highest principles. Thirdly, by the identification of some real and theoretical principles in human existence and in the sciences which would illustrate the structural role of philosophy as the science of principles.

The historical part will examine the evolution of the idea of cause in Plato, Aristotle and the Middle Ages, its metamorphosis into the ideas of reason and sufficient reason in Leibnitz and Kant, and its re-emergence as meaning and ground in contemporary philosophy.

The second part will apply the notes of universality, necessity and natural priority to the constituent elements of the order of being: viz. to the ideas of the thing, relation, unity, truth and goodness, in order to discover what configurations the order of being takes when it is interpreted as a function of each one of its elements. The impact of these configurations on the modes of being will be analyzed. Part of this systematic work has already been carried out by some European and American philosophers such as E. Cassirer, N. Hartmann, X. Zubiri, L. Lavelle and W.M. Urban, therefore only some of these perspectives need development, whereas all the comparative considerations of perspectives requires detailed organization.

The third part is a corollary applying the results of the second to the relation of philosophy with the humanities and the sciences.

Part of the historical research has already been completed and some of its results drafted. Some of the systematic ideas have also been pursued in partial exploratory studies of their exponents as well as in drafted combinations of the elements compared. With proper attention in the summer of 1966 the project could be finished in book form by the Spring 1967. Portions of the materials are already taking form as articles for the Review of Metaphysics, Documentacion Critica Iberoamericana, and as a paper for the meeting of the ACPA in the Spring of 1966.

The research on the transcendental order is parallel to the process shown by Heidegger in the Introduction to Metaphysics, where being is opposed to its transcendental properties in a sort of dialectical way. Being and becoming, is an interpretation of being from one of the schemas of relation.⁽¹⁾ Being and appearance brings forth the perspective of substance and reality. Being and knowledge brings forth the perspective of the transcendental truth and being and the ought the perspective of transcendental goodness.

If Heidegger's angle is inverted we could study the whole order of being as a function of res --the substance in a transcendental role-- relation, unity, truth and goodness. Different historical philosophies could be shown to rely upon different combinations of the various transcendental properties from the formal perspective of one of them. A definition of the transcendental order of being would thus result. This transcendental order would always point to some kind of necessity which would be the first principle of the whole system defined from each one of the formal points of view. All these schemas of transcendence might perhaps be reduced to three which would show the three fundamental forms of necessity: principial necessity⁽²⁾--always dialectically defined, though in different manners-- existential necessity --which is the transcendental projection of man's "three powers of affirmation"⁽³⁾ giving origin to conjunct-transcendentals and disjunct-transcendentals⁽⁴⁾ and finally pure, absolute or circular necessity. Being could then be defined as a transcendental order of necessity which would include reality and possibility in a way acceptable --not self destroying-- for man. (Mankind).

As an possible confirmation of this analysis some contemporary attempts to proceed in a way akin to foregoing outline might be examined. The awareness of the impact of the schemas of transcendence upon the modes of being is already present in Hartmann, Lavelle, Feibleman, Weiss and others. The ones mentioned might perhaps be sufficient to illustrate our case.

(1) The original intention of the pre-Socratics seems to be however dominated by their interest in the underlying subject which might give the key to the unity of everything.

(2) There is a hypothetical side to principial necessity in the very election of the principle as "that which makes the first difference" (Heidegger: Identität und Differenz) This election can be justified only by the positing of the difference & its subsuming or redeeming role (aufhebung). But no principle can be radical auto-position since man monopolizes this role, therefore the hypothetical element in principial necessity.

(3) Lavelle

(4) Zubiri