

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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Professor José Ferrater Mora
315 West Madison Street
BALTIMORE, Maryland

Dear Professor Ferrater Mora,

Note letter of the 15th has just reached me,
and I happen to have time to reply at once.

We stand very close together on all philosophic-
al issues, I am convinced. I agree with almost every
word of your statements about ideals and the problem of
man. But I am hesitant to say that the philosophy of
ideals is not philosophically sounder than crude natural-
ism. The reduction of man to mechanism is most
certainly debasing; but it is also philosophically
unreasonable. This, of course, depends on one's defini-
tion of reason. I define reason in the sense that
Hegel had in mind when he said that "the true is the
whole," "das Wahre ist das Ganze." Mechanistic
naturalism is un-true and debasing because it takes a
part of human nature for the whole. There are, of
course, both physiological and psychological mechanisms;
but these mechanisms are not the whole of personal
experience, and they leave out of account the truly
organic, holistic properties of man which are discover-
ed by synoptic method and overlooked or denied or
explained away by atomistic logic and mechanistic
explanation. The more complete view is both nobler
and also philosophically sounder. The philosopher,
according to Plato, is "the synoptic man." This means
that a logic of wholes must supplement the logic of
classes and of relations. I quite agree that Church right-
ly denies that symbolic logic is the property of logic-
al positivism; indeed I do not see that it adds one
iota to the theory of positivism.

Urban is a highly respected philosopher of Yale,
now retired, a former president of the American
Philosophical Association, and author of many widely-read
books.

My own work now is directed toward the writing
of a Metaphysics.--I am looking forward to the 3d edition
of your excellent Diccionario, which even in its first
edition was a masterpiece for one man!

cont. 29/I/49, Most cordially yours,

Edgar S. Brightman

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