

**Apostolos L. Pierris**

**THINGS AND PREDICATION**

**An Essay in Metaphysics**

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**[Opus 1]**

ἔστι δ' , ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, οὐ περὶ ὀνόματος ἀμφισβήτησις, οἷς τοσούτων πέρι  
σκέψις ὅσων ἡμῖν πρόκειται.

Plato, *Respublica*, Z, 533E

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## INTRODUCTION



The dissertation which follows is an Essay *in* General Metaphysics. Consequently, the *possibility* of Metaphysics as a philosophical science, indeed as the fundamental philosophical discipline from the material point of view, is taken for granted. Again logical,<sup>1</sup> epistemological, psychological<sup>2</sup> and methodological questions are not attended to at all, even though part of the requisite foundation is here provided on which their solution can be securely built.

The dissertation is further an essay in *Systematic* Metaphysics. Hence, it is a systematic investigation of certain cardinal metaphysical problems, undertaken with an avowedly constructive aim in view: the attempt is made to articulate a unified body of positive metaphysical doctrine. Thus, critical examination of various issues is always subservient to the establishment of such a doctrinal body, and is, consequently, carried on with a firm eye upon their intrinsic interconnectedness: it should not be viewed in the way that a piecemeal criticism of those issues in their isolation could be viewed.

I said that the inquiry is constructive in nature – not the metaphysical system itself. The metaphysics here expounded in some of its fundamentals is, needless to be said, *descriptive*, in that it claims to reproduce faithfully the fundamental structure of Reality. And this is, of course, the object of Metaphysics in general as a (philosophical) science. Our approach is constructive; the outcome descriptive.

But although the inquiry is expressly systematic and constructive, the doctrine to be presented does not amount to a complete, or even nearly complete,

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<sup>1</sup> I mean formal-logical, as what pertains to the form of thought as such, and not as representing the form of reality.

<sup>2</sup> I refer, of course, to philosophical psychology, and, in the present context, to questions like: How do we men actually come to possess these and those notions, or to assent to such and such propositions?

metaphysical system. For not the whole of the relevant ground is covered, and not all configurations on even the part of it which is covered are fully and adequately studied and appropriately taken into account. Thus the dissertation reproduces, in so far as it succeeds, *part* of the true metaphysical system.

A partially complete system is, admittedly, a partially true system even as regards the extent covered. Perfect truth comes together with absolute adequacy, and this requires consistent completeness. Again definite meaning is acquired by terms and propositions in a theory through their interconnection in the nexus of the theory's systematic unity and completeness – in their function as co-ordinated parts of a whole. Thus the more complete a theory the more full and precise the meaning.

But then it is permissible to hope only that the doctrine expounded here is well-defined in meaning and significantly true *so far as it goes*. Not that this means that it can be hoped even that it is perfectly well-defined and true, though partial; for in systems, *partial representation of the whole is bound to be partially incorrect representation of the part represented*. But the hope is that, upon completion, no radical upheaval of its structure should occur.

System-construction and technical senses go naturally together. Thus in the course of this Essay various expressions are transformed into *technical terms*; a sharpened signification is appropriated for them in so far as they function as organic members of the whole system. Evidently the important thing is what was there to be signified technically, and not the particular expression employed to signify it, or even its linguistic propriety as ordinarily judged. The motto selected for this dissertation highlights appropriately and authoritatively the point.

Side by side with careful and minute distinctions between notions ordinarily conceived as more or less equivalent (as when the notions of object, entity, thing, individual, being, are differentiated one from another), there occurs what may appear as indiscriminating discourse in the sense that expressions are

employed (almost) interchangeably, which ordinarily would be considered as having important and relevant differences in sense (as when we speak of potentiality or potency or possibility or power or capability or liability).

But there is nothing really inconsistent or otiose in the above circumstance. For the indifferent employment in the latter case indicates concentration on the common, essential core in the meaning-field of the expressions concerned, signified blurredly in their ordinary use; and the inter-changeableness is calculated to highlight the necessity to turn away from their irrelevantly multifarious, ordinary application and look at the essential and abstract unity involved. Whereas the systematically detailed distinctions in the other case, aim to reproduce the natural and intrinsic articulations of that essential unity or of the initial field in question, as contrasted with the unsystematic and imprecise (and, in many a case, even fundamentally incoherent) nature of ordinary differentiations.

Methodologically speaking, this Essay may be described as *rationalistic* in spirit. But if it is committed to Rationalism, it need not be considered as thus committed to anything other than to *methodological* rationalism – irrespective of what its author may believe concerning the necessity of an epistemological and psychological<sup>1</sup> rationalism, and an ontological rationalism, supporting the methodological one.

It is, surely, neither possible nor proper to adumbrate, let alone to properly expound and defend, the principles or rationalistic methodology in such an introduction. Yet some very general points may be not entirely inappositely mentioned, with a view to anticipating certain recognizable patterns in various kinds of possible objection.

The Principle of Sufficient Reason is implicitly and explicitly invoked and applied throughout the dissertation. Any item or circumstance whatsoever

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<sup>1</sup> Again, it is, of course, philosophical psychology which is meant.

requires its adequate explanation, in the form of a determination of that in virtue of which it subsists or obtains: there is a sufficient reason for everything – unless, of course, there is a sufficient reason for there being no sufficient reason in any particular case. If Reason (correctly) requires an explanation of a particular type, then there must be an explanation of that particular type.

The Principle of Sufficient Reason may thus be viewed as one special manifestation of that first principle in which Rationalism, at least as we understand it, has its core and root: Whatever Reason<sup>1</sup> discerns or distinguishes, is really and objectively discernible or distinguishable in the precise manner and way Reason (correctly) discerns or distinguishes it; whatever Reason posits, is there in reality, in the exact manner and way Reason (correctly) requires, or rather apprehends, its subsistence. In a certain non-Hegelian sense, Whatever is reasonable is real.<sup>2</sup>

There is no tendency to indiscriminately overpopulate or arbitrarily underpopulate reality in true Rationalism as such. Reason is the principle of the intellectual apprehension of reality: what its own nature *as such a principle* necessarily requires is what it finds in reality, and what there is in reality to be found by it.

Ockham's unhappy razor is of no use in the present context. For, roughly speaking, this much abused maxim is either trivial or absurd. Trivial if it means that nothing should be posed as real except what there really is and is correctly discernible; absurd if it supposes that nothing should be posed as real except what appears to the senses (or, generally, what is  $X$ , where  $X$ 's are objects taken as

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<sup>1</sup> 'Correct' Reason or 'Reason correctly...' are really pleonastic – especially when taken on the methodological level on which we move. Fallible are particular and finite reasoning minds, not the principle in virtue of which they think and reason. An erring subject, in so far as it is in error, no more misjudges what there really *is* than what is really dictated by Reason.

<sup>2</sup> 'Reasonable' taken as meaning *conformity* to Reason, not *consubstantiality* with it.

evidently real), and what is required to account for the sensibles (or the *X's*) *on the more economical "hypothesis"*.

Mention of sensibles prompts another general methodological point, this time in connection with the Theory of Meaning. Thus, it is here assumed and maintained that in order to understand the meaning of a term or a proposition, it is not always necessary to possess criteria for the (correct) application of the term in the world of (possible) human experience, or for the (true) affirmation of the proposition on empirical evidence, for the very simple reason that the term or the proposition in question may primarily and directly refer to, or signify, something nonempirical. Now of course this cannot be accepted by someone who presupposes that there is nothing else beyond the experiential World; but this does not concern us, save for the illuminating confirmation it offers to the view that empiricist, or so-called "critical", Methodology and Theory of Meaning stand in need of a metaphysical thesis which, as foundation, could sustain them and confer upon them (usually via an appropriate psychological theory) some initial plausibility.

In fine, if the terms and the propositions explicated in the course of this Essay suffer in any respect as regards clarity and preciseness in meaning, they so suffer not because they are not satisfactorily connected with empirically observable phenomena, but because they are not sufficiently integrated and submerged in the perfect totality of a complete system.

The above point bears also on the very sparing use of examples made in this dissertation. For if examples are expected to draw their content from empirical reality and the World of ordinary life and thought, then obviously they cannot properly illustrate a point not directly touching the sensible World as such; and even if taken analogically (if and where this is at all possible), and not as proper instances of that whose abstract formulation they supposedly illustrate, they are apt to mislead positively in virtue both of the experiential nature of their content

and of the ordinary connotation of their ordinary linguistic expression. If, on the other hand, they are not, as they should not be, necessarily required to take their material from experience, then they possess in general the same kind of elucidatory force as the abstract formulations which they are invoked to illustrate.

Absence of such proper examples in a particular case simply means at most that, in the context given, an investigation concerning what falls under a certain defined term is not undertaken for some reason or other. Thus, for example, in the course of this dissertation thinghood is defined, and then it is shown that determinants are really proper things in the defined sense; in this case a proper example is given because it is part of our task here to provide an analysis of abstract things. But this does not mean that our definition of thinghood is any clearer for giving that example merely qua giving an example; nor would it have been any more obscure in itself if no example had been given (since it might not have formed part of our task to give one). Hence, when we define weak creation and abstain from illustrating it, nothing is really missing – nothing I mean which could be supplied by the mere mention of an example as such.

Excepting, then, strict and proper examples systematically integrated within the doctrine propounded, illustrations do not, accurately speaking, form part of the inquiry. They are *hypothetically* and non-committally proposed on the part of the author (which can be shown to really cancel their elucidatory function); and they are at most psychological aids for the reader, who upon discerning any tension between the abstract formulation and the illustrative examples, should immediately discard the latter and concentrate on the former in the interests of the proper comprehension of the thought expressed.

As a concluding remark, attention may be fittingly drawn to the circumstance that, although the system-orientated nature of the inquiry has been stressed above, this does not in the least mean that the inquiry is devoid of any

*genuine* bearing<sup>1</sup> on the critical interpretation and understanding of Metaphysical theories advanced through the History of Philosophy. On the contrary; quite apart from any general intrinsic correlation between Philosophy and History of Philosophy which the author may wish to institute, the inquiry and its results gain additional point when seen against a back-ground of select philosophical Traditions, easily recognizable, within which they are deliberately inscribed and in which they are rooted; and, in their turn, they possess the capacity to function as organon and canon and regulative principle and term of reference in any critical-historical investigation of relevant issues, as belonging to either those, or other Traditions. And even though explicit references to actually held views on the part of various metaphysicians are never to be found in the following exposition; there is barely a page without implicit references to such views and controversies.

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<sup>1</sup> By '*genuine* bearing', I mean bearing which does not *distort*.

**CHAPTER 1**

**(Articles 1-29)**

**ELEMENTARY THEORY OF BEING**



## 1. Thought and Reality

Thought is both included in Reality, and contrasted with it.

It is included in Reality in so far as it is a kind of activity of mind, and mind is in some way part of what is real. On the other hand, Thought is by itself contrasted with Reality in so far as it essentially is thought of objects, “intending”, i.e. intrinsically referring, to objects, which primarily, qua objects of the thought, are taken, in the thought, as real.<sup>1</sup> Thought, we may say, purports to represent Reality.

We may combine both features in saying that thought is a reality purporting to represent reality. (And a particular thought is a particular reality purporting to represent *another* particular reality).

## 2. Objects of Thought and Objects

Thought may be true or false; and it may be adequate to its object, or inadequate to it.

‘True’ and ‘False’ here mean in general correctness or incorrectness in representation. A particular case of such correctness and incorrectness is the truth and falsity of propositional thought, i.e. thought representing what are facts in the broadest commonsensical sense of the word. Of course, there are also non-propositional thoughts.

Thought is true if and only if its object (what it “intends” as real) subsists or obtains in reality.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise it is false.

Evidently, in order for thought to be able to be, correctly speaking, true (or false), and thus to be a proper thought (since it is essential for thought as

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<sup>1</sup> I say ‘real’, not ‘actual’. Cf. *infra* Art. 11.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Subsists in reality’ is clearly redundant. I combine the expressions trying to convey by an almost ordinary or commonsensical use of them something which can be rigorously formulated only technically, and this when the totality of the exposition is taken into account.

representation to be able to be true or false), it should have or intend a proper object of thought, i.e. something which *can* obtain in reality, in the *unique* sense of ‘can’ in which something which does not as a matter of fact subsist in it, still could subsist if:

- a) it does not subsist or obtain *though* it satisfies all ontological laws of any grade (natural and metaphysical), or
- b) it does not subsist or obtain *because* it violates some ontological law (or laws).<sup>1</sup>

A real constituent of an object of thought in the above sense, is, evidently, also an object of thought.

Not every object of thought, though, is a proper object (simpliciter). For objects of thought, although capable (in the above indicated very special sense) of obtaining in reality (and some of them naturally obtaining in it), may nonetheless be analyzable into other objects of thought; and this can be so in two ways, reflected in two notions of proper object. Objects of thought which are unanalysable into other *kinds of objects of thought*, are properly *basic objects*. Whereas objects of thought which are unanalysable into other *objects of thought of the same general kind* are properly *simple objects* of their kind.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, for example, facts are objects of thought of a certain kind; and there are simple facts among them, which are indeed proper objects in one sense (as simple objects of thought). But the simplest fact cannot be a basic object, since it is further analyzable to at least one object which is not a fact: to its subject, that is, to a thing – say, to a concrete thing. On the other hand, concrete things are objects of thought, and even proper objects (given that they are basic objects of thought), but

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<sup>1</sup> I have tried to give non-linguistic formulation of the circumstance that sentences like: “Socrates lives now”, “material bodies repel each other”, “this red surface is green”, “some circles are round”, “all bachelors are married”, and even “this man is-predicatively that man”, may all be considered as expressing (propositional) thoughts, whereas sentences like: “if cancels ludicrous at no” do not express any thought.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also *infra* Ch. I, Art. 34.

it is plausible to say at least that most of them are not simple in that they involve as constituents (parts or ingredients) items which could themselves have been concrete things, had they existed separately. (In fact, it is plausible to strengthen the claim by maintaining that those constituents may be concrete things *even as constituents*. But the weaker formulation is meant to cover the rejection of the notion that a part of a concrete thing may be, *as part*, a full concrete thing).

Consequently, a basic object may be non-simple, and, conversely, a simple object may be non-basic. *Fundamentality is one thing: and simplicity is another.*<sup>1</sup>

It should be emphasized in this connection, that by explaining objects by means of objects of thought we are not introducing the philosophical Theory of Thought into Metaphysics. For objects of thought have been explained as, in effect, anything that either conforms to, or violates ontological laws – and this is a purely metaphysical explanation. On the other hand, it is correct to say that the explanation referred to is the reverse of what the order of reality is: it is ultimately proper objects which provide the foundation for ontological laws<sup>2</sup> and thus strictly explain objects of thought. So that the proposed explanation really is after all expository and *ad hominem*.

Now a thought may either display in its articulation the exact articulation of its object (of thought) in the latter's constitution through, and out of, its own constituent proper objects, or fail to do so in various ways and degrees. In the former case we shall say that the thought is adequate to its object (generally speaking); in the latter that it is inadequate to it, in a certain way and degree.

There follows clearly from the above that a true thought may be inadequate, and an adequate thought false.

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<sup>1</sup> Notice their usual confusion and its results.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *infra* Art. 24.

### 3. Relationship between the structure of Thought and that of Reality

Since even a true thought may be inadequate in its articulated representation of the intended object, the immediately apprehended structure of a thought need not correspond exactly to the completely analyzed structure of its object, and can indeed deviate from it in a variety of ways and degrees and for a variety of reasons (purposes or causes). But in Metaphysics we investigate the ultimate or fundamental structure of Reality. Thus, we cannot rely in the *prima facie* discernible structure of Thought, and especially of ordinary, human thought. Nor, needless to be added, could we rely on such an analysis of the immediately apprehensible structure of thought which is not properly metaphysical and conducted with the interests of Metaphysics in mind.

### 4. Universal Being as in Thought

Universal Being, or, equivalently, Being in general, is involved in every properly propositional thought and in every proper expression of such thought in (whatever kind of) language.

This Universal Being in Thought (in its propositional variety) may be classified according to various types (predicative being, the being of identity, existence), and, in general, it may become the object of an appropriate “science”, in either the philosophical or the properly scientific way – so that we should have, in this as in every comparable case, *two* disciplines occupied with its study: a properly philosophical “science” or discipline, and a properly scientific one.

Universal Being as in (propositional) Thought does not interest us in metaphysical investigations, *save per accidens*. To see this clearly we need nothing but apply to this particular case the remark made in article 3 above – and the more we are entitled to draw the obvious consequences from that application, the more central and basic is that, the connection of whose manifestations in Thought and Reality is at stake.

## 5. Universal Being as in Reality: Commonsensical description

The notion of Universal Being in Reality as employed and meant in these enquiries, can only be understood adequately when viewed in the context of the entire metaphysical system to be propounded (and here presented in some of its essentials) as an organic part of that in which it functions, and in its interrelations, assimilating and contrasting, with all other systematically connected parts. Thus, we can do nothing better, at this stage, than indicate or suggest that meaning, whose precise content is only provided by its, as it were, position within the system, and therefore is to be gathered ultimately from it in its entirety.

Universal Being, as here meant, is, then, involved wherever something, a subject, or some subjects, have a property or exhibit or display a feature or characteristic. In this description 'something', 'subject', 'have', 'property', 'feature', 'characteristic' are employed in the broad, commonsensical way.<sup>1</sup>

But it should be emphasized that the circumstance that we are using these words commonsensically (and even so, of course, only with a view to our own purposes in order to convey a preliminary grasp of what our doctrine really amounts to), does not in the least commit us to the acceptance of whatever might be thought commonsensically as falling under them as a valid instance of what we mean in using those words with their commonsensical meaning. And we are not committed to such an acceptance for two main reasons.

Firstly, it is not necessary that a commonsensical subsumption of a particular case under a commonsensical meaning should be (always) correct, even when judged in accordance with the norm established by the commonsensical

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<sup>1</sup> It may be noticed that what is here meant by 'universal being in reality' is akin to what is usually designated by 'predicative being' and contrasted to existence and the being of identity. And if these later terms are employed in their fully ontological senses, then the similarity is very close indeed. Consequently, in taking predicative being as the fundamental and universal being in reality, we wish to hold that existence and the being of identity are in a certain definite sense derivative and dependent upon predicative being. Cf. *infra* Art. 29.

meaning. Commonsensical meaning of an expression is one thing; commonsensical application of an expression is another (connected in some fashion) – and this latter may be the result of sheer prejudice or narrow-mindedness or superstition or whatever.

The above distinction and its consequence are, I take it, self-evident, especially if we remind ourselves that the expressions and meanings in question are quite general in their nature, and not such as to signify directly sensible qualities in their sensible character (red, for example, as something directly seen). The only objection one can envisage, springs from the advocacy of the sweeping principle that the meaning of an expression is tantamount to (or, at least, is exhausted, in a strong sense, in) its applications; a principle the unsoundness of which becomes manifest even at a mild attempt to render it somehow precise: for, surely, the most it can be claimed with some plausibility, is that the meaning can be *extracted* from the totality of *correct, actual or possible, applications*. And this three-fold qualification leaves the principle useless, which is the price to be paid for covering up its erroneousness.

And secondly, to repeat, we speak commonsensically only in order to convey or rather suggest in a preliminary way what we really mean – which is properly expressed in the technical articulation of the system in its entirety.

Now to provide some content after the above methodological remarks; we intend in what follows such Universal Being (with its consequent distinctions and divisions) as is appropriate or pertains to *basic objects capable of being*. (For not even all basic objects have proper being). (Non basic objects may have *analogically* a being analogous to the proper being here treated).

## 6. First distinction of Universal Being: Form of Being and Act of Being

In cases where really and properly a subject has a property or exhibits a feature or characteristic, we shall alternatively say that the *subject presents itself in or under a certain form (of being)*.

In all such cases, the subject *is* something. This is the reason why we said that it is in such cases, in which Universal Being is involved.

We can also speak of all these cases as *facts* in a generalized sense of ‘fact’<sup>1</sup>.

But now, it is crucial to note that *what (what-something) the subject is*, is to be carefully distinguished from its (the subject’s) *being* it. And again, similarly, the *property had* is to be distinguished from the *having* of it, and the *feature or characteristic exhibited* from the exhibition itself, and, finally, the *form* in or under which the subject presents itself from the *presenting* of the subject in or under it.

In accordance then with these distinctions, we distinguish in each and every “generalized” fact the *form of being (forma essendi)* from the *act of being (actus essendi)*. And in general, we observe the first distinction (not yet *division* proper, since this involves *eidetic* division) of Universal Being in *Being-Something*<sup>2</sup> (or “contentual” Being<sup>3</sup>) and *Existential Being* (not yet existence itself) or *Tying (Bond) Being*.

## 7. Forms of Being-Something, Identity and Difference between them

Being-Something decomposes itself, or is properly divided, into a variety of forms of being. Each form of being consists in, or is identical with (in contrast to is-predicatively or has), a certain determinate character of being – a certain definite

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<sup>1</sup> We say ‘generalized’ (quite unconnectedly, of course, with so called general facts, since we have always to do here with individuals, of whatever sort, as subjects) only in order to indicate the implied generalization of the notion of fact with concrete thing(s) as subject(s).

<sup>2</sup> ‘Something’ is ambiguous: it may mean either a subject displaying being, or the form of being displayed, as when we say “this (subject) is (predicatively) something”. In the locution ‘Being-Something’, it is used, of course, in the second sense.

<sup>3</sup> What may be viewed as signified by the German expression ‘Sosein’.

determinateness in content (of being) – a certain determination or specification of Being-Something in general.

This definiteness in the content-character, or determinateness in the specification of Being-Something, constitutes the identity of each and every form of being with itself. A form of being is something identical with itself, in and by reason of its being *something* determinate, and in so far as it is something determinate.

But the self-same determinateness in content, which establishes the identity of a form of being (with itself), is also, *so ipso*, the source of its being other than (or of its otherness from) any other form of being – any form of being *other* than *itself* – any form of being *not identical* with *itself*. For it is the *determinateness* of a definite being-content which bestows identity on a form of being consisting in this being-content, but it is the *determination* itself of Being-Something in general which provides the content for the said (self-)identity. And therefore, a form of being opposes itself in its (self-)identity to any form of being with whose definite content it does not coincide, as to an other.

It follows then that

(A) identity and otherness, as pertaining to forms of being, are connections intimately connected (“as two faces of one and the same thing” – exaggeratedly put) in the following way:

- a form of being is identical with any form of being than which it is not other, or
- a form of being is other than any form of being with which it is not identical;

and (B) both identity and otherness, as well as their above stated connection, reduce themselves as to their foundation or ground, to the determinateness of forms of being as such in respect of character or content of being. It is in virtue of its being a definite being-something that each form of being is identical with itself and other than anything else (in the realm of Being-Something). For the determinateness of the determination in which a form of



being consists grounds its (self-)identity. And again, it is the same definite determinateness which makes the form in question to be other than whatever does not consist in its own specificity and definiteness, that is, with anything which does not share its own content of its (self-)identity, i.e. with anything else.<sup>1</sup>

## 8. Absence of truth-functional composition in forms of being

A form of being consists in a determination, definite in its content, of Being-Something in general, or consists in a determinate being-content.

To say that every form of being is *positive* in character is really tautologous: a “positive form of being” is really a pleonasm. For alleged negative forms of being can oppose their corresponding positive ones, either contradictorily or not, i.e. in some other form of opposition. A contradictory opposition of forms of being yields, upon affirming the two opposed members of one and the same subject (whatever it may be), two contradictory propositions. In a non-contradictory opposition the two resulting propositions are such that the one is a denial of what the other affirms, but not a denial simpliciter, rather a denial *under certain conditions* whose satisfaction renders it, as it were, effective, and whose inclusion in its meaning constitutes it as no mere denial. Since now proper facts have individuals as subjects, contradictory opposition is reduced in our case to a subject’s having or not having a certain property. Thus, in case of contradictory

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<sup>1</sup> We use the expressions in each pair ‘identical-same’ and ‘different-other’ as equivalent in meaning. Admittedly, these and cognate expressions are used ordinarily with the characteristic and almost normal imprecision of ordinarily used expressions; thus ‘same’ usually points to some tacitly implied, though unmentioned, divergence or dissimilarity of the compared items; and ‘different’ usually connotes some unspecified, though sometimes contextually determinable, similarity between them. We can, of course, if we wish, take up these tendencies in ordinary usage, and introduce corresponding precise distinctions. But these, in the case considered, will, anyway, follow upon the fundamental distinction between same / different-in-subject and same/different-in-being (cf. *infra* Ch. II, Art. 33), since they pertain to the latter member; whereas to forms of being not even that fundamental distinction is applicable (cf. *loc.cit.*). Not to mention that ‘same’ and ‘different’ as they occur in the locutions signifying the fundamental distinction cannot possibly be understood in terms of the proposed sub-distinction.

opposition of forms of being, a subject's *exhibiting* an alleged (contradictorily) *negative* form of being is really the subject's *not exhibiting* the corresponding proper (i.e. positive) form of being. And again, in other cases of opposition between forms of being, a subject's exhibiting an alleged (contrarily or privatively) negative form of being, is really nothing else than the subject's *not-exhibiting* the corresponding proper (i.e. positive) form of being together with the subject's *having* some other appropriate, and again, positive properties<sup>1</sup>.

And, obviously, similarly for disjunctive and even conjunctive<sup>2</sup> properties.

Therefore, there is no truth-functional complexity in the order of forms of being. (By which, needless to be added, we are not implying that there is no truth-functional combination in the order of concepts).

## 9. Forms of Being-Something. Eidetic division

A form of being is a determination, definite in its content, of Being-Something in general. Therefore, the connections in which it may stand to other

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<sup>1</sup> To put the point in terms of schemata: Suppose *i* is a certain individual and  $f_n$  an allegedly negative form of being. As above explained,  $f_n$  is either contradictorily negative, or otherwise (for example contrarily or privatively) negative. In any case, suppose that *f* is the corresponding positive form of being. We maintain that:

i) If  $f_n$  and *f* are contradictorily opposed, "i has  $f_n$ " expresses improperly what "i has not *f*" expresses properly.

ii) If  $f_n$  and *f* are opposed in some other way than contradictorily, "i has  $f_n$ " expresses improperly what "i has not *f*, and i has ..." expresses properly, where "..." signifies the positive conditions whose satisfaction is more or less definitively implied or presupposed by the contrariety or privative nature (in general, by the not purely contradictorious character) of the negativity concerned.

(Notice that "what is expressed" in the above explanations, is a fact or an objective circumstance. And this may be expressed, or even thought of, more or less confusedly or indistinctly. Thus two sentences may express the same fact, and yet have different senses, if in 'sense' one includes the manner and the content of the subjective, mental understanding of the fact "intended". This is here said against the possible objection that the two propositions mentioned in ii) cannot have the same "meaning", since "..." signifies explicitly what is only implied in "i has  $f_n$ ".)

<sup>2</sup> By "conjunctive" here, I mean, of course, *merely* truth-functionally conjunctive, not including, for example, the seemingly additive complexity based on generic-specific connections.

forms of being, must concern its definite determinateness in content. And they must concern it absolutely to the exclusion of anything else, in so far as the connections in question are connections among forms of being *as such*, that is, independently of their being exhibited by individual subjects and of the conditions and laws to which such exhibition may have to comply in the case of each category of individual objects which could possibly serve as subjects to those forms.

Such connections, we have seen, cannot consist in truth-functional combinations of forms of being. Leaving then aside the *sui-generis* connections of identity and otherness (which are anyway “reduced”, as to their ground, to the definite determinateness of forms of being),<sup>1</sup> it is evident that any other conceivable connection must of necessity be founded on the fundamental *genus-species* connection. For it is of the essence of a form of being to consist in a definite determination of Being-Something in general, this determinateness in content itself constituting a *specific* manifestation of Being-Something in general, a particular form in which Being-Something may present itself for assumption from subjects. It is ultimately because of this, that forms of being, as various particular manifestations of Being-Something, are more or less specific in respect to Being-Something in general, and thus more or less specific in respect to each other. For though the definiteness in the determinate being-content in which a form of being consists is absolute if considered in itself, nonetheless it is this selfsame definiteness which requires a connection of more or less determinateness to other such definitenesses of content, and thereby establishes the possibility that something in itself absolutely definite be more and less determinate in respect to other forms, in themselves equally absolutely definite.

Thus the genus-species connection is written in the very essence of forms of being as such; and no other connection, independent of the genus-species one, can

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra* Art. 7.

be deduced in the same strict way from that essence. For, to repeat, a form of being as such consists in a definite determinateness of (content of) being, which involves a certain *degree* of determinateness of the corresponding determination of Being-Something, and thus postulates and grounds the genus-species connection. Nothing else is included in the intrinsic nature of a form of being as such, nothing other than that determinateness; and what is included yields the said connection; therefore, it is a priori certain that any other possible connection between forms of being as such *must* depend on, and be reducible to, the only fundamental one.

It should, in addition, be emphasized that we are here speaking about connections holding among forms of being as such, i.e., as it will be seen, among forms of being as primarily exhibited by abstract determinants. Connections obtaining between forms of being *as exhibited by concrete things* evidently depend *also* on the metaphysical and physical laws of exemplification, besides involving connections between pure forms (i.e. forms in their primary exhibition by abstract determinants). Consequently, it is not to be thought that, in what was above said, we are really committed to the absurd view that absolutely every connection between forms of being in general, irrespective of their *modus subsistendi*, is completely reducible in its entirety to the genus-species one.

Thus, the fundamental connection between forms of being is the generic-specific, or, equivalently, the determinable-determinate connection,<sup>1</sup> and only this.

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<sup>1</sup> We do not, at this level, distinguish between genus-species and determinable-determinate connections (apart from certain identifiable subjective preferences as regards the application of these expressions to various cases). For example, a usual way of distinguishing them by applying the former to the eidetic divisions in the category of substance and the second to the divisions in any one of the nine categories of accidents, is beside the point, since we are here studying forms of being *as such* and not as divided into various categories – not to say anything about the question whether forms are in themselves divided into substantial and accidental ones. (I say “in themselves”: for we have ourselves proposed a distinction between essential and accidental, but one which pertains not to forms of being in themselves but rather to the exhibition of forms by subjects in accordance with the general conditions of such exhibition – notably time, in the case of concrete things existing in time).

## 10. First distinction of Existential Being: Modes of Being

There are various ways or manners in which subjects can *be* something or other, that is, various ways or manners in which subjects can exhibit, display, or present themselves under, forms of being.

These different ways or manners in which the act of being may be executed, constitute the *modes of being*.

## 11. The fundamental mode of being: Actuality

The fundamental mode of being is actuality,<sup>1</sup> namely the actuality of actual being.<sup>2</sup> For actuality is to be distinguished from the totality of actual being or of a complex (composite) actual being, as the mode of being of that totality or of that composite. Just as Being in general is distinguished into form or determinate content of being and act of being, so is actual being distinguished in (the same as above) form or determinate content of being and actuality – this latter being a modality of the act of being involved. What makes actual being actual, is not its form or content<sup>3</sup> of being (this is the same with corresponding non-actual being), but the mode in which this form or content is being had or exhibited (from the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. also *infra* Arts. 19 and 21.

<sup>2</sup> By ‘actual being’ here we designate the form of being which is actual in its actuality. But the same expression may ambiguously, though connectedly, signify the subject which actually has the form of being in question in so far as it actually has it. The ambiguity is, of course, systematic. For the mode of the act of being which a subject performs towards a form can be taken as combined either with the form, and then we have the first signification, or with the subject, and this gives us the second meaning.

This systematic ambiguity, affecting correspondingly ‘real’ and ‘reality’, explains an apparent cumbrousness in some formulations of this and the following paragraph (in text).

Linguistically, we try to differentiate between the two significations wherever possible, by using ‘being’, and compounds, *without* article to mean the former, and *with* (indefinite) article to mean the latter.

Cf. also *infra* Ch. II, Art. 30.

<sup>3</sup> Lest such a conjunction of the terms might appear at least paradoxical, we may notice that ‘form’ and ‘formal’ are here used in the standard metaphysical sense, not the logical one.

point of view of the having or exhibiting subject) or manifested (from the point of view of the form itself).

Actuality, as the fundamental mode of being cannot properly be defined or completely explained, except by tracing the dependence of other modes of being on it and explaining them by direct or indirect reference to it. Nonetheless, it is clear even in advance of such secondary explanation, that *actuality does not coincide with reality* – taking ‘reality’ to signify (correspondingly to the case of actuality) that which constitutes real being, or something real, as real, and not the real itself *qua* totality of some content and its reality, or *qua* a composite of some subject and its reality, respectively.

But though actuality and reality are distinct, they are also connected in such a way that the sum total of actual being is a proper part of the sum total of real being. Actuality is included in reality in the sense that it constitutes a certain sort of reality: something real can be nonactual, but everything actual is real.

Exhaustive treatment of the notion and the reality of reality will not occur in this dissertation. So much, however, may be mentioned here: reality in its core is opposed in general to spuriousness. Thus ‘real’ (as ‘genuine’) intrinsically requires a term of reference. (That it sometimes appears to be used absolutely is due to the circumstance that, in such cases, it is tacitly compounded, more or less confusedly and indistinctly, with a very general term of reference. Analogously, we speak sometimes of ‘everything’ or ‘nothing’ etc. without expressly determining a specific kind). Since we are treating of Being in the text above, Being may be taken as the required term of reference there. Obviously then, “something real can be nonactual”; for, e.g., potential being may very well be thoroughly real, and yet it is impossible that it, as such (i.e. in its possibility) should be (identical) with something actual as such (i.e. in its actuality). And again “everything actual is real”; for (really) actual being is real being, being a sort of Being.

## 12. Modal concepts and modes of being

There is a great number of modal concepts, meant, sometimes ambiguously or vaguely, by a variety of modal terms.

Not all modal concepts, let alone all modal terms, signify really ontological modalities, i.e. real modes of existential being. This is only to be expected a priori:<sup>1</sup> we shall confirm it a posteriori in a moment.

Modal concepts may signify either (a) logical or propositional modalities, or (b) ontological modes.

(a) By ‘logical or propositional modalities’, modalities are meant, which relate mediately or immediately to connections of propositions, or even to individual propositions, as regards their respective truth-values – the propositions being taken in their non-analyzed form, or in a form which is the result of logical or epistemological analysis, or of any kind of analysis other than the here relevant metaphysical one.<sup>2</sup>

(b) On the other hand, an ontological modality must concern existential being as this has been explained above; and it also must unite with all other ontological modalities in a consistent and adequate system displaying their interconnectedness, which moreover should not violate any ontological, in general, or metaphysical, in particular, laws<sup>3</sup> – such as, for example, those

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Art. 3, too.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra Art. 2 and 3. Notice that here ‘form’ *contrasts* with ‘content’ (cf. supra Art. II, n. 3 [p. 29]).

<sup>3</sup> The distinction between ontological and propositional modalities corresponds roughly to the scholastic distinction between *de re* and *de dicto* modalities. But really the similarity is superficial rather than substantial, especially with modern, logical construals of the scholastic distinction. Consider, for one, that propositional modalities pertain to propositions, and thus, primarily, to propositional thoughts not necessarily completely analyzed metaphysically. Hence, there may be complete divergence between a modal proposition and the modality it explicitly or *prima facie* involves on the one hand, and the fact(s) and its (their) modal structure really and ultimately (that is, at bottom) represented by it on the other. Or consider, again, that I do not accept necessary facts with concrete things as subjects. And contrast with these considerations the admissibility, as regards meaningfulness (as distinct from truth), of an easy translation of *any* proposition modified through a *de dicto* modality to the *same* proposition (absolutely unchanged

concerning the noncomplexity in truth-functional ways of forms of being<sup>1</sup> or of modes of being.<sup>2</sup>

Thus, in particular, a mode of existential being must, as we said, consist in a certain manner of attachment of a *real* form of being to an appropriate subject; it cannot form the attaching tie of a subject with a truth-functionally composite item, compounded out of real forms of being and erroneously taken as a real form of being – and this simply because existential being as such (one of whose modes the mode in question constitutes) cannot but attach to subjects real forms of being alone. Furthermore a mode of existential being cannot itself be a truth-functional compound of modes of existential being. And this not only on the general ground that, even on the thought or propositional level, truth-functional composition pertains primarily to propositions *as wholes* and secondarily to predicates, but not at all to the copulative constituent of propositions, so that, on the ontological realm, the presumption can only be (even for those who indulge in such easy transpositions between expressions of thought, thought, and reality) that about the obtaining of truth-functional compositeness among facts and, at most, forms of being, but never among acts of being. But equally on the specific ground that non-actuality, for instance, is not a mode of the act of being but the absence of some such mode, namely actuality: that a subject, *S*, is not actually *P*, does not mean that it is, in a certain mode of existential being only different from actuality, *P*, but that it is *not P* in the actual mode of being. And similarly for other, more improbably to be alleged, cases of truth-functional composition in modes of being.

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in respect of content) modified through the corresponding *de re* modality, and vice versa – a translation which, being considered in principle unobjectionable, may be invalidated in particular cases for specific reasons (and such, usually concerning either commonsensical plausibilities and proprieties or the interests and requirements of Formal Logic).

In short, the source and, for the most part, the point of the second distinction is, or rather is taken to be, predominantly logical; whereas the context and the significance of the former one (our own) is exclusively metaphysical.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra* Art. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Besides what follows in text, cf. further *infra* Art. 20.



((In a proper distinction or division, needless to be said, only genuine kinds should be mentioned. Confusions, Mixtures and Impostors of whatever sort ought not to be allowed having a place besides the “true” kinds. Accordingly, no pseudo-kind is permitted to stay besides (a) and (b) above, as, for example, modalities which pretend to be ontological, but which really are – if anything at all – propositional, when properly analyzed.))

### 13. Modes of Existential Being and Modalities of Actuality

Proper modes of Existential Being other than actuality must be on a par with it, in constituting immediate and direct attachment-ties of subjects and forms of being.

This parity in this respect does not preclude an order of precedence or fundamentality in another sense from holding among them. Thus, for example, modes of existential being other than actuality may include a necessary *reference* to actuality, of such a kind as not to interfere with their directly-coupling function above mentioned.

On the other hand, there are, besides the proper modes of existential being, exactly corresponding or not *modalities of actuality*. These consist in different ways and manners in which an actual being, or actual being, *qua* actual, may be actual, i.e. different sorts of actuality of actual beings, or of actual being, in so far as they are, or it is, actual.

These modalities of actuality are ontological modalities.

From Art. 12, it follows, *inter alia*, that there cannot be modalities of non-actuality. For there is no mode of existential being such as non-actuality.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The substance in articles 12 and 13 could have been formalized or symbolically presented in the following self-explanatory way:

- A. Propositional modalities: Mod (...p...)
- B. Ontological modalities:
  - a) modes of (act of) being: S is-Mod P

#### 14. Commonsensical account of principal modalities

Actuality is taken as basis.

Actual being and its actuality may be of two different sorts. Judged in accordance with a certain *Order* and certain ontological laws,<sup>1</sup> whatever this order and these laws may be, it may be, firstly, such that it could not *not* be actual in so far as the order and the laws in question are concerned. Or, secondly, it may be such that it could be non-actual – again relatively to the order and laws envisaged. In the former case, the given actual being is *necessary being*,<sup>2</sup> or *necessarily actual*, or the *actuality of the actual being is necessary* – always with reference to the order and laws considered. In the latter case, the actual being is *contingent being in actuality*, or *contingently actual*, or the *actuality of the actual being is contingent*, relatively to the order and laws concerned.

Correspondingly, non-actual being and its non-actuality may be of two different sorts.<sup>3</sup> Firstly, it may be such that it could not be actual, relatively to the order and laws in question. Or, secondly, it may be such that it could be actual, with the same relativity involved. In the former case, the non-actual being in question is *impossible being*, or *impossibly actual*, or the *actuality of the non-actual being is impossible* – all these relatively taken. On the other hand, in the latter case, the non-actual being is *contingent being in non-actuality*, or *contingently non-actual*,

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b) modalities of actuality: S is-Act<sub>Mod</sub>P

We shall make some incidental use of this notation in the sequel.

<sup>1</sup> For the notion of ontological law and its connection to Order, cf. *infra* Art. 24.

<sup>2</sup> We repeat that ‘being’ signifies primarily being as form and act, and only secondarily and derivatively being as subject, that is, the subject of being, that which is. The expression is employed throughout this dissertation normally and predominantly in the primary sense. When the secondary sense is intended, this is either stated or easily gathered from the context and the linguistic formulation availed of. (Cf. also *supra* Art II, n. 2 [p.29]).

<sup>3</sup> We remind ourselves here that we are speaking commonsensically. Hence the ‘sorts of non-actuality’.

or the *non-actuality of the non-actual being is contingent* – relatively to the order and the laws in view.

The above brief commonsensical analysis gives then the following modal notions:

1. actuality (and non-actuality)
2. necessity
3. contingency in actuality
4. contingency in non-actuality
5. impossibility
6. possibility of, or for, actuality and non-actuality.

The notion (or notions) in (6) is (are) involved in the explanation of the notions (2), (3), (4) and (5), on the basis of effected divisions of (1).

It will be seen in a moment that these notions, in so far as they are the product of such commonsensical analysis, are vague, ambiguous, and in general imprecise in meaning, when judged from a systematic-philosophical point of view – as indeed is always the case with the results of *merely* commonsensical (or even worse: ordinary) analyses. To this end, we shall subject them to a mildly articulative treatment (Arts. 15-17).

## **15. First Articulation of commonsensical modal notions**

### **(a) Possibility**

The following points should be made:

i. Possibility was held to be “of”, or “for”, actuality *and* non-actuality. Thus, it can be neither a mode of existential being (for it would then have to couple immediately forms of being to subjects and not be about one particular mode of such a direct manner of attachment, namely actuality, and its absence), nor a modality of actuality (since in such a case, it could not but belong to actualities alone – not to mention the obvious circumstance that the possibility of something

being actual is not a particular way of its actuality, considering, that is, things commonsensically).

Therefore, in so far as possibility pertains in the outlined way both to actualities and non-actualities, i.e. in so far as the possibility is that something be actual or non-actual, possibility is logical or propositional. Which was only to be expected.

ii. Suppose now that we drop the non-actuality clause from the explication of possibility, in an attempt to remove its manifest propositional character, and with the hope to transplant it on the really ontological level. Thus possibility is of, or for, actuality alone. (This makes it, in effect, a modality of actuality).

Simultaneously with such removal, half of the explanatory power of the notion is thereby cancelled. (By 'explanatory power', I mean its ability to function in the commonsensical division of actual and non-actual being in the way adumbrated in the previous article). For although we can still divide non-actuality into contingent and necessary non-actuality (the latter being equivalent to impossibility) by means of the new understanding of possibility; the means of effecting the complementary division of actuality into necessary and contingent actuality are now missing, and missing as a result of the attempt to save the ontological character of possibility by restricting its applicability. Thus, although it can be said that that non-actual being has its non-actuality contingent, whose corresponding<sup>1</sup> actual being is possible (and we here use 'possible' in composition with actuality alone, in accordance with the adopted practice); and also that non-actual being having the corresponding actual being not possible is impossible being (and here again we deny possibility of something actual, or of something *as* actual, thus still avoiding the condemned association of possibility with non-actuality); yet, as we said and as is clear by inspection, the division of actual being

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<sup>1</sup> 'Corresponding being' signifies in this context being consisting in the same form or content of being, but with a different mode of the act of being.

into contingent and necessary cannot be done without invoking the rejected possibility of non-actuality (for instance: that actual being has contingent actuality, whose non-actuality is possible).

And there are no relevant alternative ways of effecting the desired division of actuality, while fully endorsing the mentioned injunction never to compound possibility with non-actuality.

We cannot say that S is contingently actually P if and when S is possibly non-P; for there are no negative forms of being. (And we cannot pretend that this does not matter here, because the whole point of (ii) is to provide ontological attire to the commonsensical notion of possibility). Nor can we say that S is contingently actually P if and when S is possibly P<sup>1</sup> *and* S is actually P; for this would render a presumed modality of actuality, namely contingency, truth-functionally composite: and similarly for attempts at explicating necessary actuality.

iii. We conclude that the commonsensical notion of possibility here treated does not signify an ontological modality;<sup>2</sup> nor can it be transformed to such an one, while we remain in the same order of thought.

## **16. First Articulation of commonsensical modal notions:**

### **(b) Contingency**

Contingently actual was held to be what, being actual, could be non-actual. And contingently non-actual what, being non-actual, could be actual. (The participial clauses are essential).

Thereon it is to be observed:

i. In as far as it is formally correct, i.e. in accordance with the notion of contingency involved, to speak of the contingency of a non-actuality, to that extent

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<sup>1</sup> This, by itself alone, would not, obviously, suffice.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Art. 12.

the notion concerned cannot but be propositional or logical in character. (Argument as in article 15, (i) and (ii), *mutatis mutandis*).

ii. There is a further, connected, imprecision, indeed ambiguity, lurking here.

Suppose that although S is not actually P, it could be. If so, then contingency is clearly involved here. But how? Contingency, as commonsensically explicated, pertains to the actuality or non-actuality of being, and is not a direct mode of existential being. In the case supposed, then, contingency could enter the scene in one or the other of the following two theoretical possibilities.

- Contingency operating on S's non-actuality or non-actual being.
- Contingency operating on the corresponding (envisaged) actuality or actual being.

Thus, given the above supposition, we ask: is S, in such a case, contingently actually P, or is it contingently non-actually P? In which of the two theoretically possible ways does contingency apply? (If we ask alternatively: is it, in the envisaged circumstance, contingent that S is P, or is it contingent that S is not P? – we only display the propositional nature of the notion of contingency employed).

If it is protested that it is all the same, since the contingency of the actuality of some being entails the contingency of its non-actuality and vice versa –

I reply, *firstly*, that this is not strictly correct: the contingency of the actuality of some actual being entails the contingency of the non-actuality of the *corresponding, and not the same*, non-actual being, or the contingency of the non-actuality of "it", *if it were non-actual*; and now 'it' refers not to the total being (form and act) but only to the common formal being, common between the given actual being and the would-be non-actual. And correspondingly for the converse entailment. Something contingently actual is not simultaneously contingently non-actual; and vice versa.

And I reply, *secondly*, that even if the answer were correct, it would not matter, since the attempt is to so modify the studied notion of contingency, as to avoid being committed to the contingency of any non-actuality as such.

Having disposed of the above protest, we are free now to conclude that the affirmative answer to the second of the above advanced questions falls under remark (i). While opting for an affirmative answer to the first is absurd, in that this solution entails the contingent actuality, and hence the actuality, of something *ex hypothesi* non-actual.

iii. It will not do to restrict contingency to actuality, thus making it a modality of actuality. (A move comparable to the one in Article 15, (ii) above). For what, then, of a not impossible, non-actual being? How is it possible to affirm contingency of it, as we ought to, in an ontological (not merely propositional) fashion, if we are not allowed to speak of its contingent non-actuality or of something equivalent? (For to say simply that it is contingent that such a being is non-actual, is either to abandon any hope of conceiving contingency ontologically or to entail something like contingent non-actuality). But, on the other hand, of course, as we noticed more than once above, how could we speak of the being's contingent *non*-actuality and yet understand its contingency ontologically?

There is no way out of the dilemma, if we persist to try to be faithful, in the main, to commonsensical or ordinary plausibilities. We could not surely *merely* say that it is not contingently actual; for of course it is not contingently actual, but neither is, say, the necessary or impossible being. And we cannot possibly do without contingency in the non-actual sector, as much as in the actual one.

iv. Suppose now, further, that in our attempt to secure an ontological status for contingency, and in the face of the previous failures, we resolve to drastically cut away any essential reference of contingency to both non-actuality *and* actuality (taking thus one more step in the direction initiated by (iii)), and affirm that contingency is *primarily* a proper mode of existential being (thus effecting a direct

coupling of subject and form of being rather than modifying an already obtaining direct coupling in a certain way).<sup>1</sup> We might then proceed and supplement this account by, *firstly*, conceiving a *secondary* application of ‘contingency’ to mark the kind of case, in which something, being actual, is also in the mode of contingency as primarily understood, and thus has its actuality modified or qualified as a result of its (the actuality’s) co-subsistence with primary contingency. In such cases, the mentioned qualification or modification, amounting to the contingency of the actual being’s actuality, renders contingency, in this secondary sense, a modality of actuality instead of a (directly coupling) mode of being. *Secondly*, a *tertiary* sense of ‘contingency’ could be conceived, applicable to cases where a *non-actual* being is also contingent in the primary sense, and referring to the total, compound situation; only that this dependent sense cannot now be construed as signifying even a modality of a mode of being (let alone a proper mode of being), since there is no such mode of being as non-actuality to serve as the subject of its modification by the contingency as here understood; thus, this last tertiary contingency cannot but be propositional or logical in nature.<sup>2</sup>

The above articulation appears attractive, and conforming to the requirements and distinctions above made.

But we ought to ask: What precisely is the notion of primary contingency involved here now? How should we explicate it?

If we rely on the commonsensical analysis for the required explication, we can extract nothing but the view that contingent being is what *can* be actual as well

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Arts. 12-13.

<sup>2</sup> Schematically: (Cf. supra Art. 13, n. 1 [p. 33]).

a) If S is-cont P *and* S is-act P,  
then S is-act<sub>cont1</sub>P, (first cases);

b) If S is-cont P *and* S is-act not P  
then cont<sub>2</sub>(S is-act not P), (second case);

where ‘cont’, ‘cont1’ and ‘cont2’ signify the primary (proper mode of being), the secondary (modality of actuality), and the tertiary (propositional modality) sense of ‘contingency’ respectively.



as non-actual. But then in the notion of contingency proposed there is of necessity included that possibility of which we were unable to give an account both commonsensical and ontological,<sup>1</sup> and also there is involved an (indirect) reference to non-actuality, and a connotation of truth-functional combination (contingent being is what can be actual *and* can be *non-actual*). Consequently, unless we succeed in providing a different analysis of either contingency or possibility or of both (other than the commonsensically available), we are not entitled to enjoy the attractiveness of the above proposal, and its fruits – nor indeed to assume that we even so much as mean something adequately articulated and precise by that proposal.

## 17. First Articulation of commonsensical modal notions:

### (c) Necessity and Impossibility

i. Necessity *in and by itself*, as above explicated, presents only the common problem of involving that notion of possibility, for which no ontological acceptance and significance could commonsensically be found. For the rest, it can easily be construed as a homonym (not a chance one, to be sure) with two connected applications as a proper mode of existential being (primary sense) and as a modality of actuality (derivative sense)<sup>2</sup>. On the other hand, this relative immunity of necessity from any special troubles is conditional on the implausible (from the commonsensical point of view) severance of any essential connection between necessity and impossibility –as we indicate in (iii) below.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Art. 15.

<sup>2</sup> In the notation above suggested:

S is-nec P

and

S is-act<sub>nec</sub> P.

ii. Not so for impossibility. Besides the common trouble, it obviously cannot be construed as a modality of actuality.<sup>1</sup> And we are prohibited from ascribing to it the status of a proper mode of existential being, by reason of its essentially negative nature<sup>2</sup> – not to mention, as we said, the sheer involvement of possibility.

iii. Furthermore, if we connect necessity and impossibility, as, and in the same way that, common sense imperatively requires, we infect the former with the blemishes of the latter. For, since what is impossible to be actual is necessarily non-actual, the notion is thereby introduced of the necessary non-actuality – a propositional modal notion. More importantly, the primariness itself of that notion of necessity which signifies a proper mode of existential being is threatened; for how could we reduce, or refer back, to this primary notion the newly introduced propositional one, which involves necessity of non-actuality?

In answer to this question, we may indeed try to structure the field of necessities in a way analogous to that which was above employed in articulating contingency.<sup>3</sup> To this end, we may avail ourselves of the two notions of necessity (one signifying a proper mode of being, the other a modality of actuality) already mentioned in (i) above; and then acknowledge a third sense of necessity, a propositional one this time, applicable to such states of affairs, as when a non-actual being could not be actual (a sense operating, in other words, on the circumstance of the non-actuality of a non-actual being, and characterizing that non-actuality as necessary). But now it turns out that the above outlined structure

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<sup>1</sup> Not:

S is-act<sub>imp</sub> P,

But

imp (S is-act P)

which betrays its propositional nature. (The first acceptance would entail the actuality of the impossible being).

<sup>2</sup> «It is impossible that ''' is equivalent to "it is not possible that p". And it has been argued that no truth-functional composition (and in particular no negativity) can be essentially involved in the nature of a proper mode of being.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. supra Art. 16, (iv).

is deficient even as such, as distinct from lacking a sufficient and secure extra-structural foundation. I mean that in the case of the attempted structuring of contingencies, we took exception to the impossibility of providing any adequate explication of the primary instance of contingency (on which the system is based), consonant with the relevant commonsensical plausibilities which we have assumed, in this elenctic section, to carry most of their seeming weight; on the other hand, the main failure of the above proposed structure of necessities consists in its (the structure's) not being a real structure at all; for the third sense is not shown to refer ultimately to the primary one, and in the absence of such a reduction, it fails to be established as a *derivative* sense, and thus to be really incorporated in a proper system of focal meaning; in which case neither the *primacy* (as the focal centre) of the primary sense is sufficiently established.

I said a few lines above that the third sense *is not* shown to be reducible to the primary one. Indeed, it can be shown that it *cannot* be so reduced. For the necessity (third sense) in something's non-actuality, say in *S*'s not being actually *P*, if it is to be reduced at all somehow to primary necessity (i.e. necessity as a (direct) mode of being), would have to be reduced to something consisting in, or involving, one or other of the following circumstances which exhaust the relevant theoretical possibilities: (a) *S* is necessarily *P*; (b) *S* is not necessarily *P*; (c) *S* is necessarily not-*P*; (d) *S* is not necessarily not-*P* (in all of which, 'necessarily' is meant in the first, primary sense).

Now (c) and (d) are simply impossible since there cannot be a real act of being (performed or operating) towards a negative form, there being no negative forms. (a) entails that *S* is actually *P*, and thus contradicts (irrespective of whether it is accompanied by a further condition or not) the hypothesis of a non-actual being. Finally, (b), though it is entailed by *S*'s being necessarily not actually *P*, does not entail it, neither can entail it in conjunction with any further condition

short of an addition of something to the effect that it is impossible that S should be P, which brings us back to that which we want to reduce.<sup>1</sup>

### **18. Commonsensical modal notions are imprecise and propositional or logical**

Commonsensical modal notions, being indefinite in what they include and what they exclude, are susceptible of various lines of development, or completion, of their meaning, and of multiple ways of handling. Their imprecision renders them unfit to serve as the stable basis of an adequate doctrine of the Act of Being.

Besides, they are, as we have seen, propositional in character. And more than this, they have been found not to yield upon some articulating treatment corresponding ontological and precise notions forming, together with coordinated propositional ones, some coherent structure – at least in so far as the treatment was itself confined, from the point of view of the source of the materials which were to be subjected to the systematic treatment, within the boundaries of Common Sense.

We see then, in this particular application, the validity of the general principle, whose certainty should have been a priori evident: commonsensical plausibilities of ordinary thinking and speaking can be of no help in metaphysical, or indeed philosophical in general, disquisitions. Thus, if in the statement of our positive doctrine of ontological modality we disregard, or rather do not (unwarrantedly) rely on, what appears plausible to the untutored mind (to be

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<sup>1</sup> The above indicated argument can be formulated succinctly, and without some ambiguities lurking in the ordinary formulation of (a) to (d), by means of our schemata. Thus 'nec[S is-act not P]' cannot be reduced to anything consisting in, or involving as part, either (a) 'S is-nec P', or (b) 'S is-nec not P', or (c) 'S is-nec not-P', or (d) 'S is-nec not not-P'; these exhaust the available theoretical possibilities; hence the desired reduction is impossible.

Notice in particular the contrast with what was proposed above concerning contingency (cf. supra Art. 16, n. 1 [p.40]). For we cannot say here similarly that nec[S is-act not P], if and when S is-nec P and S is-act not P. (This would amount to open contradiction).

distinguished, of course, from the evident intuition of the appropriately and adequately trained mind), we disregard it not without reason.

[Obviously not every way and aspect of the imprecision of commonsensical modal notions was even touched above, this (and not even their imprecision in itself) not being the aim of their brief study here.

It may not be inapposite to remark in the present connection, and in appropriate contrast to the noticed unsystematicity and concomitant imprecision of commonsensical modal notions, that despite their precision of some sort, modal notions of formal logic are as unfit as the commonsensical ones to guide a properly philosophical investigation concerning modes of being, let alone to serve as a reliable, basis for the latter's adequate understanding.

The principles to be employed in a philosophical examination of formal modal notions should be, in general, the same with those displayed in application in the above elementary treatment of commonsensical modal notions. We may be content here to advance in very rough outlines two points, one general, the other more specific.

Commonsensical modal notions are elaborate enough, diversified, ramified after a fashion, in order to answer somehow and with the limitations inherent in the purpose, nature, and manner of their function, to the complexities of the case; what they do lack is systematic precision and orderly articulation. On the contrary modal notions of Formal Logic are systematic and precise in their way, but oversimple in their articulation, inadequate to the wealth in real content, as it were, and the complication of the subject or material, whose very general, and formal-typical for that matter, features and lines of demarcation they try, within the entire apparatus of Formal Logic, to reproduce.

As a particular exemplification of the general unhelpfulness of Formal Logic towards the establishment of an adequate theory of the Act of Being, consider the following.

Take the formula 'mod(p)', where 'mod' designates any modality, and then ask: What is the modality of the copula *within* 'p'? One, of course, cannot escape the necessity of positing the copula as a necessary constituent of any proposition whatever (seeming exceptions of the trivial kind, like propositions with verbs other than the copula, do not constitute real difficulties) by just not assigning to it a separate letter in the notation which he happens to accept in Formal Logic – like, say, 'fa'. (That the copula is essential to any and every proposition is clearly seen, even irrespective of metaphysical analyses of the proposition's objective reference or "intention", if we reflect on the nature of proposition as such; for since this nature requires two (at least) terms taken as connected, their connection or, if you like, the element of propositionality, is there to be found in a proposition as much as the two connected terms themselves, whether it is signified by a separate symbol or considered to be included, in point of function, in the "predicate" term). And equally, further, one cannot avoid the above posed question by taking 'p' itself to be again of the form 'mod(p)'; for somewhere this game must stop. And what does it remain there but the notion of the mode of the attachment of characters to subjects, or, anyway since we are speaking of Logic, of items taken as characters to items taken as subjects? And what has *Formal* Logic to do with this?]

### 19. Strict possibility and Ontological Modalities

There are two basic modes of existential being: actuality and (strict) possibility.

Actually being may either be possible being *as well*, or not. Or alternatively: it may either come from the actualization of a possibility (of a possible being), or be in a sense self-sufficient for, and in, its actuality. Thus we obtain two modalities of actuality: contingent and necessary actuality respectively.

From necessary actuality, it may be derived a derivative mode of existential being: necessity. For being is necessary by reason of its being necessarily actual.

Not all possible being need be actual. Possible being may either be actual *as well*, or not. Or alternatively: it may either be actualized or not. Thus we obtain two modalities of (strict) possibility: possibility in actuality and in non-actuality.

Finally, non-actual being may either be possible (in which case we have the already mentioned non-actual possible being) or not. In the latter case (impossibility) we have neither a mode of being, nor a modality of a mode of being – but only the ontological negation or absence of both the two basic modes of existential being.

It is to be noticed that we provided above two alternative formulations for the differentiation into sub-kinds, or rather sub-types, of each one of the two basic modes of existential being. And although it does not fall within the compass of this dissertation to investigate the nature of actualization, on which the connective link between these two formulations in each case is founded; yet some indication of the account in outline of that connection in accordance with our doctrine should be given.

Being, we have seen, consists in form and act of being. And a possible being consists in form or content of being and the potential act of being: the form “acts”<sup>1</sup> potentially, and subsists potentially. Now in the actualization of such a possible being, the form of being in which, in point of content or of Being-Something, this possible being consists, receives a further mode of being, and “acts” also actually: it now subsists actually (as a form of an existent subject). The metaphysical result of such an actualization is the actual being which corresponds (in the sense previously explained) to the possible one.

Further on, it should be remarked, firstly, that in the actualization of possible being, its possibility is not thereby *annulled* or totally effaced as a *mode of*

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<sup>1</sup> This “act” of the form is different, but intrinsically and systematically connected with the act of the existing subject towards the form in question. We abstain from using the latter terminology simply because in this chapter we treat of Being and not of that which is (of *esse* and *forma essendi* rather than of *ens*).

*being*, though it is *cancelled* as an *availability for actualization*. That it is cancelled as such a *potentiality of actualization* is evident: the form of being is no longer merely *capable* of subsisting actually; it *does* subsist actually. On the other hand this cancellation of the capability of actualization does not imply total annihilation of the possibility as a mode of being; for how could then (i.e. on the contrary supposition) contingent actuality (i.e. the actuality which originates in, and through, actualization) be *intrinsically* distinguished from necessary actuality (i.e. pure actuality)?

Thus possibility as a mode of being *remains* in the contingently actual being. On the other hand, it should also be observed, secondly, that the required preservation of the potential mode of being, right through actualization and in the resulting actual being, does not imply a mere juxtaposition of the two modes of being as they are found in the actual being, i.e. as co-constituting its contingent actuality. Nor is the reception of the new mode of being on the part of the form of being concerned, a mere extrinsic superaddition to the already obtaining mode. The actuality of a contingently actual being is not pure actuality *plus* (in an extraneously additive sense) strict possibility. It is rather (pure) actuality as *intrinsically* qualified (and thus as not remaining unmitigated actuality *simpliciter*) by its coming to be received as a result of the actualization of a corresponding potentiality. Thus a strict unity in the ontological modality of even contingent actuality is maintained by means of our account, together with due allowance to its somehow composite character. The composition is not truth-functionally additive; and our positive doctrine conforms, in this important respect, with the a priori deduced conditions of ontological modality (conditions, which were negatively used above, in the criticism of the relevant commonsensical notions).

It can now be seen that both of two opposed views concerning possibility have truth in them, but do not integrate their particular insights in a coherently unified doctrine. I mean the view that there is nothing potential in something



actual in so far as it is actual and in the respect in which it is actual; and the view that actuality entails possibility in the sense that something actual is, in its very being actual, possible (to be actual). Thus, it would seem, 'possibility' is ambiguous in the present respect; for actuality in one and the same sense may both entail possibility and exclude it; possibility is both compatible and incompatible with (contingent) actuality.<sup>1</sup>

We solve the dilemma, and systematize the ambiguity, by maintaining that possibility of actualization and of the resulting actuality, in the sense in which completed actualization and consequent actuality imply denial of it, does not follow immediately upon possibility as mode of being (though it is ultimately due to this mode), but requires in addition *absence* of the actual mode of being. Presence of the potential mode *together* with absence of the actual one entail in combination that possibility; the mere presence of the former does not. Obviously then, the said possibility is annihilated upon the acquisition (on the part of a form of being) of the actual mode, without its extinction implying that possibility as a mode is also thereby annulled. On the contrary, it is preserved; and it is precisely its preservation which explains the circumstance that the contingent *actual* being is a *contingent* actual being, and is also (in a sense) possible even in being actual and in the respect in which it is actual.<sup>2</sup> For it is, obviously, not the actuality as a pure,

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<sup>1</sup> And notice that our words carry their full weight. For instance, it is not possible to evade the basic issue at stake by claiming that no ambiguity is really to be found here, since the possibility incompatible with a certain (contingent) actuality, say being P, is the possibility of that same actuality (being P), whereas the possibility compatible with it is the possibility of not being P, or of being not-P. And it is not allowed to thus circumvent the issue, because on the one hand there are no negative forms, and on the other possibility of *not* being P is manifestly propositional; thus both of the proposed solutions in the 'whereas'-clause above fail, each for a different reason, to constitute a *relevant* account of the matter.

<sup>2</sup> It may further be noticed that this preservation accounts also for a certain intrinsic metaphysical *instability* of the contingently actual being (as contrasted with the stability of the necessary one), which in turn grounds the capability on the part of a contingently actual being to cease to be, and no longer to be, what it is, thus relapsing into the state of possibility from which it sprang forth.

unmitigated mode of being which in any way and sense involves possibility and confers a certain potentiality upon the actual being as a whole.

To conclude then, the above outline. There are, as we said, two basic modes of the act of being: (strict) possibility and (pure) actuality. A form of being may “act” in unmitigated actuality alone, and then subsists necessarily. Or it may “act” in (strict) possibility *alone*; and then, in virtue of the conjunction of presence of (strict) possibility with absence of actuality, it possesses a certain potentiality (distinct from the possibility itself as a mode of being) for actualization, which, to repeat, though ultimately founded on the nature of possibility (as a mode of being) itself, is nevertheless proximately derived from the mentioned conjunctive circumstance, that is, in effect, from the *solitariness*, in the present case, of (strict) possibility as a mode. Now this potentiality for actualization, if and when realized, is no longer a potentiality; it obtains no more; it is, as it were, transmuted into the corresponding actuality. But in this transmutation, the initial possibility (as a mode) is preserved, though preserved only by qualifying (pure) actuality (thus adulterating it), and as such a qualification or adulteration of actuality. If you like, the possibility (as a mode) is *sublated* into the resulting actuality, existing now as the latter’s impurity. Which gives us the third relevant case, namely, that of a form subsisting contingently actually, as acting simultaneously (but in the above outlined intrinsically interfusing manner) in both the basic modes of being.

## **20. The role and significance of negatives in the above outlined system of ontological modalities**

The place of negation in the objective World should in each case be circumscribed with the utmost care and caution.

Indeed, one is reluctant to assign to it fundamental ontological status – nor does one find sufficient reasons to do so.

But apart from this very general point, confusion is engendered by not taking care in the assignment to negation of its proper place, in each case and problem.

Thus, for instance, grave systematic errors can be, and have been, committed by implicitly or explicitly construing non-X as a kind of, so-called negative, X, alongside with other, so-called positive, kinds.

Again, on the methodological level, a proper division cannot be effected through negatives, or, if it is thus preliminarily and provisionally effected (as a result, normally, of a dominant *interest* in the *description* of the division), it should be complemented with both the positive account of the real division, and with an account of how and why negatives were able, in the particular case each time envisaged, to do the job of the positive items of the division.

*Negation is methodologically and ontologically suspect.*

The first negativity in the outlined account of ontological modalities (Art. 19) occurs at the distinction between two modalities of actuality.

This distinction is no proper division. We are in the sphere of existential being, not in the realm of Being-Something. We are, thus, not describing (or *epistemologically* effecting) a division through a kind and its negation. The situation is rather as follows:

There is a “character”<sup>1</sup> in which possibility consists, and an independent “character” of actuality. Now, to repeat and apply some of the points summarily made in the previous article, this latter “character” may either co-subsist, or not, together with the former one. In the former case, we say that it is qualified in a certain way; in the latter, it remains in its purity. So, *strictly speaking, we have pure actuality and contingent actuality*. But if we wish to speak of these two cases, *in conceptual terms*, as two ways or manners or modalities of actuality, we cannot, in

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<sup>1</sup> Not, of course, a character in the sense of a property or a characteristic or, in short, a form of being. Cf. *supra* Art. 5.

so wishing, mean by ‘actuality’ the independent “character” of actuality (in its purity) from which we began, but rather the conceptually posited actuality as the conceptually required *common* universal to the two cases. For if we were to take as such common concept that of the pure actuality itself, we will then find that it was identical with one of the items to which it was common.

At bottom, then, the negativity in question is fictitious. Nothing more than a way of speaking – namely, a neat way of speaking on the analogy of genera and species, where a genus cannot be one of its own species.

Mutatis mutandis for the second dangerous occurrence of negativity in the advanced outline (the two modalities of possibility).

Consequently, in truth, we have pure actuality, pure possibility, actualized possibility, and actuality from and with possibility, that is, actuality which is the result of the actualization of a possibility – the two latter, namely actualized possibility and contingent actuality, both occurring, if corresponding, in each case of appropriate being<sup>1</sup>.

## **21. Order of precedence between Actuality and (strict) Possibility**

There are, we hold, two basic modes of existential being: actuality and potentiality.

In what sense then, is actuality, as it was claimed above,<sup>2</sup> the fundamental mode of the act of being? What is the order of precedence holding between the two basic modes of existential being?

The priority of actuality over possibility consists in the following:

i. The possibility of a possible being entails, and is entailed by, the possibility of its actuality. There is essential “forward reference” of possibility to actuality: the former is *of* the latter.

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<sup>1</sup> We repeat here that the exposition of an adequate and complete doctrine of ontological modality in general is not part of the object of this dissertation.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Art 11.

ii. Nothing similar with actuality. Indeed, actual being and (correspondingly) its actuality may even not be possible at all.<sup>1</sup>

iii. Even in cases of actual being which is *also* possible, the actuality of the actual being does not entail, nor is in anyway connected with, the actuality of its possibility,<sup>2</sup> simply because there is no *relevant* sense for the expression ‘actuality of the possibility of being’.<sup>3</sup>

[In this last respect, it may be said that still, even if irrelevant as regards the above made point, there *is* a “backward reference” of actuality to possibility in that the actuality of the type now considered is the result of the actualization of a corresponding possibility.<sup>4</sup> And this is so far correct. Only the asymmetry is obviously maintained even here; for there is not even sense (literal sense) in speaking of a possibility as the ‘possibilisation’ of the corresponding actuality. So that, at most we have here to do with a sense of priority different in its content from the one above advanced, in which, always in cases of actualities resulting from actualizations, the possibility appears to be prior to the corresponding actuality. But in fact, even so, the question concerning the truth of this appearance remains open. Whether that actualization bestows a certain priority to possibility over actuality or, conversely, grants *mediately* precedence once more to actuality,

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<sup>1</sup> To be noticed that impossible is not merely what is not possible, but what is neither possible nor actual (or: neither possible nor necessary).

<sup>2</sup> Contrary to the essential reference of possibility to actuality noticed in (i) above.

<sup>3</sup> In the notation above suggested: “act (S is-poss P)” is meaningless in the required way.

The *relevant* sense of this expression would have to correspond to: poss (S is-act P). For:

S is-poss P = poss (S is-act P) – analogous to remark (i),

whereas

S is-act P ≠ act (S is-poss P) – analogous to remark (iii)

(even in cases where the actual *is* connected with a corresponding possibility).

Two *irrelevant* senses of the expression in question are the following:

(a) “act (S is-poss P)” means that it is *really* possible that S is P. The “actuality of a possibility of being” meaning a *real* possibility, as against an imaginary or merely conceived one.

(b) “Actuality of the possibility of being” means the actuality *resulting* from the actualization of the corresponding possibility of being.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. n. 3, (b).

cannot be judged until an adequate account of actualization is presented. (And if examples are needed, the Aristotelian account assigns priority to actuality even in this respect, despite the appearance above mentioned). In any case, the point above made remains valid, in that in the sense here explained, actuality is prior to possibility].

Another sense in which actuality is prior to possibility will be noticed below.<sup>1</sup>

## 22. Broad possibility

It may be thought that, since it would appear that anything actual, in order to be able to be actual, whether necessarily so or contingently, must be possible as well and in advance, the doctrine summarily expounded in Art. 20, and in particular its application in Art. 21, (ii), is erroneous, at least as regards possibility.

To which the simple reply is that this is not our notion of possibility: we have clearly expressed ourselves on this point. And if the question is about the meaning of words, that is the end of it.

But there may be more to the opposing thought than misplaced anxiety concerning mere word-propriety. For indeed there is a certain sense (philosophically relevant) of possibility in which the above remark holds true. Let us mean it by 'broad possibility'.

Something is broadly possible if it is either strictly possible or necessary.

This is a correct explanation. And it makes manifest that, within our system, broad possibility can be nothing more than propositional modality, since it involves truth-functional disjunction of proper ontological modalities.

Furthermore, suppose that broad possibility is stipulatively taken as proper, basic, ontological modality, alongside with actuality – which in any case *is*

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *infra* Art. 26.

evidently a basic mode of existential being. Could the other ontological modalities be grounded on, and explained in terms of, these two?

We could explain in such terms a sense of possibility (still another sense, a third one) in which only the contingently non-actual is possible.<sup>1</sup> But there we would have to stop. For how could we distinguish between necessity and contingent actuality? Only if we were to introduce additionally either necessity or strict possibility as a third basic mode of being.

Suppose we do so. (We take no objection on grounds of parsimony). Thus we have three basic modes of being. But they are evidently connected: broadly possible is what is either strictly possible or actual without being strictly possible (if we choose to introduce strict possibility as the required third basic mode); or, alternatively, broadly possible is what is either necessary or actual without being necessary (in case that we introduced necessity as the third mode). In either case the connection renders manifestly broad possibility a truth-functional combination of the other modes – which contradicts its being basic, ontological mode of being.

Consequently, broad possibility could not be assumed in place of strict possibility as basic mode of existential being.

That our own account does not suffer from defects like the above mentioned ones in its derivation of, say, contingent actuality from strict possibility and pure actuality, is clear even from its outline presented in the two preceding articles.

### **23. Reiteration of Modalities**

Modes of the act of being, evidently, cannot be reiterated in any way.

There is no real reiteration even in the case of the modalities of actuality: actuality is rather qualified or modified. And anyway there is in each such case only a single non-iterable qualification, always with actuality as basis.

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<sup>1</sup> The explanation would run: possible is what is broadly possible but not actual.

As regards propositional modalities of whatever kind, it is to be remarked, firstly, that there applies to them what has been already observed,<sup>1</sup> in respect to the commonsensical modalities above treated, namely that they are relative to a certain Order and certain Laws.

A certain Order, and the Laws in which this Order is expressed, are the source of the particular nature or character of the corresponding group of modalities.<sup>2</sup> That the Order and the Laws are thus-and-thus, grounds that the ordered and the law-governed display these-and-these, such-and-such modalities, i.e. determines both the particular nature and “sense” of the modalities applicable to the realm in question, and which apply to what circumstances of this realm.<sup>3</sup>

For example, what is conformable to the Order is possible relatively to it; and what violates these Laws is impossible, again relatively to them: what is involved in or entailed by the Laws is necessary accordingly.

But then, evidently, propositional modalities cannot be reiterated *with, or in, the same particular sense*. For a new point of reference is required in order for it to be determined what is the modality (in a new particular sense) of an already modified (in the old sense) proposition. An Order can, and does, determine only the modality of the circumstances subjected to it; it cannot by and in itself determine its own modality, and thus the modality of the modality of the circumstances subjected to it. And if it appears to do so, this cannot but be the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Art. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Their universal nature consists, of course, in what is explicated by such an analysis as the one above conducted in its rudiments in respect to the commonsensical modalities.

It should be noted, however, that talk about particular and universal nature or character of modalities, is not to be construed in terms of the strict genus-species distinction. Modalities of whatever sort do not concern directly formal being; they attach primarily to the act of being in Thought or in Reality. And here there are no eidetic divisions, only something analogous, namely ramified distinctions.

<sup>3</sup> It is to be noticed that from these formulations it does not follow that an Order is an ultimately fundamental reality. Only, it is more fundamental than the particular nature of the modalities applicable to the realm or field ordered by it. Cf. further infra Art. 24.



result of sheer ambiguity: it is tacitly included within the Order in question the superior Order to which it itself as well as its ground conform.<sup>1</sup> For the only point in asking about the modality of an already once modified proposition, is to ask for the modality of its first modality as applicable to it, and thus, ultimately, of the modality of that which confers the first modality upon it. And that which confers the first modality, is that which grounds it, namely the corresponding Order, in reference to which all the first-order modality is defined in its particular nature and validated. But an Order cannot be self-guaranteed as to its own modality: simply because this its own modality cannot belong to the modality defined in reference to the Order in question; thus, it must point to another Order in reference to which it is defined in its particular character, and determined in its validity; unless, of course, the Order concerned proceeds directly from an absolutely first principle.

Consequently not even propositional modalities are, strictly speaking, reiterable.<sup>2</sup>

No perplexing opposition is thereby really created with Formal Modal Logic, where modalities, *presumably in the same senses*, are permitted to reiterate

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<sup>1</sup> For example, if  $\text{poss}(p)$ , and it is asked what the modality of this possibility is, it is clear that the circumstance that it is possible that  $p$ , being equivalent to the circumstance that  $p$  does not violate a certain Order,  $O$ , does not belong to the same level as the circumstance that  $p$ , and is not subjected to that Order, to which the latter is subjected. For that circumstance (that  $p$  does not violate  $O$ ) does not either violate or conform or proceed out of  $O$ .

It may, indeed, be held that it does in fact proceed out of  $O$ ;  $O$ , and  $p$ , being what they are,  $p$  does not violate  $O$ . On this account, all modalities relative to  $O$  would have to be necessary relative to the same  $O$ . And this is correct, after a fashion. Only it is evidently a secondary sense of the relevant necessity: exactly as, if  $a$  is involved in  $b$ , it may be correctly said that, after a fashion, that  $a$  is involved in  $b$  is involved in  $b$ ; in which case the first involvement gives the primary, independent sense of the particular involvement involved, and the second the secondary, dependent one.

[In text and in note above, 'violate', 'conform' and 'proceed' were meant as mutually exclusive, jointly exhaustive ways of relatedness between any given circumstance of a certain realm or field and the Order to which the realm is subjected].

<sup>2</sup> With the semi-exception noticed in n. 1 above.

themselves *ad nauseam*. Metaphysics is one philosophical discipline; and Formal Logic is another – if, indeed, this latter is in fact a *philosophical* discipline at all, strictly speaking. Anyway, they differ in immediate object of study, in purpose, in nature. They cannot, of course, disagree as regards the same thing, and in respect of the same aspect of it, but the difference in proximate object, in interest and in methods of handling the respective object, may well account for vast divergence in meaning of similarly *expressible* claims – a combination which may easily appear as opposition regarding the same *claim*.

Thus, in our case, we said that the reiterable modalities of Formal Logic are reiterable ‘presumably in the same senses’. But this is ambiguous: it may mean in *the same particular sense*, in the fullness of the sense which subtracts nothing essential, whether it concerns form or content, from the complete reality which is represented in it; or it may mean in *the same conceptually universal sense*, in the abstraction which retains from the corresponding realities only their most general, formal-typical features common to all of them, or perhaps even *only* common to all conceptions (and even worse: our conceptions) of them – in which case the common universal is exclusively conceptual and not at all real.

With this distinction the unwanted, indeed the impossible, opposition disappears. For the possibility of meaningful, within its sphere, reiteration of modalities in Formal Logic is the natural result of their indiscriminate acceptance, as regards their essential, total nature, in Formal Logic, itself a natural consequence of the whole *point* of *Formal* Logic.

#### **24. Laws, Order, and their Ground<sup>1</sup>**

Within a realm of objects, ontological laws *express* the Order observed therein.

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<sup>1</sup> The doctrine is here outlined without development.

The word ‘express’ is intended to bear here all its implication: it is not that the Order is observed because, in virtue, or by reason, of the validity of the corresponding laws; but rather the laws are valid because, in virtue, or by reason, of the obtaining of the Order which they express.

The non-fundamentality of Laws is but a (most important) instance of the non-fundamentality of *generality* in general. General “facts” of whatever type are not fundamental;<sup>1</sup> nor are they proper facts: proper facts have individual subjects of which properties are predicated. General “facts”, and with them Laws, can be reduced to, or grounded on, proper facts.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Indeed, I am inclined to hold the much stronger view that they are not in any direct way even really ontological in character; that they are comparable to, even if they do not actually involve, truth-functional combinations, and that they are class-like items; that as such, they are rather epistemological (only) in character – and in a certain specific sense products of mind.

<sup>2</sup> For example. Suppose that “P” and “Q” are properties of concrete things.

i. Take “all P’s are Q’s” as an accidentally valid generality. This is reduced to a conjunction (*not* infinite if the totality of concrete things conforming to it, or, at any rate, if the totality of concrete things, is not infinite) of which each constituent has the form: x is P and x is Q (itself a conjunction of proper facts in each case). The notion that a conjunction of singular facts can never amount to a general fact, because (if for nothing else) to deduce a general proposition from a set of singular ones one must also know, in addition to the set, that the subjects of the singular propositions cover or exhaust all relevant (or even all simpliciter) existent objects in the World (which additional knowledge is itself knowledge of a general fact), rests on a confusion of epistemological with ontological issues. For the adduced circumstance, being epistemological in nature, is *not* incompatible with the objective reference of the general proposition coinciding absolutely with the objective reference of the set of the singular propositions taken as a whole; and therefore its truth does not entail the falsity of our contention. The objective circumstance “intended” by the given general proposition may be identical with the objective circumstance “intended” by the corresponding set of singular propositions, taken as a whole; and yet we may not be able to infer the truth of the former from the truth of the latter, taken as so many premises, without knowledge of the *epistemologically additional* circumstance that these latter are exhaustive of the relevant field.

As to the other main objection likely to be urged against a view like ours, namely the one based on a possible infinity of existent objects, this does not touch us since we maintain strict Finitism. But this is not the proper place to develop further this aspect of the matter.

ii. Take “all P’s are Q’s” as a necessary (of the appropriate type) universality. Then it is grounded on: P-ness is thus-and-thus connected with Q-ness; which is a proper (generalized) fact with two individual (though abstract) subjects. Abstract entities and abstract facts do exist and

It is of the first importance to be noticed that a low degree and consequent status of *generality* is not bound to be accompanied by an equally or proportionately low degree and status of *abstractness* (conceived, needless to be added, ontologically). In fact, it is one of the gravest mistakes in Metaphysics to confuse the general or universal, and the common to many, with the (ontologically) abstract. An universality and something universal and common, cannot but refer to a multiplicity of individuals; on the contrary something (ontologically) abstract is *one individual*, an abstract individual.

A generality or universality may be founded or grounded upon an abstract individual. Perhaps the simplest way is this: a general (real) property common to many things has as its ground the corresponding abstract individual. To identify these two is an instance of the above mentioned mistake. ((That the one is the basis and the ground *could* have provided the occasion for the confusion<sup>1</sup>)).

If generality in general, and that particular kind of it which is involved in Laws in particular, are not ontologically fundamental, Order itself, on the other hand, stands in need of support in the form of ground, basis and source. But evidently, Order, being itself the source of the law-governed regularity of the ordered items, cannot in its turn be based upon this regularity. Hence the ground of an Order is transcendent as regards the ordered realm in which the order is displayed and observed.

Moreover, since the generality as such cannot be basic, an Order cannot be grounded ultimately even on a generality higher than that which it itself originates in the realm subjected to it. Consequently, an Order, not being able to have as possible source and base even higher universals as such, cannot but be grounded

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have full ontological status. Mere generalities (general concepts, general facts) are ontologically defective.

<sup>1</sup> Attempted diagnoses of the causes of alleged philosophical confusions have been rather in vogue during this century, with fanciful effects in many cases. The best thing is to abstain from any but the most obvious and certain of them. The above remark does not fall under this last heading.

on *higher individuals*, i.e. individuals transcendent with regard to those subjected to the Order in question. Which result manifests, once more, the priority and fundamentality of individuals over everything else.<sup>1</sup>

## 25. Reiteration of strict Possibility

Strict (ontological) possibility refers to, or is relative to, a certain Order and Laws.

Thus, what has been said concerning reiteration of propositional modalities, applies *mutatis mutandis* to this mode of existential being, and to the derivative modes and (ontological) modalities which are defined in terms of it and actuality.

## 26. Dependence of strict possibility on higher actuality

In addition to the above defined<sup>2</sup> sense in which actuality is prior to strict (ontological) possibility, what has been remarked in the previous article makes clear another sense in which the precedence of actuality is maintained.

It is premised that actual being as such contains or implies no reference or relativity to an Order of Laws in connection with which its actuality is validated and determined. Actuality as such is not relative to any Order and Laws.

In this, we see, actuality differs importantly from even strict, ontological possibility. This latter essentially refers to such an Order and concomitant Laws.

Further, it has been also observed,<sup>1</sup> that Laws and Order have their source and ground in a realm of individuals transcendent in respect to the ordered and law-governed realm concerned.

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<sup>1</sup> In the above exposition, we have passed freely from talk about generality and universality to talk about universals and common natures, and vice versa. Now a generality or universality is that such-and-such a feature obtains universally; the universal is the feature which obtains universally (with the appropriate restrictions of compass, of course). But this distinction does nothing towards invalidating our inferences and results.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Art. 21.

But that higher realm of individuals cannot possibly provide the required ground save *as a level of actuality*, and in this capacity alone. (Of course this realm *may* also contain additionally other modalities – both on the whole, as a totality, and in respect of its particular members and their relationships – and even *must* so contain them unless it is an absolutely first principle).

For suppose that it serves as the required ground in its being in any other modality than actuality (i.e. *qua* being modified in any other way than actuality, or in so far as it is anyhow otherwise than actually); since every modality, other than actuality, refers essentially to a corresponding Order, and every Order depends on a higher realm of individuals for its validity and determination, it is evident that there would be required, in such a case as is now envisaged, a third-level realm of individuals to ground the modalities of the initially postulated higher realm, and thus, mediately, to ground ultimately the modalities of the ordered realm from which we began. And now the question would be again: *Qua* being in what mode are the individuals of this third-level realm able to provide the basis and source for the modalities in the second and first-level realms? Either in their actuality (whether they also be otherwise *additionally*, in other respects, or not), or in any other modality. And so on.

Now either at some step of this process actuality will emerge as the true ground of the Order to which modalities of even the initial realm depend mediately or immediately; or there would be a *regressus ad infinitum*, which is impossible.<sup>2</sup>

Consequently ontological modalities other than actuality, and in particular strict possibility which is the only other basic modality of being besides actuality, depend essentially (via the Order to which they refer) on a higher actuality in the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra* Art. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Our doctrine of infinity entails the viciousness of any and every really ontological *regressus ad infinitum*. But the present case, involving as it does an infinity of *conditions* and not simply one of *consequences*, remains vicious even without the support of Absolute or Strict Finitism.

way explained. ('Higher', in order to be distinguished from the actuality co-ordinate to them). But actuality as such, does not depend on anything in the same or similar ways, being not relative in any relevant way. Hence, actuality is prior to strict possibility also in this sense.

## 27. Absolutely first, pure Actuality

We may deduce a corollary from the dependence of strict possibility on higher actuality above proven.

The following are premised:

i. All ontological modality, at each level, is derivative upon actuality and strict possibility.

ii. Between these two basic modes of the act of being there holds this relationship: strict possibility presupposes a higher, transcendent actuality, that is, a higher realm of individuals being in the mode of actuality – higher than that to which the strict possibility in question applies and belongs.

It follows that, if in a certain level of reality both actuality and strict possibility are found, then this level cannot be ultimately first; because it requires a higher, transcendent level of realm at least in order to have the inclusion of possibility in itself grounded.

But then this cannot happen at every level of reality. For this would involve a (vicious<sup>1</sup>) *regressus ad infinitum*. Therefore there must be a primal level, at which no mode other than pure actuality is present. But pure actuality is equivalent to ontological necessity conceived as a (direct) mode of the act of being.<sup>2</sup> Hence, there must be an absolutely first level of reality, a level of through and through necessary being.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Art. 26, n. 2 [p. 62].

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra Art. 20.

## 28. Types of Existential Being

Forms of being exhaust formal being. Formal being is “contentual” being, i.e. being which is a manifestation of Being-Something in a definite content capable of being exhibited by individual subjects presenting themselves under it, or exhibiting themselves in such-content.

Consequently, forms of being are common to everything, every object, which *IS*,<sup>1</sup> with all implications of this.

Accordingly, objects belonging to various (highest) categories of object may exhibit the same form of being (if capable of properly having being at all, of course) – and thus be, with regard to the corresponding content of being, identical in formal being.<sup>2</sup>

Now the total being of objects belonging to various (ultimate) categories of object must be different in *some* respect and way, because objects which are essentially beings consist in their being. Therefore it must be different in respect of the act of being involved in each case, i.e. of the act of being attaching the same forms of being (in the critical cases) to the various objects (metaphysical subjects) capable of displaying them. For there is nothing in Being besides Form and Act of Being.

But the Act of Being being contrasted with Being-Something, it cannot have kinds in the proper genus-species manner – the manner proper to the division (the one strictly speaking fundamental division<sup>3</sup>) of Being-Something alone.

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<sup>1</sup> In the sense in which we speak of Universal Being in Reality. Cf. supra Art. 5.

<sup>2</sup> For this notion of identity cf. infra Ch. II, Art. 33. For an important qualification of the statement in the text cf. infra Ch. III, Art. 45, esp. n. 3 [p. 87].

<sup>3</sup> Other divisions depend on it. For example a division of concrete things into kinds depends on the properties they exhibit, and on *their* division.



Thus, in conclusion, as many ultimate categories of objects there are whose objects ARE (or are proper beings), so many *types* of existential being there must be, which are not correctly speaking so many species of the genus: act of being.

Types of the act of being are one thing, and modes of the act of being are, of course, another. Both distinguish the Act of Being without properly dividing it.

## 29. Universal Being, Existence, and the Being of Identity

This chapter may be brought to an end with an indication of what the systematic position is of existence and the being of identity in respect to the Theory of Universal Being above articulated in its elementary features and demarcations.

As regards the being of identity,<sup>1</sup> its special character, and even its special status vis-à-vis predicative being, as some philosophers would want, is due to the peculiar character of identity as a sort (or rather a limiting case) of connection, rather than to any peculiarity of the being itself involved. Thus the treatment of this alleged major distinction of being in the Theory of Being itself, is not warranted. Otherwise, any peculiarity, sufficiently general or perhaps startling and not easily manageable, of a characteristic attributable to various subjects, would require a particular distinction in Being itself; which is manifestly absurd.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, a metaphysical subject's existence is its being *simpliciter*, and this in two ways. Firstly, it is its being something or other without involvement of that which it, as completely determined, is, either in its totality or partially; and this distinguishes existence from formal being. But existence does not absolutely coincide with act of being either. Thus, secondly, an object's

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<sup>1</sup> Which should be carefully distinguished from the identity of forms of being briefly discussed above (cf. supra Art. 7), since it concerns objects being, and not the formal being of them.

<sup>2</sup> Of course there is a legitimate sense in which each and every characteristic (if real) requires, or rather expresses, a particular division of formal being. But obviously this is not the sense in which the being of identity is usually *contrasted* with so-called predicative being.

existence is its being simpliciter in that it is the subject's existential act addressed not to this or that of the forms of being which it simultaneously exhibits, but to their totality, to its total *forma essendi*, to its complete determination. Thus, in this respect, to say that a subject exists is tantamount to saying that it presents itself under a certain totality of formal being, without specification of this totality constituting its complete determination.<sup>1</sup>

Any existential act of a subject entails its existence; and conversely, the existence of a subject entails its acting existentially towards a variety of forms of being, i.e. its exhibiting them. This close and intimate connection between existence and act of being manifests also itself in that there are as many *modi existendi* as various modes of existential being there are; and as many types of existence as various types of the act of being there are.

We conclude that existence, and also the being of identity, are non-fundamental and, in different ways derivative upon universal (predicative) Being.

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<sup>1</sup> We may describe, exaggeratedly, if we wish, existence as a subject's availability for being-determination. But then we must emphasize that this availability does not imply priority of any kind, except, possibly, merely conceptual one. It is wrong to say that a subject should exist before (in any proper sense) it could be predicatively anything; for its existence just is its being predicatively what it, in its totality, is, only without involvement of the particular nature of that which it is. Only in this sense does its existence amount to its "availability" for being-determination: this being-determination is not something superadded to an already existing subject; rather the existence is the remainder of an ontological subtraction of the definiteness in content of a subject's complete determination executed on its total (predicative) being.

(To be noticed that our objection has nothing to do with impossibilities as regards *temporal* priority of the existing subject over its being-determination. When we denounce "an already existing subject" we mean by 'already' any relevant metaphysical priority, and not just a temporal one. Questions of time are simply out of tune here, and anyway the corresponding claims are weaker).

On the other hand, a correct description of existence would be given by saying that an object's existence is its being (metaphysical) subject of some proper facts.

**Chapter II**  
**(Articles 30-39)**

**BEINGS AND CAUSES OF BEING**

### 30. Beings

Basic objects which properly are or *have being*, in the sense elementarily articulated in the previous chapter, are beings. Such an object is *a* being.

A being, being an object, is not identical with Being, or with any of its distinctions and divisions. And again, Being, and distinctions and divisions of Being, are not beings.<sup>1</sup>

A being is that which is (*ens*), and not the being, either existential (*esse*) or formal (*essential, forma essendi*) of that which is. (Linguistically, we may say that in an expression like ‘the being of a being’, ‘being’ is used *participially* in its first occurrence, but *substantively* in the second).

A being (simpliciter) is considered as that which is, in its possessing its Total Form, i.e. the complete determination which constitutes it (though in abstraction from the particular content of the Total Form and the complete determination). A being simpliciter is an *existent*<sup>2</sup> – taking existence strictly, as distinct from subsistence in general.<sup>3</sup>

But anything (any item whatsoever) which is something or has a certain form of being, say fP, *qua* precisely possessing that form of being, is a-being-something or something-being<sup>4</sup> (*not*: Being-Something), here a-being-fP.

Thus, a being may comprise a variety of something-beings. [Compare with the problem of One and Many<sup>1</sup>]. We shall see that, in a concrete World, a-being-

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<sup>1</sup> When the context or the grammatical form do not render clear the intended sense of ‘being’, we may avail ourselves of the expression ‘object-being’ to signify *a* being.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Ch. I, Art. 29.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *infra*, Art. 34.

<sup>4</sup> For convenience and easy distinction from Being-Something as the one member of the first distinction of Universal Being. The ambiguity of ‘something’ is already noticed above (cf. ch. I, Art. 6, n. 2 [p. 23]). It may mean either a subject exhibiting a certain form of being *qua* exhibiting it; or the form exhibited itself, i.e. a certain particular determination of formal Being (Being-Something) in general. It is then clear that in ‘a-being-something’, ‘something’ is used in its latter signification; whereas in ‘something-being’ it is used in the former.

something cannot exist separately as an object (apart, that is to say, from the nexus of a complete being (*simpliciter*) comprising other something-beings as well). But otherwise in the abstract Realm; there, a something-being is a full being, and a thing.

### 31. Simple Facts

Proper facts (non-general and non-truth-functionally combined facts) present themselves as the exhibition on the part of a certain (metaphysical) subject, or certain subjects, of a certain being-character, non-relational or relational respectively.

This presentation of a fact as an exhibition of being on the part of a subject, may be called ‘the first appearance’ of the fact, to be distinguished both from the inner constitution which is thus presenting itself in an ontological outward projection as it were, and from its *second* appearance, i.e. the way the fact, or rather its first appearance, appears to a percipient. But on the other hand, ‘fact’ may be also used, in a systematically ambiguous way, to signify the said first appearance; in which case the inner constitution of a fact strictly meant, is the causal (in a metaphysical, of course, sense) explanation of the corresponding “fact” – taking ‘fact’ in the second signification now. (This will become clearer, when causes of being will have been briefly treated below).

If the metaphysical subject<sup>2</sup> of a proper fact is an appropriate basic object (i.e. a basic object capable of figuring as the metaphysical subject of proper facts), and if correspondingly the ontologically attributed character is a proper form of being (i.e. a form of being as explicated in the previous chapter, in the context of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. also *infra* Art. 31.

<sup>2</sup> We intend to include in the present formulation the case of proper facts with more than one metaphysical subject. This intention is meant to cover any other occurrence of the same formulation in the sequel, unless otherwise stated. But cf. also *infra* Arts. 61-62, for the non-fundamentality of relational facts, and connective situations in general.

the General Theory of Universal Being<sup>1</sup>), then the proper fact in question is a simple fact<sup>2</sup> (and a properly proper fact, as it were).

But simple facts, though simple objects (since facts are objects of thought, namely objects of propositional thought), are not basic objects.<sup>3</sup> For they contain as constituents, objects belonging to at least one other kind of object, namely that kind, which basic objects capable of figuring as (metaphysical) subjects of the facts in question do fall under.<sup>4</sup>

Subjects of simple facts are beings.<sup>5</sup> The subject of a particular simple fact *not simpliciter, but qua subject of a certain particular fact*, is a something-being. A multiplicity of such something-beings may constitute one and the same (numerically one) object-being: the common subject (a certain object) of all simple facts involved.

### 32. Entities

A (proper) entity is a basic object to which it is directly attached *in some way or other* (not necessarily through an existential act) proper Being-Something, in the sense explained in the previous chapter.

It is to be noticed that we do not say that entities are basic objects which properly and fully *are*, or *have being* in the full sense (including both act and form

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. also the last paragraph of Art. 5. That parenthetical explanation renders of course the expression 'a *proper* form of being' pleonastic. "Characters" of non-basic objects are not proper characters or forms of being at all, and if at all, only analogically. Notice that we do not say 'of non-simple objects'. Cf. *supra* Art. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra loc.cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also *supra* Ch. I, Art. 2.

<sup>4</sup> In fact, a simple fact, in its inner constitution, can be exhaustively analyzed (i.e. analyzed without remainder, entirely reduced) into a number of basic objects (in some cases belonging to different categories, as in the case of simple facts with concrete things as subjects, where abstract things as well as concrete ones are involved) connected in certain ways.

<sup>5</sup> The notion of subject is, of course, to be distinguished from that of substrate. Cf. *infra* Art. 35.

of being). Thus, not all entities are beings, though all beings are entities. Entities do possess formal being, but not necessarily by acting existentially towards it.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, then, metaphysical subjects of simple facts are entities though they are also more than mere entities; but not only such objects are entities.

### 33. Individuals

A (proper) individual is a basic object which is one-in-subject or numerically one. For to be numerically one is to be one-in-subject, to be the same subject in a number of distinct simple facts.

To be one-in-subject or numerically one contrasts in the same field with to be one-in-being or one in kind.<sup>2</sup>

The field in question is the field of beings.

To be one-in-being is to have the same form of being. Thus, *two* beings (two-in-subject) may both exhibit a certain form of being and hence be, so far, one-in-being. On the other hand, *one* being (numerically one) may have more than one distinct forms of being and thus be two-, three-, or whatever number-in-being.

[One cannot say that the twoness in the former case and the oneness in the latter in respect of subject may somehow be reduced to commonness or difference in being. For leaving aside the disputation concerning whether subject-otherness in beings can always be reduced to some difference in being, and subject-oneness to identity-in-being, it is anyway clear that the relevant oneness (in subject) of a being cannot be accounted for by its oneness-in-being simply because nothing

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<sup>1</sup> To give an example, it will be seen that instances (at least on our construal) are entities without being proper beings and things. Cf. *infra* Ch. IV, Art. 60.

<sup>2</sup> In speaking of kind, no distinction between substantial and accidental universals is meant to be introduced. In fact, no such distinction could be made before the introduction of the notion of concrete things, to which that distinction, in its *commonsensical* *acceptation*, pertains.

prevents it from being multiple in being, in so far at least as it is a being,<sup>1</sup> and to comprise a multiplicity of something-beings].

We shall not face here the question in what the numerical oneness of an individual consists.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the answer varies with the category of the individual concerned.

To be numerically diverse entails, and is entailed by, to be capable of inconsistent being-determinations; to be numerically one entails, and is entailed by, to be incapable of inconsistent being-determinations.

[At the present stage, one could not specify further the notion of incompatibility involved (in its content and manner), since it obviously will depend on the category of beings concerned, both in respect of its manner and its content – what is inconsistent with what, and in what manner].

Individuals, then, are basic objects which are (each one) numerically one.

But, of course, each object-being is numerically one, for it is a basic object which is the subject of simple facts; it is the same one which is subject of more than one such fact, if it is the case that it is, by its nature, in any way multiple in being: it is not a mere something-being; it may comprise a variety of such something-beings, and in some way or other, as we shall see, does comprise such a variety, even in the case of abstract things.

Consequently the individuals are our beings. Nonetheless to be a being and to be an individual is not one and the same thing, as can be easily gathered from the respective explications.

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<sup>1</sup> Each abstract thing, it will be seen, possesses and exhibits just one form of being, which is its Total Form; still, it does so not qua a being, but qua an *abstract* being.

<sup>2</sup> Evidently, some such answer as the one usually given will not do – I refer to the view that, in effect, an individual is some one object which cannot be divided into a plurality of objects like to itself. For one, this would entail that simple facts are individuals. And then, 'like' is imprecise, and hence the formulation not strict enough. Besides, such an explication pertains to the notion of proper object (cf. our explication of this notion, and the distinction between basic and simple object) rather than to that of an individual *as such*.



An individual is evidently an entity (since every being is *a fortiori* an entity); although not all entities are individuals.

The foregoing summary explication circumscribes the notion of individuality in strict sense. But there may be discerned with some profit a broader sense of 'individual'.

This broader sense may be conceived by relaxing the necessary condition which individuals have to fulfill, namely that they must have proper and full being.

Thus, the new condition requires that what is to be an individual in broad sense or "individual", should have formal being *in some way* attached to it; this amounts to the dropping of the condition that it must act existentially towards this formal being which is attached to it.

One-in-being now becomes one-in-formal being: i.e. the attachment of the same form of being.

But on the other hand, 'one-in-subject' lacks now any evident meaning. For the new "individuals" are not necessarily subjects of facts – they may be, but not qua "individuals".

Consequently another sense must be given to the expression 'numerically one and the same'; which will have to be done, after proper discernment, for each category of non-individual "individuals" which there is and we may subsequently choose to introduce.<sup>1</sup>

### **34. Things. A Porphyry tree for "something"**

Objects *subsist* after some fashion or other.

The subsistence of some objects consists in their having (proper) forms of being, in their *acting* existentially towards Being-Something, or, rather, towards a

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, there is one such category for basic objects: instances. Cf. *infra* ch. IV, Art. 60.

certain (or certain) form(s) of Being-Something. The subsistence of these objects is *existence* proper.<sup>1</sup>

Objects, whose appropriate fashion of subsistence is existence, are *things*.

Such objects are basic objects, and indeed beings. They are also individuals. Again, all beings and all (proper and strict) individuals are things.

Objects other than things, may still be directly connected with, or exhibiting after a fashion, Being-Something, although their subsistence does not consist in their having or exhibiting the corresponding specification of Being-Something in general. Such objects are *entities, without being things*.

Finally, objects may not be even entities at all. Then, their subsistence is not in any way connected directly with Being, as we have analyzed it in the previous chapter (either formal or existential being).

There may be, and there are, indirect connections of various sorts.

We may now try to provide, in the roughest outline, a more general context for the above discerned distinctions by connecting them with the notions of object of thought and proper object mentioned at the beginning of the preceding chapter.

We abstractly begin with a most general notion of “something”.<sup>2</sup> Whatever subsists, or is able to subsist, or is unable to subsist in any sense and way, is a “something”.

Now there are to be distinguished three ways in which “something” may fail to subsist or obtain in reality. *Firstly*, it may belong to a category of “somethings”, whose members (or items falling under it), precisely as belonging to such a category (as being of such and such a most general kind), are unable to subsist either as such as they are and without addition or supplementation, or

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra* Ch. I, Art. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Not to be confounded with the two notions of ‘something’ already discerned. (Cf., e.g., *supra* Art. 30, n. 4), and surely not with some *thing*. It is needless to add that my treatment of ‘something’ and cognate expressions has nothing to do with quantificational Formal Logic.

even if complement in any relevant way. Such “something” cannot subsist *absolutely* speaking; they are absolutely unable to subsist. Indeed, strictly speaking, they cannot be thought of; nor is it possible for various categories of them to be differentiated; and, after all, there can be *nothing* which is *absolutely* (in the above sense) unable to subsist; thus this category of “somethings” is a category of Nothing.

*Secondly*, “something” may be unable to subsist in the sense that it belongs to a category of “somethings”, whose members (or items falling under it), precisely as belonging to such a category, are unable to subsist without supplementation of one kind or another, but can subsist with such an appropriate one. Thus, to give an example, a something-being cannot subsist separately and isolated in the concrete realm, though it may subsist in it together with other something-beings in the nexus of a complete and proper being.

*Thirdly*, “something” may be incapable of subsisting in reality, because, although it belongs to a category whose members (or items falling under it) are capable of subsisting or obtaining without supplementation (apart, of course, of subsistence itself, if this is considered to be a supplementation) is so far as their category is concerned; yet it is such that in its own *particular constitution violates some ontological law(s)*.

It is in this third case that violation of ontological laws comes properly to the picture. Thus, objects of thought belong to a (highest) kind of “something”. For an object of thought, as the notion was previously explicated,<sup>1</sup> is “something” which either subsists, or, if it does not subsist, either does not violate any ontological law (and thus it is “ready” to subsist by itself and without complement), or *does violate some ontological law(s)* (and, thus, is unable to subsist in the third sense above discerned).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Ch. I, Art. 2.

To continue. Objects of thought have been distinguished into proper objects (simpliciter) and *merely* objects of thought.<sup>1</sup> To the former belong basic objects and simple non-basic objects. Under the former fall things and entities in general, under the latter simple facts. And to anticipate what will follow, things are either concrete or abstract.

It may be observed that forms of being are not proper objects of thought. For their inability to subsist is of the second kind: they need an object to sustain them by exhibiting them (and ultimately they require a matter to inform). That forms of being are not proper *objects of thought* confirms our claim that beings and thing are proper (in the sense of *basic*) objects (simpliciter). For, as it was defined above,<sup>2</sup> a kind of proper object is such a kind of object of thought, that objects of thought belonging to it are un-analyzable to objects of thought belonging to general kinds of objects of thought other than it. On the other hand, we hold that beings (and things) are composite of matter and form, and of existential act and formal being; but none of these constituents belongs to a category of object of thought in our acceptance of the term; and thus the truth of our claim is safeguarded.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Which distinction, of course, does not affect the objective, extramental reality of what are *merely* objects of thought, but only the *fundamentality* of such reality, or its *grade*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra loc.cit.*

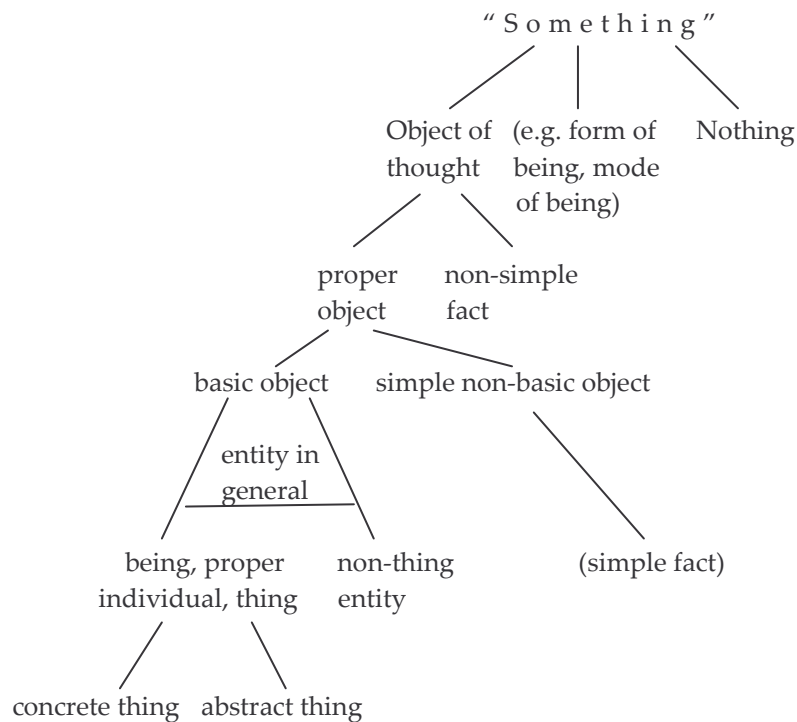
<sup>3</sup> The following diagram, a kind of incomplete Porphyry tree for “something”, recapitulates the above results. (But it is not held to be totally exhaustive. It is rather merely indicative of the definite claims made in the text).

### 35. The Substrate or Matter

The subject of a simple fact, as we mean the term 'subject', is that which exhibits, having it and *qua having it*, the corresponding form of being (according to the phenomenological first "appearance" of the fact), or that which is determined exemplificatorily by the corresponding determinant<sup>1</sup> (according to the fundamental structure or inner constitution of the fact) in so far as it is so determined.

Now the relative *substrate* to, or of, the fact in question, is that which yields the subject by assuming as a *superadded attribution* the form of being concerned (at the phenomenological level); or that which yields the subject by assuming *as a superaddition the determination* by the corresponding determinant (at the fundamental level).

Thus, we may say, the relative substrate to a fact is what exhibits a property, or what is determined by a determinant, in so far as, or in that aspect of



<sup>1</sup> Cf. infra ch. III.

it in which, it does not exhibit that property, or is not determined by that determinant – which implies, of course, no contradiction, because of the ambiguity of ‘that which has’ and similar expressions, i.e. the possibility of meaning either that which has something in having it *and* qua having it, or that which has something in having it *but* qua *not* having it, though being *able* to have it, i.e. in that aspect of it in which it is united *extraneously* with that which it has.

The qualification expressed by ‘in having it’ is required by the relativity and reference of the relative substrate to a certain particular formal determination. The relative substrate to such a determination is that which, in receiving the latter, yields the corresponding being-something,<sup>1</sup> not as such simpliciter (i.e. as a certain definite being-something merely and solely), but as a constituent in the nexus of some total, full being (which may, of course, be just the being-something considered, as in the case of abstract things; even so, what is constituted in any and every case is a certain *being-something as referring (and in its reference) to a total being*; for to be a being-something as such is *not* to be a total being as such, even if one and the same item happens to be a being-something and a total being at once). Or, alternatively, the relative substrate to a particular determination is that which, in receiving it or being informed by it, yields the total being, again not simpliciter and as such, but in its particular determination in question.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Art. 30.

<sup>2</sup> The full justification of these views would take us too far for the purposes at hand. Let it then be only declared that there are systematic reasons for them. And let some such reasons be hinted at as follows. Suppose S is P and S is Q, where S is an individual subject and P and Q real properties. The substrate to the fact that S is P and the substrate to the fact that S is Q are combined within S, and thus are connected. But they cannot be connected in virtue of their involving a reference to P and Q or to being-P and being-Q respectively. (Suppose that P and Q, and even being-P and being-Q, are totally unconnected). Nor can they be connected in virtue of their (several) connection with the absolute substrate of a subject (with *its* first matter); for a thing’s absolute substrate is itself *one* something, and *of* a certain individual thing, by reason of its reference to the thing in question and its (total) being. Finally, the ground of the required connectedness of the two mentioned relative substrates cannot consist in their referring to the individual itself as contained in it; for we move now at the order of the analysis of the object and

After the notion of relative substrate has been introduced, it is easy to conceive of the substrate of a subject simpliciter. This is what becomes (in not necessarily temporal way) the subject by having superadded to it all the forms of being which form the complete determination (the total forma essendi) of the subject in question.

Instead of substrate, relative or absolute, we may speak alternatively of matter, respectively. (Only it should be noticed that, as follows from the above explication, our matter is not confined to concrete things. *There is matter, of the appropriate sort, wherever there is individuality and thinghood of any type*).

A terminological remark: usually both 'subject' and 'substrate' are held to suffer from the ambiguity of 'that which has' noticed above, but in our acceptance of the terms, 'subject' always refers to the individual involved as *bearer of being in so far as it includes the being borne*, and 'substrate' to the matter, i.e. to *the bearer of being in so far as it excludes the being borne*.

### **36. Matter and Total form of a thing or individual**

The Total Form of a thing is the totality of the forms of being which it exhibits.

It is then evident, in view of what has been said above, that a thing is constituted, at the first phenomenological level of outward projection, from matter and Total Form. (The first "appearance" involved here is, to repeat, a thoroughly ontological "showing" (itself) of the object, having nothing to do with perceptual situations of any possible kind). *A thing is essentially bifurcated into matter and form*.

The resolution of a thing into matter and Total Form is naturally connected with the distinction, on the same level of ontological "show", between a thing's act

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its constitution out of the items resulting upon the analysis. There remains, then, that the relative substrates are ultimately connected through their respective references to the total being of the given individual, and thus in virtue of their reference to a total being. Hence they must involve such a reference as above stated.

and form of being. Thus, the existential act of a certain thing towards a form, and the corresponding act (in a systematically connected sense) of the form in the context of that thing, entails the involved matter's being informed ("in-formation") by the form concerned.<sup>1</sup> (Of course, matter as such never acts, in any sense and way, existentially in the *actual mode*).

It can be easily seen that neither matter, nor Total Form (or indeed form of being in general) are subjects, things, individuals, or being.

### 37. Constituents of beings and Causes of Being

The constituents of things may be viewed as improper "causes" of the beings which they constitute. In this way, we may speak of the matter and the Total Form of a thing as its material and formal *immanent* "cause" respectively.

But where we have a being, we must also have *proper* causes of its being. Thus in respect of any given factual manifestation, it is appropriate and correct that we ask: What is the metaphysical ground of its being so, what metaphysically accounts for its being so? Or, what is the metaphysical "Reason" of this being, what is that in virtue of which the being succeeds in being? The answer will vary from case to case, from kind to kind, and from respect to respect; but the question is always legitimate. For being, that is, particular being, is not self-explanatory.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, then, in seeking for metaphysical explanations we are not seeking for ordinary, commonsensical or even scientific (in the modern sense) accounts; the less so, the more such sorts of explanation as these latter concern *experiential*

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<sup>1</sup> It should be emphasized that an adequate picture of all these elements in their interrelationships cannot be attained without a comprehensive and detailed doctrine of matter as found in both the abstract and the concrete order of things. The presentation of such a doctrine lies beyond the scope of the present dissertation, although an adequate, for our purposes, treatment of matter in abstract things will be given in Chapter VI. Of matter as found in the World of concreteness nothing substantial will be said here; and, in general, the constitution of concrete things will not be treated in its entirety, but only so far as their formal constitution as a result of paradigmatic causality is concerned.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *infra* ch. V, Art. 68.



*reality* (i.e. one capable of being humanly experienced as that which it is), which is at one further remove from the fundamental core of reality than being proper and outward manifestation or first “appearance” of facts. For an experiential fact consists in the way the first “appearance” of a fact (i.e. its outward projection as being-determination) appears<sup>1</sup> to a percipient or experiencing subject.

Now it is not the task of Metaphysics to inquire whether the second appearance is an exact representation of the first or not, and in general about the connection of these two appearances. But equally well, Metaphysics cannot reject, out of its own resources, the possibility of significant and relevant divergence. And this justifies us in sharply distinguishing, in the respect concerned, ordinary and scientific explanations on the one hand, from metaphysical ones on the other; not to embark in a more thorough investigation of this and other differences, which, anyway, do not fall within the province of Metaphysics.

### **38. Efficient and Paradeigmatic Causes**

There are, then, metaphysical causes of the being of each object-being, and in general causes of being. But universal Being, we have seen,<sup>2</sup> distinguishes or decomposes itself into Act of Being and Form of Being. Correspondingly we must have two kinds of causes. We call ‘*efficient cause*’ the cause of an act of being; and ‘*formal cause*’ (properly so called) a cause of the formal being of subjects.

The latter clause should make it clear that a formal cause is not the cause of a form of being as such, but rather of a form of being as subsisting in a metaphysical subject, though not of its subsistence. Or, again, it is the cause of a subject’s exhibiting the corresponding form of being in so far as it exhibits the form of being which it exhibits and not another. And this appropriately contrasts with the efficient cause, which is the cause of the subject’s exhibition itself of the

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<sup>1</sup> This time a more “correct”, ordinarily, use of ‘appear’.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Art. 6.

form of being which it exhibits in so far as it exhibits it, and is not the case that it does not exhibit it.

It is to be noticed that the present proper notion of formal cause of being is quite different from the earlier mentioned notion of improper formal cause of beings, in the sense of the formal constituent of things. Indeed they function on two different levels: the latter is immanent in the thing caused; the former is transcendent over it. Partly to emphasize this difference, partly for historical reasons, and partly for reasons which will become evident in the sequel, we shall also designate properly formal causes by the term '*paradeigmatic cause*'.

Finally, it may be noticed that, in as far as a particular existential act does not coincide with existence simpliciter,<sup>1</sup> to that extent efficient causes, as here defined are not causes of a thing's existence tout court.

### **39. Properly material cause**

We have introduced above the notions of improper material and formal causes of things, in the sense of their material and formal constituents respectively.

But that improper material cause may itself have a proper cause. That is, there may be a cause of the matter underlying a certain subject or thing. In cases in which there is such a cause, we may speak of proper material cause of the thing in question, or of a cause of it in its material aspect; such a cause is, of course, no *cause of being*, but rather of the absolute material *for* being.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Art. 29.

**Chapter III**  
**(Articles 40-58)**

**ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF ABSTRACT**  
**THINGS VIS-À-VIS**  
**CONCRETE EXEMPLIFICATION**

#### 40. Ontological predication

That a certain appropriate metaphysical subject, a certain appropriate basic object, exhibits a certain form of being, is the outward projection or manifestation of a simple fact.<sup>1</sup>

We call such exhibition ‘ontological predication’, in which the form of being is predicated of the subject in question.

Thus, a simple fact presents itself as an ontological predication.

#### 41. Simple facts with concrete things as subjects

It will be seen that there are only two kinds of simple fact.

One of them comprises simple facts with concrete things as subjects.

The notion of concreteness is here introduced for the first time. It will be sharpened technically in the sequel by the articulation of its systematic connections;<sup>2</sup> meanwhile we rely on an intuitive and natural grasp of it.<sup>3</sup>

It should be observed, that this notion is not considered at the outset as *essentially* involving spatiotemporal determinations – let alone as being *defined* by reference to existence in space and time.<sup>4</sup>

Simple facts with concrete things as subjects will be denominated ‘concrete simple facts’.

#### 42. Determination in being of concrete things

An exhibition of a certain form of being on the part of a concrete thing (and thus the former’s predication of it) is a determination of it in being.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Ch. II, Art. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. infra Ch. IV, Art. 64.

<sup>3</sup> Roughly, it coincides indeterminately with the notion of substantial particulars.

<sup>4</sup> Space and time are even inapposite at the level of abstractness appertaining to General Metaphysics.

Since particular being stands in need of metaphysical explanation,<sup>1</sup> that determination in being must have its metaphysical cause(s).

Now Being is formal, and is existential.

What ultimately determines concrete things in formal being with respect to *one* single form of being,<sup>2</sup> is a *determinant*.

Thus, to each determinant there corresponds<sup>3</sup> only one form of being, namely that form of being in respect of which concrete things are determined, when they are determined by the determinant in question. Contrariwise with concrete things. A concrete thing exhibits more than one form of being: this is a fundamental, essential feature of concrete thinghood.

[Of course, such multiple exhibition must of necessity conform to certain metaphysical principles governing the determination in being of concrete things: and further physical principles are also applicable (by way of natural necessity) to actually existing concrete things. But these circumstances are not to the point here].

#### **43. Exemplification**

The determination in formal being of a concrete thing by a determinant (which constitutes the fact that the said concrete thing exhibits the corresponding form of being), is an *exemplification* of the determinant by the concrete thing.

#### **44. Determinants as paradeigmatic causes**

Consider again simple facts with concrete things as subjects. The primary appearance of these facts consists in their subjects exhibiting various forms of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Ch. II, Art. 37; and further remarks, though on a different occasion, infra Ch. V, Art 67 (and also Art. 66).

<sup>2</sup> Concerning the peculiar unity of forms of being cf. infra Ch. VI Art. 88, and the cross-reference there given. For the absence of truth-functional composition with respect to forms of being, cf. supra Ch. I, Art. 8.

<sup>3</sup> The nature of this correspondence will be investigated presently. Cf. infra Art. 44ff.

being. That such a subject exhibits one such form is grounded on its being determined, as regards formal being, by the corresponding determinant. This is the first result of the analysis of a simple fact.

The question now is posed: What is the kind of ground to which determinants, as metaphysical reasons of the circumstances that concrete things exhibit the respective forms of being, belong?

Determinants are the causes of the forms of being exhibited by the subjects; or the causes of the corresponding facts (i.e. that these subjects exhibit these forms), in so far as they exhibit *these* forms and not others. Determinants, therefore, *are paradeigmatic causes<sup>1</sup> of the being of concrete things.*

#### **45. Determinants exhibiting forms of being**

Paradeigmatic causes are contrasted with efficient causes. They are also non-immanently formal causes. But such a formal-paradeigmatic cause cannot cause but what it itself already has. Thus the determinant must have, in some manner, the caused form of being which is immanent in the determined concrete things.

That a formal-paradeigmatic cause causes what it itself possesses is evident from the fact that it is the ground of, and thus metaphysically explains, the exhibition of the corresponding form of being on the part of the concrete things which exhibit it, in so far as the referred exhibition is of this form and not of another; i.e. it is the ground of the occurrence of the correlative form of being in the World of concreteness among all other occurring forms of being. This form, as immanent in concreteness, cannot be unaccounted; for then it would be a first principle. And it cannot be accounted as immanent, in its specific nature or being-determination, in concrete things, except by its being exhibited by the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Ch. II, Art. 38.

corresponding paradeigmatic cause: this is the role, in so far as concrete manifestation of exemplification is concerned, of the paradeigmatic causes.

Further, the paradeigmatic cause must exhibit the said form of being in *the actual mode*. For, in general, a cause qua cause must be actual; that is, it cannot have its power of causation founded in anything but an actuality. For an *active*<sup>1</sup> potency possessed by a certain subject cannot be strictly due to the subject's possession of another such potency, except in the sense that the possession of the former is a consequence of the possession of the latter. Ultimately, the latter must also be founded on some part or aspect of the subject's *actual* constitution.

Besides, it will be shown that determinants, in everything concerning their connections with concrete things, are actual. More than this, no potentiality (non-actualized potentiality) pertains to the realm of determinants.<sup>2</sup> Hence, their exhibition of forms of being cannot be but actual.

Evidently, a determinant exhibits the form of being which it causes in concrete things, in a fundamentally different manner from that in which the determined concrete things exhibit the same form as caused. The formal being of determinants, or their being-something, does indeed coincide with the formal being of the concrete things which are determined by it, in so far as they are so determined.<sup>3</sup> But their existential being is of a totally different type:<sup>4</sup> let us express this basic differentiation of type by saying that the being of determinants is primary, and that of concrete things secondary – or that determinants are *primarily*, what the concrete things determined by them are *secondarily*.

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<sup>1</sup> We are not speaking, of course, of material or passive potentialities. Though the principle holds good even for these, with the exception, which is really a limiting case, of absolutely first matter.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *infra* Art. 53.

<sup>3</sup> There is an important qualification, relating to the *perfection* of being, which should be clearly made here. But it, together with the doctrine of perfection on which it depends, does not form proper part of the object of the present dissertation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. I, Art. 28.

#### 46. Is the subsistence of determinants proper existence?

We have defined the formal being of determinants. But what of their subsistence?

That determinants have, after some fashion or other, formal being at all, that they are somehow associated with forms of being, manifests that they are entities.<sup>1</sup> But are they (proper) things?<sup>2</sup> For an affirmative answer to be given, it would be required that they have their subsistence consisting just in their exhibiting their *forma essendi*.

And this is the natural and correct answer. But its “evidence” is usually obscured by the consideration that this would pose self-subsisting determinants, independent in their being from concrete things.

The consideration discerns correctly; only the required positing poses nothing but what there really is.

#### 47. Dependence and Independence in being

Concrete things depend *directly* for their formal being on determinants as on paradigmatic causes. And since they have, *qua* things, their subsistence consisting in their exhibiting their Total Form, they also depend indirectly on determinants for their existential being and existence.<sup>3</sup>

Determinants, on the other hand, are completely *independent* from concrete things in their formal being. Indeed, they cause paradigmatically concrete things to have the same formal being with them: they give derivatively to concrete things their formal being. Thus, this independence is but the reverse side, as it were, of the before-mentioned reverse dependence.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra* Ch. II, Art. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Ch. II, Art. 34.

<sup>3</sup> The question of the *direct*, ultimate dependence of their existential being and existence is left open, and will not be considered in this dissertation.



Concrete things depend for their formal being on their exemplifying determinants; indeed, they have the formal being they have as a result of their being determined accordingly by the corresponding determinants. On the contrary determinants are completely independent (for their formal being) of their determining concrete thing, as much as of the concrete things themselves.

But is the *subsistence* of determinants equally completely independent from the determined concrete things and their tying connection with them? We hold, and shall argue, that it is.

#### **48. Independent subsistence of determinants**

There may be unexemplified determinants, i.e. determinants unexemplified in the actual concrete World in its totality.

This is self-evident. But it can also be proven as follows.

Consider any exemplified determinant. Since that there are actual concrete things who present themselves under a certain (real<sup>1</sup>) form of being is contingent<sup>2</sup>, that the determinant in question is, as supposed, exemplified is similarly contingent. Consequently it could be non-exemplified. But then consider the actual World being different from what it is, in that the said determinant is no longer ever exemplified in it, and everything else that this main difference necessitates metaphysically. The resulting World is a possible one; for the main substitution is possible, and everything which is necessitated by something possible cannot be impossible in itself, or incompatible with anything else also necessitated by that same something, or incompatible with that from which it follows, or with anything with which that from which it follows is compatible.

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<sup>1</sup> This, in what it involves, must be emphasized. (Cf. supra Ch. I, Art. 8). Thus, there is no place for objection in terms of, say, such counterexamples as the 'character' of being-P-or-non-P, and the like.

<sup>2</sup> Here metaphysical modality is indeterminately meant, in simple contrast to merely physical (or natural) modalities.

Now, that the resulting World is possible means that it could be actual. But if it were actual, there would subsist a determinant (the one actually exemplified, as things are) unexemplified in it. Therefore, the actuality of a World is not inconsistent with the subsistence of a determinant which is unexemplified in it; which means that whichever was the possible World which as a matter of fact was going to be actualized in each conceived case, there could have been determinants unexemplified in it. And, obviously, this applies, then, to that among the possible Worlds, which happened as a matter of course to be actualized, that is, which is the actual World. Therefore there may be determinants unexemplified in the actual World in its totality. And any determinant might have been unexemplified.

But if this is so, then determinants cannot have their subsistence dependent in any way on exemplification; for their subsistence is compatible with their nonexemplification, actual or possible. Thus, they are completely independent, in their subsistence, from concrete things and their connections with them.

#### **49. Impossibility of necessary exemplification of all determinants**

In the above argument, it was presupposed that that there are concrete things exhibiting a certain (real) form of being, is contingent; that is, that it is contingent in itself, whether a certain determinant is exemplified or not. Naturally, this is consistent with the possibility of all determinants being, as a matter of fact, exemplified in this (the actual) concrete World – or in any possible World, for that matter.<sup>1</sup>

One may conceivably object to such a presupposition.

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<sup>1</sup> The idea of applying exemplification, actual and possible, to *any* possible World, leads to some dialectical intricacies. Yet, we are content here with remarking, that an actual exemplification in a possible concrete World as possible, really is an exemplification which would have been actual strictly and correctly speaking, if the possible World in question were actualized in place of the actual one. And similarly with possibilities in possible concrete Worlds. Modalities of being apply to possible concrete Worlds *hypothetically*.

But it can be shown, in reply, that it is impossible that all determinants must of *intrinsic necessity* be exemplified (in this actual or in any possible concrete World). To this end, it is enough to be proven that it is impossible that the exemplification of any determinant necessitates the exemplification (in the same World) of all others; since if it fails to do so, and fails *necessarily*, i.e. as a result of the structure and nature of the determinants themselves,<sup>1</sup> then the former impossibility follows as well.

Now it is the case that the impossibility of any one determinant's exemplification necessitating the exemplification of all other determinants can be proven, given some elementary conditions necessarily satisfied by the structure system of determinants. For example this system comprises essentially both determinable and determinate determinants. Let, then, P-ness be a determinable determinant proximately superordinated over the absolutely<sup>2</sup> determinate determinants P'-ness and P''-ness. And let Q-ness be any other determinant of whatever order and kind. Now *either* the exemplification of Q-ness does not necessitate the exemplification of any one of the determinants P-ness, P'-ness and P''-ness; and then the imagined objection is immediately disposed of. *Or* the exemplification of Q-ness necessitates the exemplification of some one at least of the three named determinants. But in such a case, still it is not possible for it to necessitate the exemplification of all three of them directly or indirectly.<sup>3</sup> Hence

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<sup>1</sup> The structure and nature of determinants, in other words, is such as *not* to require (and thus render intrinsically necessary) the exemplification of all determinants in the concrete World; hence such as to preclude their *intrinsically necessary* co-exemplification.

<sup>2</sup> The 'absolutely' is not essential. Any determinates, whose difference in being is such that, in view of the laws of Exemplification, nothing can co-exemplify them, would do.

<sup>3</sup> Indirect necessitation; Necessitating the exemplification of a determinable by necessitating the exemplification of a determinate under it.

there would remain at least one of the two absolutely determinate determinants whose exemplification would be unnecessitated.<sup>1</sup>

But, to be sure, the metaphysical law of incompatibility in determinateness implicitly invoked in the above argument, precludes the exemplification of both P'-ness and P''-ness by *the same concrete thing*; so that, one may object, nothing prevents the exemplification of Q-ness from necessitating the exemplification of P'-ness by one concrete thing, *and* the exemplification of P''-ness by *another* concrete thing.

To which the answer should be that the exemplification of a (monadic) determinant by a certain concrete thing (or of a relational determinant, if there are such things,<sup>2</sup> by an appropriate multiple of concrete things<sup>3</sup>), being in itself in no way and degree the work of the determinants as such and their system, cannot necessitate, with a necessity having its ground in that system and thus properly metaphysical, the exemplification of another (or even the same) monadic determinant by *another* concrete thing (or of another – or the same – relational determinant by another multiplicity of concrete things). Such necessitation cannot, thus, be due to the determinants as such, and therefore, cannot be necessary in the required sense.

Finally, an objector may concede that it is not the case that a necessity of exemplification of all determinants in the concrete World *can* be grounded on the determinants as such and their system; and yet contend that still the necessity is real though grounded on a different principle.

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<sup>1</sup> I say 'at least', because there could be that, in the envisaged case, the exemplification of both P'-ness and P''-ness is not necessitated by the exemplification of Q-ness, except in an indeterminate way, by the necessitation of the exemplification of P-ness. (Indeterminate necessitation differs, of course, from indirect necessitation).

<sup>2</sup> For the negative view, cf. *infra*, Ch. IV, Arts. 62 and 63.

<sup>3</sup> Or rather: by various concrete things jointly or in common. (To avoid the linguistic appearance of postulating classes or ordered sets – as objects).

In replying, we do not ask what this principle is. We only observe that intrinsic necessity alone is relevant here. For our real object was to prove that the subsistence of determinants does not *consist* in their exemplification. And what the argument required as premise was that *in so far as determinants are concerned*, any one of them could be unexemplified without ceasing to be (a determinant). Now to maintain that, nonetheless, determinants have to be exemplified in their totality by a necessity extrinsic to them, does nothing to disprove the former claims, if only because it is not even incompatible with them: determinants subsist in themselves, *not* having their subsistence *consisting* in their exemplification; and yet they are necessarily exemplified because so-and-so (the alleged principle of that necessary exemplification); these claims are perfectly compatible.

And further, besides, we just mean metaphysical modality by ‘modality grounded on determinants as such’.<sup>1</sup> So that the necessity extrinsic to determinants contended by the objector would not be a metaphysical one – and it was with such a one, that we were exclusively occupied in the above argument.

#### **50. The subsistence of determinants is distinct from their exemplifiability**

The subsistence of determinants is independent of their exemplification.

Still, one may attempt to construe their subsistence as consisting in their *exemplifiability*, in order to avoid admitting that it consists precisely in their exhibiting the form of being with which they are respectively associated.

It is, of course, true that to be a determinant *entails* to be exemplifiable, and, granted that we understand by exemplification paradigmatic causation, the converse is also true. But, naturally, this does not mean that to be a determinant *is* to be exemplifiable. Identity in being is not secured by biconditionality – even if the biconditionality concerned is really ontological and not merely formal-logical (or informal-logical for that matter).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. mainly Ch. I, Art. 26, and also the development to follow in this chapter, esp. Arts. 53 and 57.

In order to be shown that the subsistence of determinants *cannot* consist in their exemplifiability, the following may be observed.

The totality of its formal constitution, and part at least of the not-merely-physical Order (and corresponding laws embodying this Order) of the World of concreteness, is due to the World of determinants;<sup>1</sup> and thus the system of the (not merely physical) modalities specifically applying to it, is partly, at least, grounded (as regards its specific nature) in the latter World, just as its total formal being. But the specific nature of modality applicable to a certain realm, and the Laws and Order to which this modality is related, are grounded on the *actuality* of a higher, transcendent realm, i.e. on a transcendent realm in so far as it is actual.<sup>2</sup>

Now the required actuality of this transcendent realm cannot contain any essential reference, equally in respect of subsistence as of associated formal being, to the transcended realm; for the ground of the Order and Form of a certain realm, *must subsist and be-something in order to be able to act as ground*; but what grounds, in so far as it grounds, cannot depend in anyway either in its grounding function, or in respect of anything which is presupposed by its grounding function, on what is grounded, in so far as it is grounded, either as regards its being grounded, or in respect of anything which its being grounded presupposes; consequently, the subsistence and formal being of determinants, in so far as they are presupposed by the latter's determining function – which determining function comprises both paradigmatic causation and establishment of that part of the order prevailing in the World of concreteness which is due to them, and which is denominated properly metaphysical<sup>3</sup> – cannot depend in any way on the World of concreteness, either in the latter's manifestation of the Order and form due to determinants, or

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<sup>1</sup> This is evident, regarding also its latter part. Consider for example the necessary universality of the circumstance that everything red is coloured. But, on the other hand, this is a *merely hypothetical* example: it is not meant to affirm that there are determinants corresponding to colour character.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Ch. I, Art. 26.

<sup>3</sup> *If* it is not the whole of that order which, mediately or directly, is due to them.

in its capacity of such manifestation (i.e. in its material aspect), in so far as both the manifestation and the capability of manifesting it, are presupposed by its being constituted in the relevant ways as grounded on the World of determinants.

In conclusion, then, it is seen that the prior in, and by, nature grounding realm must (a) be actual, and (b) be independent of the posterior, grounded realm, both in respect of subsistence and of associated formal being.

And in our case, determinants, as (partial, at least) ground of the concrete World's Order and absolute ground of the latter's formal being, must subsist and be associated with forms of being, (a) actually, and (b) independently of their exemplification.

This having been established, we observe that the proposed identification of the subsistence of determinants with their exemplifiability can be refuted. For there are two ways of conceiving this identification, both leading to results either in themselves absurd, or contradicting our established results.

- (i) Either the exemplifiability is conceived as constituting the potential subsistence of determinants, their actual subsistence being considered as consisting in their actual exemplification. Which conflicts with their proven actuality in subsistence irrespective of their actual exemplification.
- (ii) Or their exemplifiability is construed as identical with their actual subsistence. In which case, firstly, we have the cardinal absurdity of confounding the distinction between actual and potential, and of having to maintain that an actuality as such consists in a potentiality as such;<sup>1</sup> secondly,

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<sup>1</sup> Which is a quasi-converse of the correct doctrine, that potentiality must be grounded on an actuality. Cf. supra Art. 45, n. 1 [p. 87] and corresponding text.

But it may be said that the nature of some actual possessions seems to consist in a certain potentiality or capability; for instance, skills, powers, abilities, liabilities, opportunities, etc., may be mentioned.

To which the answer is that one important consequence of the doctrine of distinct modes of being, in each one of which something may act towards *one and the same* form of being, is that there is, on such account, no need to postulate two fundamentally different kinds of real

questions are naturally posed like: What then of the actual exemplification of determinants vis-à-vis their actual subsistence? Is it an augmented actuality? or: What of their potential subsistence (if such is recognized<sup>1</sup>)? Is it an enfeebled and emasculated possibility of exemplification? And thirdly, of course, there would still be, even on a construal of the criticized proposal of identification such as the present, an indirect, but no less essential, dependence of the subsistence of determinants on the concrete World.

The above refutation<sup>2</sup> is but the dialectical aspect of the self-evident truth<sup>3</sup> that possibility of exemplification presupposes metaphysically the prior subsistence of that which possesses the said possibility, and thus, a fortiori, cannot be identical with it, even though the very nature of the subsistent object in question entails its exemplifiability.

## 51. Determinants exist as (strict) things

Both the subsistence and the formal being of determinants were proven to be completely independent of exemplification and concreteness.

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properties, namely proper properties and dispositional ones. Roughly, *having a dispositional property is acting potentially towards that which the dispositional property is a disposition of or for or to* (the “object” of the disposition). Evidently, various further qualifications should have to be imposed on the said potential act in each general type of case, in order to account for the precise nature of the alleged, in each case, kind of dispositional property. But the validity of the principle is evident. To say that a dispositional property is actually had (as actually as a proper property actually had – the difference being accounted by the radical difference in kind of the properties had), is, in effect, to say that a potential having is an *actually* potential having; which amounts to a distorted apprehension of the nature of ontological modalities, and also a confusion between the notions of *real* and *actual*.

<sup>1</sup> On our part, we maintain only an implicit (latent) subsistence of a determinate in its determinable, as in its absolute cause. But for this, cf. *infra* Ch. VI.

<sup>2</sup> Which, by the way, constitutes also a second proof of the independence in subsistence of determinants from their concrete exemplification.

<sup>3</sup> Itself an instance of the general principle that a particular potency presupposes something having or possessing the potency, whose objecthood and total being cannot consist in, or even be exhausted by, its possession of the mere potency as such. First matter can be treated, conformably to this principle, in a number of ways, but I shall not enter into such disquisition here.



It is, then, intuitively evident that their subsistence consists precisely in their exhibiting the form of being which they do exhibit, i.e. that their subsistence is proper existence.

Thus determinants are not only entities, but proper individuals, and things. We are then entitled to grant them the appellation 'abstract things', in order to indicate both their similarity and their dissimilarity in nature to concrete things respectively.

## 52. Abstract simple facts

And here we recognize the only other kind of simple fact,<sup>1</sup> beside that of concrete simple facts. The new kind is that of abstract simple facts, i.e. simple facts with abstract things as subjects.

One such fact presents itself (in first appearance) as the exhibition of a certain single form of being on the part of a certain abstract thing.

This exhibition, this existential act towards the corresponding form of being, is fundamentally different from the exhibition of even the same form of being by a concrete thing. Hence we recognize the two *types of the act of being*<sup>2</sup> answering the two categories of proper beings, i.e. of things.

Again, the exhibition considered is, if the fact is seen, as it were, from its other terminus, an ontological predication in which the involved form of being is predicated of the abstract thing in question.

Accordingly, here we have the second kind of proper *predication*.<sup>3</sup>

## 53. Absence of Potentiality form the world of Determinants

It was seen in the course of the preceding discussion that the subsistence as well as the formal being of determinants is in a certain sense immune from

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Art. 41.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra Ch. I, Art. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. supra Art. 40.

potentiality, in so far as they are the ground of the corresponding Order and of the total formal constitution of the World of concreteness.

The last clause, obviously, restricts the said immunity in two ways:

- a) It is in so far as the World of determinants is a ground, in the relevant ways, of the concrete World that the immunity in question is proven of the former. This, in itself, leaves open the possibility that the former World also contains possibility, and thus modalities other than actuality, in other of its capacities. For example it might imaginably be the case that that World was the outcome of an activity of a still superior realm, exercised in shaping it through determination, in ways analogous to those in which it, on its part, shapes the concrete World.
- b) The potentiality denied of the World of determinants is in the sense of the term previously delineated,<sup>1</sup> which, as employed hitherto, is considered as essentially involving possibility of actualization and *non-actualization*. There may still be some other sense of possibility which applies to determinants as such. (We shall recognize such a sense of improper potentiality, subsequently, in the necessary actualization of the potentialities intrinsically inhering in the determinable determinants).

The second (b) point will become clear in the treatment of the nature and structure of determinants below.<sup>2</sup>

The first (a) restriction can already be removed. For it is evident that nothing potential at all, in the required, proper sense, occurs in the World of determinants as such (and not only in so far as they ground in the relevant ways the World of concreteness) as regards the forms of being with which they are associated. And since their subsistence consists in their just having these forms of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Ch. I, Arts. 19-20. Of course that quasi-general sense must be understood as appropriately specified by the particular way in which modalities may pertain to the World in question.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. especially infra Ch. VI, Art. 87.

being, neither can anything potential occur in that World, even as regards the subsistence of determinants.<sup>1</sup>

In the previous paragraph the first restriction aforementioned as just raised, is seen not to be applicable to the realm in question. But the *reason* for which nothing but actuality pervades the said World, is that it is in no way constituted in its ramification by the determining function of a realm higher than it:<sup>2</sup> the World of determinants includes in itself the principle of its being; in which the major and profound difference from the concrete World is to be found. But that this is so, will be seen clearly in the investigation concerning the nature and structure of determinants.

#### 54. Immutability of Determinants

From the absence of any (proper) potentiality from the World of Determinants, their *immutability* can be deduced.

For change towards a certain situation or state on the part of a given subject involves necessarily both that initially the subject is not actually in the terminus-state, and that nonetheless it has the capacity to be in it, i.e. that it is potentially in it. And the situation or state mentioned, may either refer to a form of being or to subsistence, so that change concerned may be either change of character (proper change) or change in respect of subsistence (coming to be and passing away).

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<sup>1</sup> It is even *prima facie* apparent that there cannot be any valid and real distinction between an actually subsisting determinant and one merely potentially subsisting, in a way analogous to the corresponding distinction in case of facts and even of concrete things. For a possible fact is constituted by a possible exemplification of a determinant; and a possible concrete thing is also defined by a possible joint exemplification of all determinants involved in a (possible) complete determination; but in both cases the subsistence of the determinants concerned clearly appears to be required (and is taken for granted) just as much as in the case of actual facts and existing concrete things. The *actual subsistence* of determinants is required to account for both the actuality and the possibility of concrete things and corresponding facts.

<sup>2</sup> For the bearing of this on the explained circumstance, cf. *supra* Ch. I, Art. 26.

Thus, absolute absence of potentiality entails impossibility of change, i.e. immutability.

### 55. Time and Eternity as modalities of Being

Besides modalities of being properly so called, there are also modalities of the act in being *in respect of time and eternity*.<sup>1</sup>

Time and eternity, and everything which directly falls under them, are not in themselves determinant s or forms of being, but modes – or, in a certain sense, conditions – of exemplification of such proper determinants, or, in general, of the exhibition of such forms of being on the part of appropriate subjects.<sup>2</sup>

Eternity has no parts at all; and it is not *boundary* of parts either. It is indivisible, but not in the way in which boundaries of parts, as such, are indivisible. Thus, what has being in eternity (i.e. is in the mode of eternity), does not have being (formal or existential) *piecemeal or part after part*. We may say metaphorically that it has all its being all at once.

Time has (temporal) parts. And these parts are related in a series of (temporal) priority and posteriority – complete or partial, the second in the case of partial overlapping –. Time is (continuously) divisible, a continuous magnitude. Consequently, what has being in time (i.e. is in the mode of temporality), does have being (formal or existential) *piecemeal or part after part*. It *lasts*.

An immediate consequence of the above is that, in the case of objects subsisting in time, their duration, or rather their enduring, must be ontologically accountable; thus, a cause distinct in essence is required, besides the

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<sup>1</sup> Proper modalities answer to the question: How? Temporal modalities to the question: When? Both in respect of being.

<sup>2</sup> A consequence of which is that the truer form of the fact that a certain concrete thing, a, has a certain property, P, at a certain time, t, is, schematically put, “a is<sub>t</sub> P” (or “t(a is P)”) rather than “a is P and a is (at) t”. Cf. also *infra* Ch. IV, Art. 62.

paradeigmatic and the (strictly) efficient ones: the cause of the object's *continuation* or *perseverance* in being.

A (strict) *moment* or *instant* of time is no proper part of time. There is no duration associated with it. It is rather a boundary of such periods or time-durations. Consequently, something momentary or instantaneous does not last; does not as such subsist piecemeal or part after part. Yet it subsists *in time*, and not in eternity, since the moment in which it subsists or occurs is connected with proper parts, and other boundaries, of time.<sup>1</sup>

## 56. Eternity of determinants

Evidently change implies subsistence in time of that which changes. But mere lack of change does not in itself entail eternity. For accidental changelessness (unchanged perseverance of an object through time, as a matter of course) is compatible with temporal subsistence. In such a case the object *stands* (still) in time – not in eternity: time does measure and comprehend its unaltered subsistence.

The *possibility* of change requires subsistence in time. And now the converse is also true: temporal being entails *changeableness*. What *cannot* change does not subsist in time at all: it must be eternal.

[The impossibility involved must, of course, be metaphysical; indeed an intrinsic one proceeding from the nature itself of the objects in question].

But what was above<sup>2</sup> denied of determinants is not merely change, but the possibility itself of change. Therefore determinants cannot subsist in time: they are eternal.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The indicated ambivalence of the instant makes clear the point of the metaphor that eternity is *like* an instant comprising the whole of time.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. supra Art. 54.

<sup>3</sup> That abstract individuals are eternal for the stated reasons does not eo ipso imply that concrete things must of intrinsic necessity be in time. What one is justified in asserting is that if in the nature of concreteness possibility of change is included, then concrete things must subsist in time. But such possibility will be found not to be really required in an adequate definition of concrete

**57. Necessity of Abstract Things as against the contingent actuality of concrete things. Division of the latter in essential and incidental being.**

We have acknowledged ontological necessity as a mode of the act of being, as contrasted with propositional or logical necessity.<sup>1</sup>

It has also been shown<sup>2</sup> that no (proper) potentiality pertains to the realm of determinants: there is only actuality to be found there.

And pure actuality is tantamount to (ontological) necessity.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, everything in the World of determinants is necessary.

This ontological necessity, primarily expressed as necessary mode of exhibition of forms of being on the part of abstract things, has a twofold further valid logical manifestation, as regards each and every determinant:<sup>4</sup>

- i) The (total) Form of an abstract thing is necessarily one certain (that is, a single) form of being – even though a form of being can have as constituent element another form of being.<sup>5</sup> It is not possible that the same abstract thing should have a Form however slightly different from the Form it actually has: for in such a case, imagined to be realized per impossible, there would be not

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things as such. (Cf. especially *infra* Ch. IV, Art. 64). But the important point in this connection is that, even though concreteness does not ultimately and essentially involve temporality in existence, yet it does not exclude it either. Thus, what *is* involved essentially in concreteness is the intrinsic possibility of temporal existence, and hence, if I may put it so, the intrinsic possibility of possibility of change. Consequently, even if a World of eternal concreteness was actually realized (and, of course, we are not here concerned with whether this is possible simpliciter, for any reasons other than the nature of abstract things as such), then that the concrete things would be eternal would *not* have been necessary. In sharp contrast with determinants, which could not but be eternal, given their nature.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. mainly *supra* Ch. I, Arts. 19 and 20.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Art. 53.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *supra* Ch. I, Art. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Of course, it will not be adequate to invoke merely that it is necessary that what is such-and-such, qua such-and-such, is such-and-such (that is, that it is necessary that A, qua A, is A). For this necessity holds absolutely universally. (Even for concrete things).

<sup>5</sup> For the peculiar unity of forms of being cf. *infra* Ch. VI, Art. 88, and references there given.

numerically the same abstract thing any more; the thing is unqualifiedly bound to its Form in the latter's absolute entirety. Thus, in determinants, any whatsoever difference in (formal) being entails otherness in respect of subject and vice versa.

- ii) The number and nature of determinants are necessarily determined, in a way that will be established in the sequel.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, even the matter of a certain determinant could not but assume as its Form one from a corresponding limited and pre-determined, closed system or family of forms of being. And besides, as will also be shown,<sup>2</sup> the said matter, not only *may*, but also *must* assume the one or the other of the forms in question.

Necessary acts of being *cannot* be found in concreteness; for there is only *contingent actuality* in its World. Concrete things fail to exhibit necessarily forms of being. Thus, evidently, they also do not satisfy either one of the two conditions (i) and (ii) above.

The actual, though non-necessary, exhibition of forms of being on the part of concrete things may yet be either *essential* or *incidental*.<sup>3</sup>

It is incidental, if it is possible<sup>4</sup> that the same numerically subject should not display the corresponding form of being. Otherwise it is essential.

It is thus seen that, contrary to (i)-(ii) above:

i') Difference in respect of being does not eo ipso entail otherness in respect of subject in the case of concrete things. This fits well with the circumstance that,

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<sup>1</sup> This claim is in fact an immediate consequence of the doctrine to be propounded, concerning determination in determinants, i.e. the derivation of the determinates out of their determinable. Cf. *infra* Ch. VI. Besides, that claim in itself constitutes a sense in which necessity reigns in the domain considered.

<sup>2</sup> This again follows immediately upon the doctrine referred to in the preceding note.

<sup>3</sup> To be distinguished, of course, from "accidental".

<sup>4</sup> That is, nothing hinders that etc., in so far as the determinants and the Laws of Exemplification are concerned, provided, of course, that the necessary adjustments in the concrete World are also made.

necessarily, concrete things are capable of exhibiting more than one forms of being.

ii') The matter of a concrete thing, even as regards essential predication, could assume any set of forms of being corresponding to a consistently co-exemplifiable number of determinants. There is no limited and definite number of (total) Forms or complete determinations, all of which belong to a homogeneous family, and among which one may be assumed by the matter in question, thereby defining the total being of the resulting concrete thing in absolutely every respect.<sup>1</sup> And if there is no such set of Forms, satisfying the above conditions, then there cannot be any talk of a necessity incumbent on that matter to assume one or other of the members of such family. Indeed, even if the extra conditions are removed, and the said matter is considered vis-à-vis the set of groups of determinants compatible in co-exemplification, still it is not the case that it *must* assume any one of those groups, in so far as the determinants as such, the laws governing exemplification and the nature of matter as such (i.e. as receptacle of the determinants' concrete manifestations) are concerned.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The required availability of a limited and definite, predetermined set of Forms is qualified by the requirement of (a) its forming a homogeneous family, and (b) of its being such as the assumption of any of its members by the matter in question to define *entirely* the being of the resulting thing; because it could be maintained that, on the supposition of a finite number of determinants (which we share), there *is* a definite number of compatible sets of determinations and thus of Forms. Conditions (a) and (b) are evidently satisfied if the realm in question is that of abstract things. Contrariwise with concreteness. In this case, condition (b) is not satisfied because there are aspects in the being of concrete things which cannot be accounted solely in terms of their determination by determinants as such. Such aspects relate to the parameters of *perfection* in being (hinted at supra Art. 45, n. 3 [p. 87]) or of *degree* and *extent* of exhibition of being (cf. infra, Ch. IV, Art. 62), and must be referred to causes other than the determinants themselves.

<sup>2</sup> In spite of these factors, the matter could remain unformed, if it was not for the operation of a distinct principle, akin to an efficient cause, which, by establishing the appropriate connection between matter and determinants (by bringing them, as it were, together), renders possible for the eternally present paradeigmatic causality of the latter to be concretely exercised and materialized.



We see, then, various differences in which the basic difference,<sup>1</sup> with respect to the mode of being, between the concrete and the abstract realms, expresses itself.

The following points may be noted in the present connection:

A) That a subject is essentially so-and-so does not mean that there is something necessarily so-and-so, or that it (or its matter) is necessarily so-and-so; neither that it is necessary that there should be something so-and-so, or that is necessary that it (or its matter) is so-and-so. It only means that it could not be the same numerically thing as it is, if it lacked the characters essentially attached to it.

B) The above abstract formulations would become more easily grasped, if we were treating of concrete things existing in time. For then, it could be said that among the properties of a concrete thing, those are essentially attached to it, which the thing in question cannot not have at any time of its existence, whereas it may lack any of those incidentally applying to it at any time. The concrete thing can change (that is, properly change, with the implication that it remains the same numerically) with regard to the latter; it can change only in the sense of being generated or destroyed, in respect to the former.

C) The defined sense of essential exhibition is, of course, quite different from that which amounts to *universal, necessary and per se* connection between two notions, at one level, or two natures, at another, and of the properties of the objects which fall under them (the former), or have and possess them (the latter).

D) Similarly, the defined sense of incidentality is different from the accidentality pertaining to the modes of being. The present incidentality is a particular modality of the actual being of concrete things, whereas accidentality permeates concrete actuality completely.

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<sup>1</sup> Which, in one word, is that the actuality of concreteness is contingent, whereas the actuality of abstract things is necessary.

**58. Determinants transcend both essential and incidental Being**

It is a simple consequence of what has been said in the preceding article that neither essential, nor of course, incidental being belongs to abstract things – even in the abstract senses of ‘essential’ and ‘incidental’ defined without reference to time.

Thus, we may say, the Being of determinants transcends the essential-incidental distinctions, in the same way as their necessary actuality transcends the contingent actuality of concrete things.

[Obviously, on the other hand, one may employ a broad sense of ‘essential’, in which, again, individuals *in their individuality*<sup>1</sup> are essentially this or that, but that they are so is taken now to mean that they are what they are either necessarily or, if accidentally, then essentially in strict sense].

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<sup>1</sup> Thus still differentiating this broad sense from the one indicated in (C) above. (Art. 57)

**Chapter IV**  
**(Articles 59-65)**

**CONCRETE THINGS AND CONNECTIONS**

### 59. Determinants are not Efficient Causes of Concrete Things

A metaphysically adequate theory of causality does not fall within the compass of the present dissertation, yet so much may be premised, as follows.

Abstract things are determinants, and thus paradigmatic causes of the formal being of concrete things.

But they cannot also be *efficient* causes of the being of concrete things; they determine concrete things with respect to the form of being which these latter exhibit, but not in their exhibiting it.

This can be shown as follows.

Suppose that determinants were the principles of not only the formal being of concrete things, but also of their existential being. Clearly then, a given determinant would not only determine concrete things exhibiting its form of being with regard to the displayed form of being, but also, in respect to their exhibiting it.

But now, with determinants, no potency may remain unrealized. Consequently, if the given determinant has the power to effect the existential act of concrete things, and indeed the one addressed to that precise form of being, whose primary bearer the determinant is, then it must eternally operate in this way.

It follows, that there would be no reason why one concrete thing should not exhibit a form of being exhibited by any other. And hence, each and every concrete thing would, on the examined supposition, display all forms of being<sup>1</sup> (i.e. the Forms of all determinants).

But such state of affairs is not only factually false; that is, it is not only that we are entitled to assume that concrete things, even considered in themselves and

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<sup>1</sup> Since it is impossible that no exemplification of determinants occurs and there is no Concrete World; which is the other theoretically available (but unreal) possibility.

apart from how they perceptually appear to us, are *not* indistinguishable in respect of formal being as exhibiting all available real properties; that state of affairs is also metaphysically impossible. For some of the determinants cannot be co-exemplified by one and the same concrete things.

The following objection, still, may be raised: precisely the last mentioned impossibility shows that the efficient causality of determinants can be consistently combined with the fact of difference in total formal being among various concrete things.

The objection is not valid.

For, in effect, it urges that determinants can only act as efficient causes upon objects capable of bearing their effects; that this is universally (and even, perhaps, necessarily) true with all efficient causality; and that it does not necessarily entail any limitation on the part of the efficient cause itself or of its (in our case) eternal exercise of its powers, since the “fault” lies with the recipient. It is not that the cause does not exercise its causality in such cases; it is rather that something is not able to subject itself to it.

Now what the objection contends is true<sup>1</sup> in the case of ordinary, particular efficient causes operating *within*, and *from* within, the concrete World. But far from true in the case of determinants. For they, in their totality, are eternally there, above<sup>2</sup> the concrete World – or, rather, above its first matter. How then could possibly some of them determine that matter (and here ‘determine’ has its full force<sup>3</sup>) *before*<sup>4</sup> or in advance of the others, in order for the latter to be able to be excused for selectively not exercising their power of determination in some cases (or rather for the exercise of their power failing to be effective) by reason of the validity of certain metaphysical laws prohibiting their co-exemplification by the

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<sup>1</sup> That it is always so, stands in need of argument. But this is not the place to give it.

<sup>2</sup> Of course, nothing in the argument depends on this metaphorical use of ‘above’.

<sup>3</sup> That is, determine both in act and form of being.

<sup>4</sup> Not necessarily a temporal priority is meant; any metaphysical or other precedence, is allowed.

same concrete things together with some of the former, already effectively causally acting, determinants? Obviously first matter, as possessing the mere potentiality to assume forms of being, cannot in itself and as such include a principle of selectivity of determinants. Therefore, the above asked question manifests the absurdity of what the objection presupposes, namely that that which accompanies efficient causality in the experienced World, is an essential ingredient of its nature.<sup>1</sup>

More vividly patently absurd results would follow from the view that determinants are, as such, efficient causes of the concrete thing's being, on the supposition of a temporal concrete World. In this case, the (actual) concrete World should consist in a fixed number of changeless things,<sup>2</sup> remaining everlastingly identically the same, and absolutely similar in all their determinations. Their impossibility of change in such a case would further contradict the fact that concreteness in time entails at least possibility of change.

## 60. Instances and Inherence

A form of being *qua* being exhibited by a certain concrete thing constitutes an instance *of* the corresponding abstract thing *in* the concrete thing involved.

An instance is not a form of being simpliciter; it is constituted by a form of being *qua* subsisting, after its proper fashion, in a concrete thing. This manner of subsistence is *inherence*.

Instances can be conceived as entities. For they clearly satisfy the relevant condition, namely that they be somehow correlated with forms of being:<sup>3</sup> each one of them is indeed correlated with the form of being exhibited by the concrete thing

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<sup>1</sup> Empiricist objections to metaphysical doctrines commit this mistake not rarely.

<sup>2</sup> Even their plurality could be questioned. But the doctrinal solution to this problem can only be given after the establishment of the principium individuationis for concrete things.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 32.

as a result of the latter's determination in formal being by the corresponding determinant.

But though instances are, on that account, entities, they fail to be (proper) things. For their subsistence is their inherence in the concrete things in which they do inhere, and not their being connected with, or displaying after a fashion, the corresponding forms of being which are correlated with them.

Instances are not (proper and strict) individuals.<sup>1</sup> But they are "individuals", provided we define their numerical oneness as follows:

an instance is numerically one if it is "one-in-subject"<sup>2</sup> and one-in-formal-being;

'an instance is "one-in-subject"' means that it inheres in a (basic) object which is properly one-in-subject. (In our present case, in a numerically one concrete thing).

Instances are not (proper) beings; not even something-beings.<sup>3</sup>

[To be sure, there is a sense in which even instances are beings after a fashion; this sense would be conceived if we were to relax the requirements to be fulfilled by some item in order for it to be a being or a something-being in identifiable ways (restriction to formal being, to the exclusion of the concomitant act of being). But this would merely be to use a broad notion of a being covering both proper beings and mere entities].

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 33.

<sup>2</sup> The double inverted commas are put in order to distinguish the present use from the proper one. Cf. *loc.cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 30.

## 61. Auxiliary Clarifications

We shall proceed now to briefly provide the main outline of a doctrine of Categories of forms of being, and then of connection in general.<sup>1</sup>

And firstly for the former, it may be noted that a theory of *categories of being* supplies also, *eo ipso*, a theory of *categories of determinants*, since there is an essential one-to-one correspondence between determinants and forms of being (which, of course, does not hold in the case of concrete things and forms of being).

On the other hand, it is evident from what has been said, that *categories of (forms of) being* are *not categories of concrete things*, nor *categories of basic objects*; they are not even categories of beings (full and total beings), though they provide the categories of something-beings.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, it may be noticed en passant, there is a manifest confusion about this primal point in many modern interpretations of classical doctrines of categories.

## 62. Categories of (forms of) being

The commonsensical equivalent of 'forms of being' is 'properties'. Of course not any exhibition of property need be an exhibition of a form of being, since properties may be either totally unreal, or objectively (i.e. apart from a mind conceiving them) unreal, or real but unanalyzed; forms of being, on the other hand, are ex definitione objectively real and simple in a maximal way (falling short only of absolute oneness).<sup>3</sup>

Still, and in spite of the divergence noticed above, we may begin with an enumeration of the highest kinds of property, and then proceed to determine which of these pass the tests for a real category of forms of being.

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<sup>1</sup> These doctrines will be summarily expounded not because they strictly form part of our object in this dissertation, but simply because they shed appropriate light on various claims of mine, and also because they anticipate possible objections which cannot be treated individually here.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 30.

<sup>3</sup> The peculiar simplicity of forms of being will be established in the following two chapters. For example, cf. *infra*, Ch. VI, Art. 89.



Since there is no intrinsic and essential restriction imposed on the extent of concrete manifestation (after, of course, its proper *type*, as *concrete* manifestation) of forms of being as against their abstract one, it is didactically better to begin by classifying properties of concrete things, since it is they who are surely expected to overstep the limit; besides, they are prior in knowledge with respect to us, men and human minds.

Properties then, commonsensically meant, of concrete things as existing in space and time, are divided into the following highest simple kinds (there may also be some combinational quasi-kinds, not genuinely unmixed ones).

- A. Relational properties
- B. Non-relational properties, which include
  - a. qualities
  - b. quantitative properties (extensive and intensive)
  - c. spatial properties<sup>1</sup>
  - d. temporal properties
  - e. acts (actions and passions) either instantaneous (occurrences, events) or enduring and lasting (movements, activities, operations, events).

With regard to this classification, then, the following remarks are in place.

*ad (Ba)*. Here are also included the qualitative aspects of quantities or of essentially quantified items (quanta). For example, the triangularity of triangles or the five-ness of groups of five items.

Qualitative properties as such *may* correspond to forms of being. Real qualities *are* such forms of being.

*ad (Bb)*. Quantities are *not* forms of being. They measure either the *degree* of exhibition of a certain form of being on the part of various concrete subjects, or the

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<sup>1</sup> Here, nonrelational spatial and temporal properties are meant, like this place and that time, in the propositions 'this is in this place' and 'that happened at that time'. That there are such nonrelational spatial and temporal properties, *commonsensically* meant, is obvious.

*extent* which such exhibition occupies (wherever we have to do with space – or time – occupying concreteness), or the *number* of such distinct exhibitions.

[In this connection, it may be noted that the latter case does not really require the objective subsistence of classes. Classes are not (real) objects. They are rather mental products, or, better, essentially dependent on a mental operation: a class of objects is just the objects co-considered by a mind.

Of course it does make sense to say that there is a number of such-and-such objects, and further, this is sometimes true. Moreover, it makes sense, and is sometimes true, to say that the class of *X*'s numbers *K* members. And finally, for such statements to make sense and be, depending on circumstances, true, there must be some *objective* ground of their meaningfulness and occasional truth. Only all this does not really require the subsistence in extramental reality of a class as an object (over and above the objects involved as "members") which has a certain number of members. There are indeed objectively, say, seven *F*'s; there is a seven-fold manifestation of *F*-hood, again objectively; and there is the class of seven *F*'s as a mental construction based on the mentioned objective grounds].

Intensive quantities (degrees of manifestation) and extensive quantities (either extent or mathematical number) are not forms of being. Neither discrete nor continuous quantities are forms of being. Quantity<sup>1</sup> is a factor in concrete exemplification coming from a source different from abstract thinghood.

*ad (Bc)*. Space is almost a framework of exemplification rather than an exemplifiable determinant or form of being itself. It is also essentially quantified. Exemplifications and forms of being immanent in spatio-temporal concrete things *occupy* space.

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<sup>1</sup> We mean quantity as such, not in its qualitative aspect, concerning which we provided already a place in qualities. Cf. *supra*, *ad (Ba)*.

*ad (Bd)*. Time is a modality of exemplification.<sup>1</sup> Exemplifications of determinants or determinations of concrete things occur in time, for the cases considered. Thus, temporal properties, no less than spatial properties, do not correspond to forms of being.

*ad (Bc)*. To acts, active or passive, there may, if real, correspond forms of being. But an analysis of such forms will not be touched at all in the present disquisitions. We notice, *en passant*, that, of course, acts of concrete things of the kind envisaged here (i.e. existing in space and time), presuppose time even if they are instantaneous.

*ad (A)*. Relations holding among concrete things are *based* on other non-relational properties.<sup>2</sup> Thus, in general, they can be founded on:

a<sup>1</sup>) qualities (similarity – dissimilarity, and particular cases of these).

b<sup>1</sup>) quantities (equal-unequal, more and less, etc.).

c<sup>1</sup>) spatial (non-relational) properties (nearer in space, between in space, etc.).

d<sup>1</sup>) temporal (non-relational) properties (nearer, between in time, etc.).

e<sup>1</sup>) causal acts (cause-effect, generation, etc.).

Relations cannot subsist as such without being based on non-relational properties.<sup>3</sup> This establishes for them a certain non-fundamentality foreign to abstract things.

Besides, there can be no question of quantitative, spatial or temporal relations corresponding to forms of being, in view of what has been said above about quantities and spatial or temporal (non-relational) properties. And even in respect to the qualitatively and causally based relations, their non-fundamentality renders them dispensable in a theory of categories of forms of being. For that two

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Chapter III, Art. 55.

<sup>2</sup> A detailed proof of this falls outside the scope of the dissertation, just as, in general, an exposition of the complete doctrine of Relations.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1 above.

concrete things are, say, similar in a certain respect, is the same as that they both display a certain property; and that a certain concrete thing is, say, the cause of another concrete thing in a certain respect, is the same as that the former acts in a certain way and the latter suffers in a certain way.<sup>1</sup>

Various objections may indeed be urged against such a view concerning relations as the above roughly outlined. These objections cannot be examined and refuted here in detail. We only append the following remarks as an indication of our general way of answering some of them.

And firstly, temporal and spatial relations presuppose absolute space and time, not indeed necessarily in the sense of two subsistent entities or objects, but rather as systems of non-relational, (monadic) properties, on which the respective relational ones are founded.

Secondly, the directionality of relations (an allegedly cardinal point against our view) can be accounted by proper qualities or, in general, non-relational properties, inhering in the related term(s). Thus A's love towards B (or A's loving B) presupposes a certain feeling or emotion felt by A (which accounts for his being in a state of love), and a certain qualitative modification of A, or of that feeling or emotion of A – say, in the form of a mental (perceptual, intellectual and emotional) representation of B<sup>2</sup> – (which explains the direction of his love towards B).

Thirdly, there may be cases in which the above noticed directionality of relations cannot be explained (in any *natural* way) exclusively by the postulation of appropriate qualifications or, in general, non-relational modifications of, and in, the related term(s). In such cases, it is some or all of the obtaining concomitant *circumstances* in their complete totality (as far as relevant circumstances, of course, are concerned) which explain the directionality of the relation involved. Thus, for

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<sup>1</sup> Since relations among concrete things is a kind of connection in general, see also the following article.

<sup>2</sup> But notice that we are not doing (philosophical) psychology here.

example, if it is objected that one cannot reduce, in a certain sense, the relational fact that A causes something in B (or causes B in a certain respect) to the fact that A acts in a certain way and the fact that B suffers in a corresponding way, since in the latter two facts, even if taken together, there is nothing to ground and ensure that it is on B in particular that A's action is operative or exercised (something which is essentially involved in the relational fact as such); we may reply that, in such a case, that A's action is directed towards, or aimed at, B (in which, and not in anything else, it takes effect under the present circumstances), and that B's passion is due to A's exercise of its relevant causal powers, are accounted by the obtaining of those circumstances (ultimately non-relational in character), which are required and presupposed by causality in general, and causation of the particular type and kind involved in each case.

For instance, if spatial proximity or contiguity were the one and only universal condition (external to the intrinsic natures of A and B as agent and patient respectively) to be satisfied in order for causality to be operative (given, of course, that the agent has the power to act and the patient the power to suffer), then A and B being in such positions at the appropriate times as to entail that proximity or contiguity, together with A's acting in a certain way, would constitute exhaustively (i.e. without remainder) the causal-relational fact that A causes B in a certain respect (or causes something in B).

Evidently, the above example is hypothetical. Nor could a proper example be given in advance of the specification of an adequate theory of Causality. Yet the principle is this: causation takes place when an object able to effect E, and an object capable of suffering E, have certain properties and stand in certain relations, which properties and relations form the (general and specific) conditions to be satisfied if causal activity (of the general and particular kind in question) is to occur. Now the relational circumstances involved in the said conditions cannot *ultimately* be causal in character. For if part of the conditions for the occurrence of a

certain causal activity is the occurrence of another causal activity, this other activity will have its own conditioning circumstances; which if it again involved the occurrence of a third particular causation, would presuppose the obtaining of the latter's conditions – and so on.<sup>1</sup> Which cannot be infinitely repeated;<sup>2</sup> otherwise not even our initial activity could occur.

But if the relational circumstances involved in the conditions for the occurrence of a causal activity cannot, ultimately, be themselves causal; and if non-causal relational facts can be shown to be non-fundamental in the previously indicated ways; then the initial relational causal fact, reduced as it is in a certain sense proximately to non-relational facts about the related terms on the one hand, and non-causal non-relational and relational (in general) circumstances on the

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<sup>1</sup> We in truth rely here on two propositions of the Theory of Activity in general, and of Causality in particular. The propositions are the following.

a) A contingent activity or operation (like the activities and operations occurring in this world of concreteness with which we are concerned here) is the exercise of an (active or passive) potency and results from the actualization of the potentiality involved in the said potency.

b) The transmutation of any potentiality (of either subtype) into (contingent) actuality requires, in a concrete realm, some distinct (from the potentiality itself) principle(s) or condition(s) to account for the transition. For the actualization of a passive potency does obviously require (the presence of) an (active) power capable of rendering it (i.e. the passive potency) operative; and an (active) power cannot depend for its own actualization solely on itself (and, where appropriate, on the presence of something capable of suffering its action), because in that case there would be no reason why it may operate here, but not there, and at this time, but not at that.

The application of the above two propositions to the topic discussed in the text, justifies us in asking, in each particular case of causation in this World, for the conditions whose satisfaction renders the exercise of the causal agent's power *really possible in the particular instance considered*. And thus the consequence may be validly inferred, as we said, that the conditions for the occurrence of causal activity in any particular case are, ultimately, free from any involvement of causal activities, or of any activity whatsoever for that matter.

The matter cannot be pursued further here, since it is not our purpose to expose an adequate Theory of Action and Passion.

<sup>2</sup> We assume without proving it here that an *ontological* infinite regress is always necessarily vicious.

other; is ultimately reduced, in a certain sense, to entirely non-relational facts, and is, thus, *so ipso* shown to be non-fundamental in its reality as relational.<sup>1</sup>

In fine, we end with two permissible categories of forms of being corresponding to only qualities and acts among properties in general.

### 63. Highest Kinds of Connection

A connection in general is that which connects (in the non-causal, but organic sense) the connected items in a connective-situation. It is the metaphysical, proximate ground of the particular connectedness of the connected items in such a situation.

We shall briefly sketch here the general outline of an account of connections *holding among basic objects*.

In such cases, connective-situations as such have a certain characteristic of non-fundamentality. For their connectedness in each case must *rest* on something else not essentially presupposing either the particular connectedness involved, in its specificity, or even connectedness in general – being therefore, a connectedness dependent on that other thing.

Connections among basic objects<sup>2</sup> can be based:

- A. on causality, and on this in two ways:
  - a. as effects of a certain causal activity,
  - b. as consisting in such activity
- B. on the exhibition of forms of being
- C. on a combination of (A) and (B).

On these, the following comments should be made.

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<sup>1</sup> And it is, finally, to be noted that causal relatedness presents the hardest and most difficult cases to be articulated in terms of a view like ours.

<sup>2</sup> There can be, I submit, an extrapolation of the doctrine, in order that it may be applicable to objects in general.

*Ad (A).* A connection based on causality may be either itself the *effect* of a certain cause (as when the efficient cause of a certain concrete thing 's being causes that certain connectedness (to hold) between the said thing and the corresponding determinant, which allows the former to receive the eternally available "stamp" of the latter); or be the *exercise* of causality itself (as when one of the connected items is constituted in its objecthood,<sup>1</sup> or in a part, aspect or moment of its objecthood, by reason of its standing in the connection concerned to the other involved item(s)).

*Ad (B).* Contrary to the secondly mentioned case above (where one item, if a being, partly is what it is *in virtue of its standing* in the corresponding connection), objects stand in connections of this (B) type *by reason of their* being what they are.

Such connections may be viewed as essentially involving the following two pairs of connections, which are highest in generality (in the present respect), taken in combinations:

- i) identity and otherness in respect of subject
- ii) identity and difference in (respect of) being.

By means of these two pairs, the presently studied type of connection can be divided proximately as follows:

1) otherness in subject but identity in being: similarity in general. Otherness in subject and in being: dissimilarity.

[<sup>1</sup>) otherness in subject and specific difference in being conjoined with generic identity in being: generic similarity and contrariety].

2) otherness in subject, identity in being, but difference (or identity) in the *degree or extent* (spatial or temporal) of *acquisition*, or *number of distribution*, of (form

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<sup>1</sup> I am using 'objecthood' instead of 'being', to cover the case where not all basic objects need be beings.



of) being:<sup>1</sup> more and less in general (or equal); inequality (equality). (Connections based on quantitative properties).

[Naturally, this applies to cases *susceptible* (and in the respect in which, and in as far as, they are susceptible) of variation in degree or extent of acquisition, or number in distribution, of (formal) being].

3) identity in subject, but difference in being: unity of beings (that is the connectedness between *a* something-being<sup>2</sup> and another when they are the same in subject; corresponds to the connection of two properties when they are found in the same thing).

4) identity in subject and in being: absolute identity of beings.

Now, as regards the connections in (i) and (ii), which, as it was seen, are involved in the various connections of the B-type above classified, it is to be said that:

I) since a study of the principium individuationis<sup>3</sup> does not fall within the compass of the present dissertation, the systematic account of identity and difference in subject cannot be given or adequately comprehended,<sup>4</sup> and,

II) identity and difference in being are grounded on identity and difference as holding among forms of being, which are different from, but intimately connected with, the former connections. And these latter are themselves founded on the particularity of determinedness of each form of being.<sup>5</sup> Consequently, the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Art. 62 (Ad (Bb)).

<sup>2</sup> For the notion cf. *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 30.

<sup>3</sup> With respect to the principium individuationis of abstract things in particular, the solution may be found in that the oneness of a determinant consists in its exhibiting necessarily a unique form of being, the unity of a form of being being concurrently definable. Cf. for the peculiar complexity and simplicity of forms of being (wherefrom the alluded definition may be gathered), *infra* Ch. VI, Art. 89, and other references therein.

<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, whatever this systematic account must be, there is no reason why it should contradict the result already established of the non-fundamentality of connections in general.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 7, and the account of specification in the last chapter, especially (Ch. VI) Art. 87.

non-fundamentality of identity and difference in being, and of connections involving these, is independently ascertained.

*Ad (C).* To this type belong connections consisting in the unions of member-items which yield a united item. The connections considered are either those holding among the member-items or those holding between them and the united items resulting from their union.

Now a united item and its members may be:

1. A Mixed and its ingredients.
2. A Whole and its parts.

The explication of these distinctions can be given as follows:

The unity of a united composite or compound consists in the connection(s) holding among its unified members. These connections, as holding among the members, constitute the united composite or compound.

This constitution and the corresponding unity, must be of one or other of the following kinds:

1<sup>1</sup>) The relevant connections of the items concerned do not belong to the latter's essential being and they are not grounded at all on it. Thus the objects as members of the United and apart from it are essentially the same, hence also numerically the same, and only incidentally different in being. Obviously such unification can pertain only where the essential/incidental distinction is applicable, namely to the realm of concrete things.<sup>1</sup>

2<sup>1</sup>) The connections of the unified items do belong, in the present case, to their essential being, or, better, are grounded on it. Thus the constituent members of the united item when considered as members of it, and when apart from it, are essentially different in being (at least partly<sup>2</sup>) and, consequently, also numerically

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. III, Art. 57.

<sup>2</sup> This 'partly' signifies the same as 'to some extent', i.e., in the present connection, some of the forms belonging to the totality of all forms of being essentially held by each one of the subjects concerned.

other. Evidently, there must be two subkinds of this kind of unity, because it may pertain either to objects where the essential/incidental distinction is applicable, or to objects where no potentiality has place, and which, therefore, have necessary (i.e. purely actual) being. (We may speak, correspondingly, of concrete or physical parts and wholes and of metaphysical ones<sup>1</sup>).

(1<sup>1</sup>) and (2<sup>1</sup>) explicate (1) and (2) respectively.

(Concrete things stuck adhesively together so as to yield a united item may be taken as an example of what it is meant by ingredients in a mixture. Whereas organic parts of an organism in their organically functional nature could provide by way of example some idea of our notion of parts in a whole).

It may then be observed, that in the present C-type of connection, there are involved, as aforesaid, both connections of the B-kind, as is evident from the above given explications, and of the A-kind, in that the united compound can be viewed as the result of a sort of quasi-causality, namely of the immanent<sup>2</sup> causality exercised by the member-items and operative in the formation of the united item in question. Only, of course, there is here reciprocity of causal action, differentiating these present cases from those falling properly under (A): for the full being of the members qua members is, to some extent at least, due to their being unified in a united Total.

Recapitulating, it may be said generally, that in (A), one of the connected objects is what it is<sup>3</sup> by reason of its being connected, in (B) that objects are

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<sup>1</sup> It will turn out that no real *and fundamental* metaphysical wholes subsist, except those consisting in the nexus of a determinable and its determinates. (*Not* that the determinable determinant is a whole with the specific determinates as parts). In this respect, the total system of determinants is the most comprehensive, all-encompassing, metaphysical whole. On the other hand, it will be seen, each determinant (or form of being correspondingly) has a unity transcending that of a whole, and falling short only of absolute simplicity. Cf. *infra*, Ch. VI, Art. 89.

<sup>2</sup> Physical or metaphysical immanent causality contrasts with proper, transeunt causality, similarly physical or metaphysical, as the constituents of being contrast with proper causes of being. Cf. *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Obviously, in so far as it enters into the connection in question.

connected *by reason* of their being what they are, and finally in (C), that objects have the being which they have to some extent *in* being connected (which again argues (C) a kind of combination of (A) and (B)).

A corollary of such an analysis of connections as the above, is that connections (and a fortiori relationships), qua connections, are not real and proper forms of being.

To have the outline of the matter completed, the connection between complex and element must be located within the framework above worked out. And we say that, *in one sense*, the notion of this connection applies, with the appropriate modifications in each case, to both mixed objects and wholes, connoting in addition a certain impossibility of proceeding further in the analysis or dissolution of the united involved to its constituents. But, *in another sense*, it signifies a compositeness of a unity more enhanced in strength (in a certain, specifiable sense<sup>1</sup>) than that pertaining to even wholeness.<sup>2</sup>

#### **64. Connections involving non-objects**

The above outlined doctrine of connections is concerned, of course, with connective situations involving (basic) objects.

Yet there are some other kinds of connection involving objects and non-objects or non-objects and non-objects.

The fundamental connection of the former type is the following:

- i. The act of being, as connection between subject and form of being.

To the second type, there belongs the following derivative connection:

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<sup>1</sup> I mean something like the definite sense in which the unity of a whole, being based on the essential being of the parts, is "stronger" than the unity of a mixture, which is founded on the incidental being of the mixed items.

<sup>2</sup> It is possible and proper to elaborate further on these distinctions. However, since they are not treated here for their own sake, but only in so far as they are instrumental to the clarification of the issues studied, we may abstain from their adequate articulation.

ii. The connection holding between various forms of being (qua concretely exhibited) when they are exhibited by one and the same (numerically) subject.<sup>1</sup>

But on the other hand, it should be observed that, since forms of being as exhibited by concrete things constitute instances of the corresponding determinants, and because such instances can be viewed as entities, and thus as objects, connection (ii) consists really in *co-inherence*, – a connection holding among objects, and ultimately founded on inherence, as a connection between a concrete thing and an instance.

[(Merely) truth-functional connections are obviously *not* considered, since they lack objective (i.e. relating to objects) and extramental ontological status. Of course there are many (numbers of) objects, but a number of objects, qua a mere set of objects, does not constitute *an object*. Thus, if we have to do with a number of actual facts, there is no necessity to pose a conjunctive fact, over and above them, in order to account for their “number”. And if conjunction is discounted, a fortiori the rest of the truth-functional connections cannot be considered].

### 65. Three fundamental ingredients or notes of concrete-thinghood

One essential feature of concrete-thinghood has been already mentioned. It is that:

A. Concrete things are essentially capable of exhibiting a multiplicity of forms, which are not in themselves (i.e. in their primary exhibition by abstract things) connected in such a way that the exemplification of one of them by a given concrete thing necessitates the exemplification of another by the same (numerically) concrete thing.

Additionally, if it is noticed that determinants are essentially structured through the determinable-determinate connection,<sup>1</sup> it will be seen that concrete

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<sup>1</sup> There is, evidently, no corresponding connection of the corresponding determinants in themselves, in such case. Exemplification in general, we have seen, does not in anyway effect, and has nothing to do with, the being of determinants as in themselves.

things must exhibit one of the proximately specific forms of each exhibited generic form. But this necessity, of course, operates equally well on the said specific form in its capacity as generic. And if it is admitted, as we hold,<sup>2</sup> that there are, for all lines of eidetic descent, absolutely determinate determinants, i.e. determinants which are in no way anymore determinables, then a second essential feature of concrete thinghood can be formulated as follows:

B. Concrete things are *absolutely* (and not only multifariously) determined; that is, for each of their non absolutely determinate determinations, there is at least one determination of them by an absolutely determinate determinant falling under the determinant involved in the given determination.

C. And further; the determination in being of a concrete thing must be in a certain sense *complete*. That is, for each particular determination partly constitutive of the being of a concrete thing, the latter is also determined through all determinations necessitated *either* by the form of being involved in the given determination in its capacity as form of being simpliciter and in its connection, as such mere and pure form of being, with other forms of being in themselves; *or* in virtue of ontological laws of any grade (metaphysical and physical) governing, as it were, concrete exemplification; – the resulting total, complete determination being, of course, self-consistent and possible, i.e. not violating, in its concatenation and in its being-characterization of a single subject, any law of any type and grade, either categorical, or deriving its content and validity from the abstract structure of determinants in themselves, or expressing in part the metaphysical and physical Order of exemplification.

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<sup>1</sup> For the establishing of the point with respect to forms of being, cf. *supra*, Ch. I, Art. 9.

<sup>2</sup> The relevant treatment has not been incorporated into the present disquisition.

The three mentioned notes or features, namely a concrete thing's essentially *multifarious* and *absolutely determinate* and *complete* determination in being, form the core or the quintessence of the strict notion of concrete thinghood.<sup>1</sup>

In all three respects, abstract thinghood contrast sharply with concrete thinghood.

[It must be noticed that the necessitation mentioned in (C) above, is either *direct* and *proper* necessitation (as when determination by a determinate determinant necessitates determination, of the same subject, by its determinable, and by the determinable of its determinable, and so on); or *indirect* and *indefinite* or indeterminate (as when determination by a certain determinant, necessitates determination by *one or other* of its determinates without specification of a particular one among them)].

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<sup>1</sup> Since it is not our problem here to analyze space and time, it is not our task to show whether non-spatiotemporal concrete things are *really* possible (in contrast to: theoretically conceivable) and how. What we maintain is that space and time are not really indistinguishable from the quintessence of concrete thinghood, nor are they really indispensable for a strict conception of concrete things.

**Chapter V**  
**(Articles 66-81)**

**STRUCTURE AND NATURE OF**  
**DETERMINANTS:**  
**NEGATIVE RESULTS**



## 66. Two Problems concerning determinants

In the preceding chapter we have deduced some general features of Determinants and their Being.

Now we want to penetrate further into their nature and structure.

It is essential for such penetration to occur, that the solution to the following two problems be found:

I. We have seen what the being of concrete things really consists in – and explained this in terms of the exemplification of determinants. What, now, does the being of determinants themselves consist in? How are we to analyze the circumstance that a certain determinant has (primarily) the form of being which it has?

II. Determinants are essentially determinable and determinate. What does the corresponding structuring connection (call it 'D-D connection') consist in?

These two problems can be shown to be inextricably connected. Indeed, they admit, as it will be seen, of one common solution; which is the reason of putting persistently together the terms 'structure' and 'nature' in respect to determinants.

## 67. Dependence of the being of determinants on their connections

We hold that, in general, problem I depends by nature for its solution on problem II.<sup>1</sup> The precise character of this dependence will become manifest when the solution of the problems has been achieved. But certain general points can be established in advance of their final solution, and to these we now turn.

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<sup>1</sup> The qualification 'in general' is meant to make room for a single exception not to be discussed in this dissertation; for an absolutely determinable determinant cannot have the being it has in virtue of its standing in a D-D connection to a higher determinable.

Suppose that what we claimed is not so. This would mean that D-D connections hold among determinants as a result of the latter's<sup>1</sup> being what they are; for one cannot possibly maintain that the question about the holding of D-D connections is totally irrelevant to the being of determinants, that is, for instance, that a determinate's falling under its proximate determinable has nothing to do with their respective natures; and this being excluded, it is evident that if the being of determinants does not *somehow* depend on their D-D connections, then it must be the case that they are D-D connected in virtue of their being what they are.

Thus the being of determinants could not, in accordance with the supposition examined, be due in any respect and way to their standing in D-D connections. But the being of determinants is completely independent of their connections with the World of concreteness;<sup>2</sup> furthermore, it is independent of any other higher realm acting towards the World of determinants in a way analogous to that in which the latter World acts towards the realm of concreteness.<sup>3</sup>

Consequently, the being of determinants cannot be derived at all from an extraneous principle. But it *must* be derived somehow and from somewhere: for being, the particular being of particular objects, is not self-explanatory and, according to our theory, it is not absolutely ultimately fundamental in a certain sense.<sup>4</sup> And besides, on the contrary supposition, each determinant, *qua being what*

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to both terms of a D-D connection. To avoid possible misunderstanding it should be firmly kept in mind that the view which we are combating in this article is the view that the being of determinants in *no way* depends on their connections, and hence that *both* terms of a D-D connection stand in the connection as a result of their being what they are. The contradictory of this view is, accordingly, that *one* at least of the terms must somehow have its being in virtue of its standing in the connection, and not that *both* are what they are by reason of their being connected as they are.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. III, Art. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. III, Art. 53 ad fin. Let it be remarked that what is here denied is not the subsistence of a higher supreme principle simpliciter, but the analogous position of such a principle (if there subsists) vis-à-vis the World of determinants to that of the later vis-à-vis concrete things.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. also *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 37. The sense is that the particular being of a particular object presents the "Show" (or first appearance) of the object's interiority.

*in particular it is*, would be self-explanatory and self-accounting, i.e. a first principle or something underivable, a Platonic “anypotheton”. In which case, there would have existed a multiplicity of absolutely (in the respect considered) first principles of the same general kind and in all their specificity, which is strongly repugnant to Reason and also probably impossible.

[A sketch of such a proof follows.

Suppose a multiplicity of first principles of a certain field in respect to some per se features of it; that is, a multiplicity of first principles of the same kind, with regard to a certain field. Either these various first principles have nothing in common qua principles, or they do have something in common. On the former supposition they could not be first principles of *one* certain field (a field with *some* unity), since they would lack the harmonious and congruous operation necessary (for the unity of the causation) in effecting the said field as regards the relevant aspects and features; indeed, they could not even be mere principles of the said *same* field, let alone first principles of it. Consequently the second alternative must be true, if the initial supposition is at all true. But if they have something in common, and do so precisely in so far as they are first principles of the given field, then the question necessarily and legitimately is posed, How, and Whence this commonness? They themselves cannot account for it. For quite apart from the general principle that something cannot create the (*objective*) order to which it conforms, they cannot account for it because that commonness or order cannot be a chance result of what the principles happen to be, but must originate from somewhere. And if it is retorted that their being is necessary and therefore there is no question of their *happening* to be anything at all, then the question is only slightly transposed: for now it must be answered, How, and Whereby is their necessary being established; which is only but another facet of the same fundamentally problem.

Thus, it must be said that the commonness (or their necessary being which involves that commonness) is derivative; it comes from somewhere else. And this is so, exactly in their capacity as principles of the chosen field. Hence they must be dependent in this capacity of theirs on something other than, and metaphysically prior to, them. But then they cannot be *first* principles. Which contradicts the supposition. Hence there cannot be many *first principles* of the same field, in the same respects. Which was to be proven].

It is concluded then, that the being of particular determinants must be derived from an *inner* principle, inner to the World of Determinants.

Now there is no other kind of (fundamental) connection, in which a determinant can stand, and on which it can consequently depend, in some way or other, for its being, than the D-D connection.<sup>1</sup> And this was above shown to be impossible, in accordance with the initial supposition. Hence that supposition is false.

It is therefore finally concluded that the being of determinants must somehow depend on their standing in D-D connections. And the real problem is, How?

Determinants, in general, are what they are in virtue of their severally standing in the fundamental connection holding in their realm; which circumstance indicates already a certain peculiar unity of the World of Determinants, which will be manifested clearly when the nature of that fundamental connection has been precisely ascertained.

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<sup>1</sup> This is to say, in terms of determinants, the same thing which was shown to obtain with regard to forms of being. Cf. *supra*, Ch. I, Art. 9.

## 68. Remarks on Two Principles

In the above argument, two principles were employed which call for a brief comment.

The *first* is that being stands generally in need of metaphysical explanation. Now this is true of being as such, and not only in respect of concrete being, i.e. being displayed by concrete things. But on the other hand, it should be noticed that it is not the general circumstance that there is being and exhibition of being which is claimed to call for account. (That some objects are essentially bifurcated into an interior subject and an outward projection or manifestation – or “first appearance” – as *forma essendi*, calls for a completely different sort of explanation, if at all). In other words what we ask to be explained is not that there are beings, or that some objects are entities and things; it is rather the particular being exhibited in each particular case which requires explanation – that this form of being, in its determinate specificity, is displayed, and not another. And it is in this sense in which the aforementioned principle is meant to be deployed in the argument above.

The *second* principle also employed therein, is that determinants are not determined (in their being) by their being connected to some higher realm of objects. And by this, in accordance with what has been said immediately above and with what we have already intimated,<sup>1</sup> is meant that they are not so determined in their particular determinateness or specificity of each one’s being. We do not wish to exclude the possibility of their World in its entirety, or in respect to some common feature of all of them, being *somehow* derived from some higher principle; nor, of course, do we mean to endorse such a view for the time being. But equally, a strong denial of that possibility is not even really required for the validity of the above argument (in the preceding article). What we do maintain, and is needed for its validity, is rather this: there is no realm above that

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Art. 67, n. 1 [p. 130].

of determinants, in which all forms of being are explicitly reproduced in the same or in an analogous way to that in which the World of Determinants reproduces explicitly the World of concreteness in its formal aspect. *Such* a higher realm is *not* required by Reason, and its arbitrary postulation would only begin a regressus ad infinitum.

### 69. Specification in forms of being and Determination in determinants

The only fundamental connection between forms of being was seen to be the generic-specific connection.<sup>1</sup>

But each one determinant has, *ex definitione*, attached to it *one* certain form of being. (Each determinant is uni-form). [Thus, a true and adequate comprehension of the structure and nature of determinants goes together with a thorough clarification of the aforementioned fundamental connection].

The corresponding structuring connection among determinants is the D-D connection. This, then, is the only fundamental connection holding among determinants.<sup>2</sup>

We shall work in terms of the following example-schema:

P<sub>1</sub>-ness is the proximate determinable of P<sub>2</sub>-ness.

fP<sub>1</sub> is the (total) Form of (i.e. one certain generic form of being uniquely attached to) P<sub>1</sub>-ness; and fP<sub>2</sub> the Form of (i.e. one specific form of being proximately under fP<sub>1</sub> and uniquely attached to) P<sub>2</sub>-ness.

We may further introduce here some terminological apparatus.

We shall say that fP<sub>2</sub> is a (proximate) *modification* or *manifestation* or *specification*<sup>1</sup> of fP<sub>1</sub>; correspondingly, P<sub>2</sub>-ness is a (proximate) *determination*<sup>2</sup> of P<sub>1</sub>-ness.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. I, Art. 9.

<sup>2</sup> We can, of course, signalize the two "directions" of this connection, say, by the use of appropriate subscripts. But there is no point, as regards our inquiry, in doing so.

## 70. Items involved in Specification

In a specification (manifestation, modification) constituting a specific form of being out of a (proximately) generic one, there are distinguished:

- a) the generic form of being,
- b) the resulting specific form of being,
- c) that which yields the latter from the former.

To define and determine correctly and adequately what precisely (c) is, is the main task of a Theory of Determinants and forms of being. In other words we seek to comprehend the nature of the derivation (for the time being noncommittally meant) of (b) out of (a).

## 71. Specifying forms of being and Specifying determinants

Inappropriate attention to formal-logical or even conceptual considerations in metaphysical disquisitions is, in principle, erroneous.

Paying such unwarranted heed here, leads to, and supports, the following account of (c) (the theory hereafter to be called 'SFB'), which, in other respects, satisfies the constraints constituted by what we have already established about the nature and structure of determinants.

The mentioned account runs thus:

The specification of a form of being consists in the acquisition (on the part of the specified, generic form of being) of a certain form of being, distinct both from the generic and the specific forms of being concerned. Call this alleged form

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<sup>1</sup> 'Modification', 'manifestation', 'specification' and 'determination' may signify either the *activity* (or *process*) or the *result*. The context will normally render plain which one signification is meant. For instance, obviously it is the result which is denoted by them in the text above. In some important cases, the sense intended will be explicitly stated.

<sup>2</sup> No confusion is permitted between the present use of 'determination', and the one in which we speak of the determination of concrete things by determinants in regard to (formal) being.

of being, in its presently required function, 'modifying or specifying form of being'.

This is then, of course, the metaphysical projection of the logical doctrine of specific differences.

Now there is an one-to-one correspondence between forms of being and determinants. Let the determinants, whose proper and peculiar forms of being are specifying forms of being, be called 'specifying determinants'.

In the deployed example-schema, let  $P_m$ -ness and  $fP_m$  be, respectively, the required specifying determinant and corresponding (unique) form of being.

## 72. Constitution of specification according to SFB

According to SFB, a specific form is a whole comprising as two parts the generic form and the specifying form.

[Mixtures and wholes and complexes were defined above (Art. 63) with regard to objects, whereas forms of being are neither objects nor constituted out of objects. Thus we apply here the terms (for instance in speaking of a whole in the previous paragraph) *analogically*, relying on the "ratio" of the object having formal being to the formal being being had.

With such an analogical application of the terms, we see that, of course, there is not even a question of the possibility of forms of being being mixtures, since determinants have not incidental properties at all, through which the mixing-connections could operate<sup>1</sup>].

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<sup>1</sup> Here by the way it is also clearly seen that when two abstract things are co-considered by the mind, nothing, no object, not even a mixture, can be postulated in extramental reality: for that they are co-considered is even less to them, as it were, than an incidental property, it is of complete indifference to them; they have only necessary being.

On the other hand, when the mind forms a general conception out of the two *general concepts* corresponding to two abstract things, it forms an (organic) whole and no mere mixture. Thus the ontological and the conceptual levels are kept firmly apart.



On the other hand the two alleged parts of a specific form of being are sharply contrasted in nature and function. For the one is modified and the other modifies as a modificatory form, the former assumes and the latter is assumed in the modification. And the roles obviously, cannot be interchanged.<sup>1</sup> Thus modification is no mere external addition, no mechanical (as it were) juxtaposition or superimposition.

Whether this theory does full justice to the, so to speak, organic unity of a form of being in considering it as *the unity of a whole*, remains to be seen. Our contention will be that it fails – the unity of a form of being being more intense and consummate than the unity of a (metaphysical) whole.

[We may put both the above mentioned points (*two* parts functioning *differently*) schematically, borrowing the letters of Art. 70, as follows:

$$b = (a) + c,$$

where all a, b, c are forms of being, and '+' signifies not any agglomerative extraneous addition but the addition of the parts when they co-constitute the whole by being "added up". The parenthesis round 'a' expresses that the two parts function differently: a is the basis for the production of b].

### **73. Connections among Determinable, Determinate and Specifying Determinants**

According to SFB the general solution to problem (I) in Art. 66 would then be as follows:

That P<sub>2</sub>-ness is fP<sub>2</sub> consists in P<sub>2</sub>-ness being connected with P<sub>1</sub>-ness and its being connected with P<sub>m</sub>-ness. On account of its first connection, it is fP<sub>1</sub>; on account of its second connection, it is fP<sub>m</sub>; and thus on account of both (and on

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<sup>1</sup> Absurdities would follow all too easily from such a view. An immediate one: each determinant would have at least two determinables.

Again it must be emphasized that our point is meant to apply to the ontological level, prescinding from the question of its validity on the conceptual one.

account of  $P_1$ -ness being a determinable and  $P_m$ -ness a specifying determinant) it is  $fP_1$  as modified by  $fP_m$  (or  $(fP_1) + fP_m$ ), i.e.  $fP_2$ .

The former connection is a D-D connection. What is the second connection?

It cannot be a D-D connection.

For if it were,  $P_2$ -ness would have to fall under two distinct and proximate determinables. Which is impossible. Further, on such a hypothesis, we would have taken the first step towards a regressus ad infinitum. For what about the form which, in being assumed by the form of being proper and peculiar to the determinable  $P_m$ -ness, results in  $fP_2$ ? Since  $P_m$ -ness is now conceived as a proximate determinable of  $P_2$ -ness, we are entitled to ask for the said form. This form, for parity of reasoning, must be a further mediating form of being, attached to a further mediating determinant, say  $P'_m$ -ness, the connection of which latter with  $P_1$ -ness we shall again be obliged to construe as D-D connection; and so on.

Consequently, the connection of  $P_2$ -ness to  $P_m$ -ness must be a connection differing from the D-D type of connection. Let us call it 'D<sub>m</sub> connection'.

Secondly,  $P_1$ -ness and  $P_m$ -ness must be somehow connected in order for  $fP_1$  to be able to be modified or specified in accordance with  $fP_m$ . This connection constitutes the susceptibility, on the part of the generic item, of specification by the assumption of the form of being exhibited uniquely by the determinants with which the generic item is in this way connected.

Now what is this connection?

Obviously not a D<sub>m</sub> connection.

Nor, of course, a D-D connection with  $P_1$ -ness as determinable. Firstly, because this would lead to a regressus ad infinitum; for  $fP_m$ -ness would have to be connected with a further mediating determinant, itself D-D connected with  $P_1$ -ness, and so on. Secondly, because the various species of a genus represent a

division of it in accordance with *one single* principle of division;<sup>1</sup> therefore, all species must belong to the same family, in the sense that they must be homogeneous as being derived from a certain item in accordance with a single principle; but what effects, in part, a certain division (i.e. the specific difference), cannot be homogeneous in the required sense with the results of the division: what belongs to the dividing principle cannot be homogeneous and on the same level with what is the result of the operation of the dividing principle – though there subsists a one-to-one correspondence between them.

Consequently, a third kind of connection must further be postulated on the present account, holding between determinable and specifying determinants.<sup>2</sup> Call it ‘ $d_m$  connection’.<sup>3</sup>

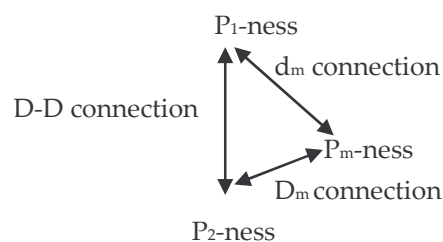
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<sup>1</sup> That proper eidetic division in the objective realm is effected through only one principium divisionis at each step, and that the proximate specific multiplicity under a genus is homogeneous in the corresponding sense, is self-evident. For, of course, we have not here to do with conceptual combinations, but with ontological communions. (And see further the positive account of the matter to be presented in the next chapter).

On the other hand, if we were arguing ad hominem, we could say that what is needed in the refutation of SFB to follow is not that what we claim to be true of determinants is true of them universally and necessarily, but the much weaker contention that it just obtains in some at least cases. For even if there is a real *possibility* of there being such cases, then the SFB account of specification cannot be valid (as a general account), and *per se* applying to determinants and forms of being.

<sup>2</sup> Parsimonious the theory it is not.

<sup>3</sup> Thus, the unit of the structured system of Determinants could be presented, on the examined view, by means of the following diagram:



#### 74. First Reductio ad Absurdum of SFB

The specifying determinant  $P_m$ -ness being, according to SFB, a proper determinant, it must itself, in general, belong to a vertical series of determinants standing in D-D connections.<sup>1</sup>

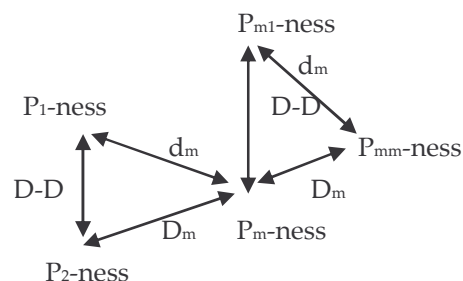
Therefore, the structure of the previously described unit or nexus, must of necessity be repeated, centered on  $P_m$ -ness this time.<sup>2</sup>

Now, for SFB, a form of being is a whole with two other forms of being as parts. But that a certain generic form of being is susceptible of a certain specification is equivalent, again according to SFB, to its being capable of assuming the corresponding modifying form of being. And since this latter is a whole, the generic form must be capable of assuming each part of the whole in order to be able to assume (or at least in so far as it may assume) the whole. Thus  $fP_1$  must be able to assume  $fP_{m1}$  and  $fP_{mm}$ .

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<sup>1</sup> The series may in some cases be short. The theoretically minimal condition is that if a given determinant is an absolutely determinate one, then it must belong to at least one higher (here, highest) genus before coming (to be subsumed) under the category Determinant itself – that genus defining the kind of determinant, which the said absolutely determinate determinant is or falls under.

<sup>2</sup> Like this:



But no potentiality as such, no real unactualized potency, pertains to the World of Determinants and to their Forms.<sup>1</sup> Therefore the above mentioned potentialities must be realized in actuality. Hence, there must be two forms of being consisting in the assumption by  $fP_1$  of  $fP_{m1}$  and  $fP_{mm}$  respectively; and there must be corresponding determinants.

Now these two determinants, as it is evident from their “construction”, must be determinates of  $P_1$ -ness. And clearly, since  $fP_{m1}$  and  $fP_{mm}$  are proper parts of the  $fP_m$ , they modify  $fP_1$  not up to the extent to which the latter is modified by  $fP_m$ , but, still, up to a certain extent which constitutes a proper part of the latter, more thoroughgoing modification. Therefore, the two determinants fall as determinates of  $P_1$ -ness between it and  $P_2$ -ness. But then  $P_2$ -ness is not a *proximate* determinate of  $P_1$ -ness – which contradicts the initial hypothesis.

Since everything else in the argument is unexceptionable, the theory (SFB) must be false.

## 75. Second Reductio ad Absurdum of SFB

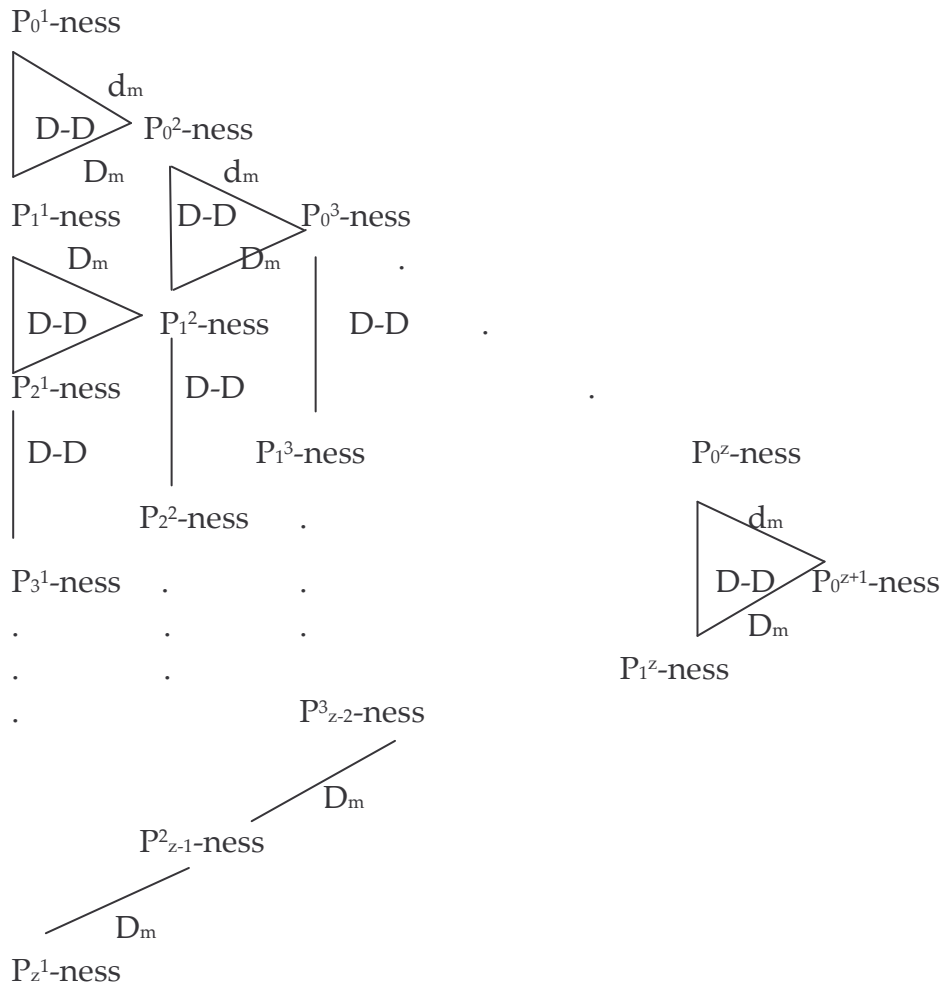
To save words, I shall employ a diagram exhibiting the type of convected, parallel lines of descent or columns (of decreasing determinability or increasing determinateness) characteristic of the structure of determinants as viewed by SFB.<sup>2</sup>

(The particular form of the diagram will be justified by what immediately follows).

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. III, Art. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Some alteration effected, for convenience, on the symbolism previously proposed, is self-explanatory.



I shall criticize this theory after drawing corollaries from its principles under three headings, as follows:

I. The absolutely determinate level

That  $P_{j-1}^1\text{-ness}$  is a determinable, i.e. stands in D-D connection to a determinate of it ( $P_j^1\text{-ness}$ ), entails that it is  $D_m$  connected to the appropriate determinant of the second line, namely  $P_{j-2}^2\text{-ness}$ . And the same, with the appropriate changes in subscripts, holds in respect of the members of the second column vis-à-vis the third one, and so on.

Now suppose  $P_z^1\text{-ness}$  be an absolutely determinate determinant. This means that it is *not* connected in the D-D manner, and as a determinable, with any determinant. This, again, entails the circumstance that it is  $D_m$  connected to the absolutely determinate corresponding member of the second line of descent.

Correspondingly for the other columns.

## II. The highest determinable terminus

That  $P^1$ -ness is a determinate, i.e. stands in D-D connection to its determinable ( $P^0$ -ness), entails that it is  $D_m$  connected to the appropriate determinant of the second column, which in turn stands in  $d_m$  connection to  $P^0$ -ness. The appropriate determinant being here  $P^2$ -ness.

Now suppose  $P^0$ -ness is the highest determinable of its column. This means that it cannot be further (towards the direction of determinability) analyzed through a D-D/ $d_m$ / $D_m$  scheme of connections. Therefore it must be  $d_m$  connected to the highest determinable of the second line of descent.

Similarly, for the rest of the columns considered.

## III. Right hand extremity

But these constraints imposed on the subsequent (right) column and drawn from the character of the previous (left) one, determine also the number of members of the former, given the number of members belonging to the latter.<sup>1</sup>

So that if we begin with  $n$  members in the first line of descent, the second column must have  $n-1$ , the third  $n-2$ , and so on. Consequently we *must* end with a column comprising just one member.

Now this one member, being (vacuously) the last member of its column, must be an absolutely determinate determinant. Being also (vacuously) the first member of its column, it must be the highest determinable of its line of descent. The satisfaction of both these conditions entails that that one member must be an absolutely determinate determinant which does not fall under any determinant whatsoever, being absolutely unique.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The number of members is, correctly speaking, the number of families of determinates, each family having a certain degree of determinateness. We shall see the crucial importance of this, presently.

<sup>2</sup> This in itself is already unacceptable. Cf. *supra*, Art. 74, n. 1 [p. 140]. But let us waive this consideration here.

*And now the devastating consequences.*

The various determinants represented in our schema, belong to families of co-ordinated determinants, each family consisting in members having the same degree of determinateness and affiliated differences, each family being subsumed under one, single determinable. So  $P_j$ -ness, belongs to the family of the proximate determinates of  $P_{j-1}$ -ness.

Now, since  $P_j$ -ness has its Form derived from the modification of  $fP_{j-1}$  by the form of  $P_{j-1}^{i+1}$ -ness, its co-ordinated items must have their Forms resulting from the modification of the same generic forms  $fP_{j-1}$  by items coordinated with  $P_{j-1}^{i+1}$ -ness. So much is surely required by the unity of the families proximately subjoined under any determinant, or, in other words to the same effect, by the unity of the principium divisionis which breaks down a certain generic unity to its *proximately* specific multiplicity.

The multiplicity, then, of, say, the family to which  $P_j$ -ness belongs, necessitates an equally-numbered multiplicity of the family to which  $P_{j-1}^{i+1}$ -ness belongs. And, this in its turn, requires an equal-numbered multiplicity of the family, from the variety of the forms of which members, it draws the variety of the forms of its own members, namely, it requires an equal-numbered multiplicity on the part of the family to which  $P_{j-2}^{i+2}$ -ness belongs.

Pursuing this successive series of requirements, we shall inevitably come to some first member of some one of the columns in the relevant schema. Let us suppose that we finally reach  $P_{r_0}$ -ness. It is evident that this determinant would have to satisfy the following two conditions:

a) it must be a highest determinable, i.e. a determinant which does not fall under any other determinable as one among the latter's determinates.

b) it must belong to a family of determinants whose members present a certain multiplicity in their forms deriving from the modification of a generic



form, proximately superordinated over them, by an equal-numbered variety of forms belonging, as a family, to the next line of determination and on the appropriate place.

Obviously, satisfaction of both conditions (a) and (b) is logically impossible.

(A limiting case, if we had begun from the last member of the first line of descent and its family, we should have ended with ascribing a family with an equal-numbered multiplicity to  $P_0^{z+1}$ -ness – which makes the above, generally deduced impossibility, more vivid).

## 76. Modified Theory of Specification

We conclude that SFB is untenable.

Specifying forms cannot be construed as proper forms of being. There are no Specifying Determinants.

Before completely abandoning the ultimate presuppositions of SFB, let it be considered whether the theory can be drastically modified in order to meet our criticism while preserving those ultimate suppositions.

These are:

1. That specification involves three objects and three forms.
2. That the specific form is a whole with the other two forms functioning as parts of it.

The suppositions are evidently, from the nature of the case, mutually entailed.

SFB holds all three forms to be forms of being, and all three objects to be abstract things.

The modified theory, hereafter to be called 'SF', accepts that the modifying form is no form of being properly so meant, and that the modifying object (bearer of that form) is no determinant.

That is, the novel theory postulates a special category of objects, call them 'Specifiers', with the required special forms properly and uniquely attached to them.

### 77. Refutation of SF

SF has a completely ad hoc character. For the positing of the special category of objects concerned is neither a demand of Reason, nor an attempt to save phaenomena in general: it is nothing more than an expedient, a manoeuvre to retain from an untenable theory precisely the root of its erroneousness: its principles.

But since the above do not constitute a full *refutation* of SF, or of any theory for the matter of that, the following may be observed with a view to its rejection.

A) Obviously, any chance specifier cannot interact with any chance determinable determinant so as to yield determinate ones. Moreover, besides this general restriction of (possibility of) interaction on the members of appropriate couples of specifiers and determinables, there is a more specific requirement, which specifiers interacting with a certain determinable must satisfy. For a modifying form which by supervening upon a certain generic one (capable of such acquisition) yields one of the proximately subordinate specific forms, must be necessarily connected with all other specifying forms which by being superimposed upon the same generic form yield the totality of the proximately subordinate specific multiplicity; for the principium divisionis of each genus at each division is unique and single.<sup>1</sup> Now, it is the connectedness of the modifying forms which produces the connectedness of the multiplicity of the specific ones, given that the generic one is common to all the latter. Therefore, the sort of required connectedness of the relevant specifying forms must be the sort of connection holding among the various proximately subordinate specific forms

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra, Art. 73, n. 1 [p. 139].

themselves, namely the family–nexus or co-ordination of a group of specific forms proximately subsumed under one and the same generic form, as its various specifications. But if modifying forms are connected in this sort of way, they are of necessity forms of being, requiring a generic form of their own kind in order to be subsumed under it as its proximately subordinate specifications. Thus, SF fails to differentiate itself from SFB.

B) Suppose  $fP_0$  being modified by  $fP_m$  to yield  $fP_1$ ; and  $fP_1$  being modified by  $fP_{m1}$  to yield  $fP_2$ .

It is claimed as a lemma that  $fP_1$  is further modified in so far as it itself is the result of a modification of  $fP_0$ , that is, that it is modified in respect of the modification which resulted in it.

This can be shown as follows. *Either* the modification of  $fP_1$  is a further modification of the way  $fP_0$  was modified in order to yield  $fP_1$ , *or* not. If it is, the point is conceded. If it is not, the said modification must relate to a constituent of  $fP_1$ , other than the modification which produced it. But the only *other* constituent of  $fP_1$  is  $fP_0$  as an element in  $fP_1$ . Hence the modification of  $fP_1$  must be of it qua containing as a part  $fP_0$ , and so, primarily, of  $fP_0$ . But a modification of any form of being is either simple, yielding a proximate specific form, or composite, yielding a non-proximate specific form, always of the same genus. In the former case,  $fP_2$  would have belonged to the family of forms *co-ordinated* to  $fP_1$ , and not *subsumed* under it. Whereas in the latter case, the modification in question, being composite, would have been a modification of a modification of  $fP_0$ ; that is, it would have been a modification of that modification of  $fP_0$  which resulted in  $fP_1$  – and our point is conceded once more. Since these are the only possible alternatives, the lemma is true.

Now modification is explained in the theory being criticized as the assumption, on the part of the genus, of the specifying form. Thus, the above mentioned modification of a modification of  $fP_0$  must be accounted by a

modification of  $fP_m$  ( $fP_m$  accounting for the relevant modification of  $fP_o$ ); but it is also accounted by  $fP_{m1}$ . Therefore,  $fP_{m1}$  in a modification of  $fP_m$  – and consequently we have once more to do with forms susceptible of specificatory modification, i.e. with forms of being. SF again failed to differentiate itself from SFB.

C) Even supposing, *per impossibile*, that specifying forms could succeed in complying with the requirement deduced in (A) and (B) above without having thereby to be reduced to proper forms of being; then the question naturally arises, of their own specifying forms. These specifying forms of the specifying forms could not belong to the same category with specifying forms (could not themselves be specifying forms), because the arguments adduced against SFB would equally apply, *mutatis mutandis*, against such a supposition; for the structure, as distinct from the structured items and the structured total or whole, would be the same. And if they were held to belong to a new category of specifying forms attached to a new category of objects; a *regressus ad infinite* would have commenced.

D) Further, in respect to the same *per impossibile* supposition as above (C), the arguments against SFB would *anyway* apply, *mutatis mutandis*, as can be ascertained by inspecting them.

E) We may finally have recourse to a purely speculative argument.

The most general notion of *form* as we use the term is indicated by saying that forms, in general, are the outward manifestation or external projection of the inward interiority of objects. They are the showing forth or “appearing” (in first appearance) of objects.

Forms of being are unitary forms (of course the precise manner of their unicity is to be ascertained and will be ascertained in the final chapter).

And specifying forms exhibit just the same kind of unity – they consist in a highly unitary content. They lack the looseness in the oneness of form characterizing non-basic objects or non-entities among basic ones. Which character

of theirs precludes any sharp differentiation and separation of them from proper forms of being. If there are specifiers at all, they must be determinants. Once again, SF has failed to differentiate itself from SFB.

The refutation of SF provides also a proof of the contention twice mentioned above<sup>1</sup> that the specific being of determinants cannot be due even in part, to a principle extraneous to them.

### **78. There are no specifying objects and no specifying forms of being**

It is concluded that specification and determination does not involve three objects, but only two: the determinable and the determinate.

Similarly, there are only two forms of being: the generic and the specific one.

Further, (c) in Art. 70 above is not to be accounted by a special form (grounded on a special object) which, in being assumed by (a) yields (b) (or transforms (a) into (b)). Specification as the derivation of the specific from the generic requires a different metaphysical explanation.

Finally, a specific form cannot have the complexity of even a whole.<sup>2</sup> For, if a whole, it would have *fundamentally and really* only one part, namely the generic form, since there is not in reality any specifying form distinct from them (i.e. from the specific and the generic forms of being).

On the other hand, of course, the above conclusions do not invalidate our mentally distinguishing in specification that form which the generic form of being may be conceived as assuming when transforming itself to, or manifesting itself in, the "shape" of the corresponding specific form of being. This notion of a specifying form (whose logical counterpart is the notion of the specific difference)

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra, Ch. III, Art. 54, ad.fin., and Art. 67, sub.in.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. infra, Ch. VI, Art. 89.

is a valid *conception*, provided one does not read into it ontological commitments of the sort which we have above repudiated.

### 79. Are there no separate Determinables?

A parsimonious theory of specification holds that specification is really and fundamentally a mental abstraction of the generic out of its species, seen from its other terminus.

Since we have proven the independence in being of determinants, in general, (their being in and for themselves), this theory is bound to hold that, ultimately, only the absolutely determinate determinants<sup>1</sup> really do subsist separately in extramental reality.

We shall confront such a theory on the assumption<sup>2</sup> that it is sophisticated enough to acknowledge that the mental abstraction allegedly involved is grounded on some valid and real distinction<sup>3</sup> in things themselves (here on determinates and their forms of being).

For example, the genus may be considered exclusively as a material immanent principle within the various species.<sup>4</sup> And it may then be denied that it can subsist independently and separately from its species – save as a mental conception, itself the result of a mental abstraction.

Let such a kind of view be called “The Abstraction Theory of Specification”.

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<sup>1</sup> An absolutely determinate determinant is, we repeat, one which in no way is also determinable.

<sup>2</sup> Although some of the arguments to be deployed below against it do not depend for their validity on such an assumption.

<sup>3</sup> An inquiry concerning the nature of various kinds of *distinction* will be avoided here. For instance, we shall not enter into the controversy about “*distinctio rationis cum fundamento in re*” and “*distinctio formalis a parte rei*” – to use the scholastic formulation of the problem.

<sup>4</sup> This will be found in the sequel (our positive account) to be correct, provided we omit the word ‘exclusively’ from the formulation in the text: what is, then, wrong is to consider such a view as the complete and adequate account of the matter. In truth, the immanence of the genus in the species, presupposes its transcendence in separate and independent existence.

This theory entails, of course, a very definite and real priority of the determinate over the determinable as such.

### 80. Refutation of the Abstraction Theory of Specification

The above defined theory can be shown to be false as follows:<sup>1</sup>

1. There is a multiplicity of (absolutely) determinate determinants, each possessing a particular, single form of being. But on the criticized theory, there *can* be no adequate metaphysical explanation of their being in its particular specificity. However, such an explanation is imperatively required for the adequacy of a theory.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, a theory on which such explanation is *impossible*, is untenable and false.

2. The ground within the species which validates the abstraction of the genus from it as (the result of) a mental operation, also stands in need of metaphysical explanation. Why and Whence and How is it there? And nothing can account for it on the abstraction theory.

3. A specific form of being has a certain kind of complexity, although neither the complexity of a mixture, nor even that of a whole. And it is necessary that both the kind of this complexity and the precise way in which the involved constituents come to be united in one complex item should be explained.<sup>3</sup> Which, again is impossible for the present theory.

4. The determinate determinant (with its unique specific form of being) is the result of a manifestation or determination (correspondingly, specification, for the forms of being) of the determinable determinant (with its generic form). But

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<sup>1</sup> The arguments below are not absolutely independent one from another. Nor should they, or need be so. They cohere, and complement each other.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also *supra*, Art. 68, sub in.

<sup>3</sup> To be noticed that the criticized theory *admits* the existence of (absolutely) determinate determinants, and denies the existence of determinables. It is not that it denies altogether the existence of abstract things in themselves and explains the above mentioned facts conceptually. This has been already settled (in Chapter III).

both the result of a manifestation and also the manifestation itself as an activity or operation *presuppose* ontologically *the manifested*. One cannot possibly ascribe objective ontological status to manifestations (either as results or as activities) and deny it of the items manifested. Even if it belongs to the essence of an object to manifest itself in certain ways (and hence always, if it is a temporal object, or eternally, in the case of an a-stemporal one, does manifest itself in these ways), yet the subsistence of it is evidently presupposed by the act of manifesting and the subsistence of its result. And the manifested must exist *by itself* in order to be able to act manifestingly, constituting a resulting manifestation of it. Consequently, the separate subsistence of the determinable is presupposed by the subsistence of the determinate.

5. There is a multiplicity of (absolutely) determinate determinants. Each one is a paradigmatic cause with respect to the concrete World. On the criticized theory nothing is above them as paradigmatic cause – or as any cause of them for that matter. Thus in the mentioned respect, i.e. exemplarism, they are first principles of the same general kind. But it was shown to be impossible that there be a multiplicity of first principles of the same kind.<sup>1</sup> Which proves once more the theory false.

The theory is, then, rejected. We cannot afford to dispense with genera. There are determinables, and they exist separately and in themselves.

### **81. There do exist determinate determinants as such and in themselves**

The exact opposite to the above discarded view is presented by the theory which denies real subsistence of determinate determinants in themselves as separate things and individuals. On this account, the specific form of being *as such*, is not primarily the unique and proper Form of a determinate determinant, an abstract thing subsisting in and by itself, but fundamentally a manifestation of the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Art. 67.



Form of the determinable, which manifestation, being incapable of being sustained by a *separate* thing whose total *forma essendi* it would constitute, can only be found on the one hand in mind, as a specific general conception, and on the other in concrete things as a specific form of being attached to them together with many others. (In Metaphysics, one is not, naturally, interested on how exactly the present theory would complete itself by accounting for the formation of the mental conception referred to above; that is, whether it would maintain that it is abstracted from concrete things or mentally derived from the generic form, or in some way jointly produced by abstraction and derivation).

The theory admits in effect the subsistence as separate abstract things of only the absolutely determinable determinant(s), i.e. of such determinant(s) which is (are) in no way determinate.<sup>1,2</sup>

This doctrine of the nonexistence of determinate determinants as separate things cannot be sustained.

For concrete things do exhibit specific forms of being. Indeed, it is in accordance with Reason to hold that when they exhibit a specific form of a genus, they exhibit *two* forms of being (the specific and the generic one) only in so far as the generic is involved as an element in the specific; in a certain sense they exhibit primarily only *one*, the specific.<sup>3</sup> Now forms of being as exhibited by concrete

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<sup>1</sup> Obviously, this definition of an absolutely determinable determinant will be grasped clearly in its precise signification only after the positive account of determination has been given.

<sup>2</sup> In truth, it can be shown that there is only one absolutely determinable determinant.

<sup>3</sup> This view in no way conflicts with the doctrine of the precedence and priority of the genus over the species in exemplification; that is, with the claim that first (in metaphysical priority) comes the exemplification of the genus which predisposes the matter to receive afterwards the further determination constitutive of the specific form. For this further determination is received by the matter as predisposed, that is by the matter as having already received the generic determination of its being, and this means that, primarily, it is in this generic determination in which the matter is further determined in formal being – so that the total outcome is, in a sense, a single specific determination as above maintained.

On the other hand this combined account does contradict the view according to which what really “acts” exemplificatorily is the absolutely determinate determinant, and generic forms

things require the exhibition of the same by abstract things, in that determinants are the formal-paradeigmatic causes (i.e. exemplars) of concrete facts (i.e. facts with concrete things as subjects). And further, the required determinants must, in their capacity as paradeigmatic causes (exemplars), exhibit the said forms of being in the actual mode.<sup>1</sup> Thus, there must be determinants actually exhibiting specific forms of being as such. But determinable determinants *qua* determinable, exhibit specific forms of being *implicitly* or *latently*<sup>2</sup> if at all. Consequently, there must be determinate determinants as such, bearers of the actuality of the specific forms of being in question, themselves having these forms in the actual mode, and thus actually existing. And this was to be proven.

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occur in the concrete World, not only in so far as they are involved in specific form of elements (this is conceded by our theory, too), but also as the indirect result of the direct exemplification of (ultimately) absolutely determinate determinants, and not as the result of a direct exemplification of the corresponding determinables.

But we cannot enter here fully into this controversy.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. III, Art. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *infra*, Ch. VI *passim*.

**Chapter IV**  
**(Articles 82-94)**

**SPECIFICATION AND DETERMINATION**  
**AS PROCESSION**

## 82. There are determinable and determinate determinants, but not specifying ones

The refutations in the preceding chapter show that determination and specification involve, in their unit cell (i.e. in the nexus of a genus and one of its proximate species), neither *three* entities, nor –one\_real entity – nor, if it should be added, *no* real entity at all.

They, then, involve just *two* entities, namely two abstract things: the determinable and the determinate determinants with the corresponding generic and specific forms of being uniquely attached to them.

## 83. Priority of genus over species

Both the modification as an operation or quasi-activity, and the result of modification presuppose, universally and necessarily, something modified. And not only the actuality, but even the possibility of a modification and its result presuppose the modifiable, something, independently subsisting, which is capable and has the power of being modified.

In this general sense, specific forms *presuppose* generic ones; and accordingly, determinate determinants presuppose determinable ones for their very being.

The said presupposition is the other side of the *derivation* of the specific form out of the generic (and of the determinate from the determinable, at least as regards being).

Both these aspects of the connection holding between genera and species may be signified by saying that genus is *prior* to species.

But, of course, the important thing is to determine exactly the nature of presupposition, derivation or priority; in the course of which determination, the precise *ontological* significance of the presupposition, derivation or priority involved should become manifest.

This determination of the precise nature of the priority concerned is also necessarily bound up with the final solution to the problems enunciated in Ch.V, Art. 66 above.

#### **84. The generic form of being possesses intrinsic power of eidetic development**

There are distinguished within the specific form of being two quasi-elements (but not real, proper parts): the generic form of being as a constituent of it, and the quasi-form of the specific difference which by supervening upon the latter yields the former (or which trans-forms the latter to the former).

Specification cannot, it has been shown, be accounted by a postulated interaction of the determinable with a specifier or a specifying determinant. There is no possibility of extraneous interference in the derivation of the specific form of being from the generic one. But if the required form of the corresponding specific difference cannot be contributed by any external (as regards the nexus of the coupling: genus-species) source, it must have an internal origin and origination. Consequently, the form of the difference must come from where the generic element within the specific form also comes, namely from the generic form of being as such.<sup>1</sup> *The generic form of being must then, as such, be intrinsically able to develop itself towards its species.*

Thus, the question is, In what does this intrinsic capability of the generic form of being to yield the specific one *in its specificity* consist?

#### **85. The generic form of being as such contains implicate the specific difference of its own species**

The determinate P<sub>2</sub>-ness exists in itself, as a separate, individual abstract thing. But in-itself-being does not, of course, imply uncausedness. On the contrary,

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<sup>1</sup> The generic form of being as such is distinct from the generic form of being as actual constituent of the specific form of being. The nature of this distinction will be exposed in what follows.

particular determinants require metaphysical explanation of their determinately specific being.<sup>1</sup>

The paradeigmatic cause of P<sub>2</sub>-ness (or of the abstract fact – i.e. fact with an abstract thing as subject – that P<sub>2</sub>-ness is P<sub>2</sub>)<sup>2</sup> in so far as P<sub>2</sub>-ness is P<sub>1</sub>, is, evidently, P<sub>1</sub>-ness. Moreover, from what has been established above, P<sub>1</sub>-ness must also be the paradeigmatic cause or exemplar of P<sub>2</sub>-ness in so far as P<sub>2</sub>-ness is P<sub>m</sub>; for there cannot be any other relevant cause of it.

Now paradeigmaic causes cause, as exemplars, what they themselves already possess.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, P<sub>1</sub>-ness must exhibit, after some fashion or other, fP<sub>m</sub>. But the (total) Form, the complete *forma essendi*, of P<sub>1</sub>-ness is fP<sub>1</sub>. Hence fP<sub>1</sub> must include somehow fP<sub>m</sub>.

This, then, is the immediate answer to the question posed in the preceding article: the generic form of being has the power to develop or transform itself to the specific form of being *by reason of its in itself containing in some appropriate manner* the specific difference constitutive of that specific form in its specificity. The specific difference must be *written in* the nature of the generic form itself *in advance*.

The generic form must not only be according to its own nature susceptible of specification in general; it must furthermore be intrinsically capable of undergoing the particular specification resulting in its proximately subordinate specific forms, and capable of doing this just *be being what it is*. Thus not only the susceptibility of specification in general, not even only the capability in particular of undergoing *definite* specifications, but also the definite specifications themselves

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. *supra* Ch. V, Art. 68.

<sup>2</sup> A cause can alternatively be viewed as cause of a thing in so far as it is (something), or of the corresponding simple fact with the said thing as subject. Strictly speaking a cause is cause of *a being as such*.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *supra* Ch. III, Art. 45.

in their determinateness must *pre-exist* in it, after some fashion or other, constituting a positive power of eidetic development.

But, of course, the way in which the specific difference is contained in the specific form of being is not the way in which it is included in the generic form of being.<sup>1</sup> We shall say that the specific difference is found *explicite* in the specific form of being and *implicite* in the generic one, to signify the real difference above discerned.

### 86. Moments of (forms of) being

Specification, then, consists in the rendering explicit of what is implicit in the generic form of being.

The determinable determinant exhibits its Form in the actual mode of being. And it also must exhibit in the same manner everything included in the Form. Thus, the implicit inclusion in the generic form of being cannot be accounted by a *potential* exhibition, properly so called, of the specific difference on the part of the determinable concerned: *Potentiality*, as a mode of being, and *implicitness*, in our technical sense, are distinct. But on the other hand, neither is the *dividing* specific difference an *element* of the generic form of being, as its own genus and constitutive specific difference are.

We are thus led to recognize *aspects* or *moments* of forms of being, apart from their properly constitutive elements.

Indeed a form of being may be considered in its bare particular<sup>2</sup> determinateness, as a particular being-determination or being-something. And this is its *content*. Taken thus, the form of being is considered *in itself*, as just a particular form of being and nothing else.

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<sup>1</sup> And, similarly, the generic form is not found in the specific form as it is in and by itself.

<sup>2</sup> 'Particular' in such uses means nothing more than singular; it carries the ordinary, broad sense, as when we say 'in particular'. Thus it lacks ontological implications, in contrast to 'individual'.

But the same<sup>1</sup> form of being can be viewed as a *generic* form of being since it is one. It is in this capacity that it contains implicitly the dividing specific difference. Thus, this latent inclusion consists in that moment of the form of being, which grounds the reality of eidetic divisibility. Hence, it is this moment which manifests itself as that *power* of the form of being, whereby the form can be eidetically divided into its species.

Finally, again the same form of being can be considered as an element *in* each one of its species (or, in general, as an element of its species). And it can present itself as such, in virtue of the *activity*, i.e. the explicit manifestation, of one or other of the implicitly included forms of specification – that is, in virtue of the activity (or operation) of its power of eidetic division in one of the possible ways or other.

Forms of being, then, present three distinct aspects of being, or involve three distinct moments of being, which do not differ in respect of content of being, but only in respect of *the state and degree of implicitness*<sup>2</sup> of the implications as regards eidetic division latent or implicit in the various forms of being.

Summarizing:

1. The form of being as such is the bare content or particular determinateness of being;

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<sup>1</sup> To be noticed that this sameness is not susceptible of distinction into numerical and formal sameness. Forms are no objects. Here we have to do with the identity mentioned supra, Ch. I, Art. 7. Cf. also infra Art. 87.

<sup>2</sup> It is not only liberality, or the conception of a limiting case, that makes us speak by implication of a state of implicitness where the proximately dividing specific differences are not even implicitly included (i.e. in the first moment of being). For even in this case, since the bare content of particular being involves as elements its own genus and the corresponding constitutive specific difference, it also includes the subsequent dividing differences, not, of course, in the way in which these are included in the second moment of the form of being in question, but in the indirect way in which they are included in its genus, namely as the differences which produce further modifications of the modification expressed in the specific difference constitutive of the form and content concerned. For, of course, our analyses apply *mutatis mutandis* equally well to specification in general, not only to proximate specification.



2. The form of being as generic is the content with its power (of eidetic division);

3. The form of being as element in another form of being is the content with the activity of its power (exercised in a particular direction from the predeterminedly available ones).

Each form of being, with the exception of the absolutely generic and the absolutely specific, includes also directly all three moments in itself. For such form, *qua* being exhibited by one and the same determinant as its unique Form, involves a content, its power (as regards further specification), and the activity of its superordinated genus.

A corollary of the above doctrine is that content or determinateness in being, power and activity (meant in the appropriate senses) of being are not determinants or (with systematic ambiguity) forms of being. Thus, there are no abstract things Power, Activity, Determinateness, Genus, Species etc. Their status is different from that of proper abstract thinghood – really ontological and “super-physical” though it is.

### **87. Specification involves negation and contraction**

Co-ordinated species are so many (results of) manifestations of their proximate genus.

Specification is the rendering explicit of forms of modification of a generic form of being implicate included in the same generic form of being.

A particular specification (i.e. one resulting in a particular specific form of being) consists in the explicit manifestation of one of the modificatory or specificatory forms implicate contained in the generic form. Such a particular explicit manifestation cancels, *eo ipso*, the *availability* of the other co-ordinated possible (with reference to the generic form) manifestations as *still* possible

manifestations; that is, it nullifies their implicitness: they are no longer available and possible: they no longer constitute real powers.

Not that the other forms of specific differences are totally and in every way absent from the particular specific form of being concerned. They cannot be so absent (absent simpliciter), because the specific form of being includes as an element the generic form, in which all these specificatory forms cannot but be *somehow* contained. True, they cannot, as we said, be implicate contained any more.<sup>1</sup> Nor, obviously, can they be explicit included. It remains that they are included as *explicitly suppressed or nullified* in their power to yield eidetic specification. They are included as that which could have been done, if what actually took place had not been done.

The explicit manifestation of one of the dividing specificatory forms of a genus is simultaneously an equally explicit suppression of all other co-ordinated specificatory forms. Thus, what constitutes a specific form in its positiveness of specificity (namely, the explicit manifestation of its constitutive specific difference) is at the same time (and from the reverse side, as it were) what constitutes it as other or different from all other co-ordinated specific forms (namely, the explicit negation of all other specific differences dividing the same genus). In other words, what constitutes positively a specific form as a form of being, constitutes it also negatively, as other from the other co-ordinated species. Here, then, is given the analysis of, and reason for, the claim<sup>2</sup> that determination accounts both for the self-identity of a form of being in its particular positive determinateness and for its difference from other forms of being.

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<sup>1</sup> There is, of course, no inconsistency in holding that the forms of proximate manifestation of a generic form are not implicate included with it, because we have here to do with the generic form not as such, but as an element in the specific one, that is, with the generic form in its activity of eidetic division, and even with this in so far as it is carried out in a particular one among the available ways.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra* Ch. I, Art. 7.

In determination or specification ontological negation is involved, not indeed independently and on its own, as a positive reality as it were (per impossibile), but as the reverse side of explicit manifestation. We have seen that in a specific form of being as such, there are included or posited *explicitly but negatively* (i.e. in explicit negation or suppression) all specific differences coordinated with the one which is explicitly *and* positively included; indeed, it is this involved explicit negation which grounds negatively the identity of the specific form in question as a particular form, circumscribing its positivity *against* that of others (i.e. which grounds the difference of this specific form from others connected).

This intrinsic connection of determination with negation ontologically concerned, gives our analysis of the dictum: *Omnis determinatio est negatio*.

Further, it is observed that explicit manifestation, in being a renunciation of all other available ways of development or eidetic transformation than the one ontologically adopted, implies a limitation of the power of being, as above defined, pertaining to the generic form of being. Moreover, further eidetic activity can only be exercised towards modifications which are further developments of the modification already effected through the explicit adoption or positive positing of the specificatory form assumed.

We conclude that multiplied (ontological) *negativity, contraction* in power and increased *determinateness* go necessarily together.<sup>1</sup>

### **88. Necessary possibility in the Realm of Determinants**

Speaking of powers, possibilities or capabilities in the realm of determinants, we are not contradicting what we have maintained regarding the

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<sup>1</sup> This result, developed and supplemented, is of help in the formation of a correct and adequate notion of infinitude and finiteness.

absence of any potentiality from it. For as it has been already remarked,<sup>1</sup> the latter claim concerns potentiality *properly so called*, that is, one which *may* be actualized, but also may remain *unrealized*; this was the notion deployed in the discussion of modes of being.

Now, on the other hand, we have to recognize a fundamentally different notion of possibility involving *necessity* of actualization. Such possibilities may be termed ‘necessary possibilities’ or ‘possibilities of necessity’. Capabilities in the realm of determinants are of such a kind. For the power of a generic form of being cannot remain inoperative or unexercised; all potentialities involved in it in the form of so many implicit dividing differences are of necessity realized, thereby constituting the subordinate specific forms in their particular specificity. Possibilities in the realm of determinants are not only actualizable; they are actualized; and they could not but be actualized; thus, they are necessarily actualized.

Possibility proper, involving, that is, possibility of actualization and non-actualization, cannot evidently be itself the principle or cause of its own actualization.<sup>2</sup> Contrariwise with possibility in the novel sense; it must either involve intrinsically such a principle or depend for its actualization on a principle necessarily operating in such a way that the said actualization is realized.

From what has been established concerning determination in determinants, eidetic divisibility (as power) involves necessary possibility of the first type (including that is, its own principle of actualization or transmutation to act). For nothing extraneous to the genus contributes in the least to eidetic division; the

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. supra Ch. III, Art. 53,(b).

<sup>2</sup> This applies equally to active and passive potencies. Our distinction between two senses of ‘possibility’ is different from that between two kinds of *proper* possibility, namely active and passive potencies in the World of concreteness. This has important consequences on the theory of causality in this World. Cf. also supra Ch. IV, Art. 62, sub fin.

power of being involved in the generic form of being as such is the only cause or principle of its actualization, and, thus, of the actual division of the genus.

But although the being of determinants is necessary in so far as its actuality does not come from the actualization of a proper potentiality, and even necessary in a stronger sense in so far as its actuality comes from the actualization of a potency which involves the principle of its own actualization; yet it is not absolutely necessary, in that it does come from the actualization of a possibility, even though of a *necessary one, necessarily self-actualizing itself*. Which shows that the actuality of the determinants and their being is not absolutely pure actuality.<sup>1</sup> Which again is to confirm that determinants are not absolutely first principles.<sup>2</sup>

### 89. Composition in forms of being. Their complexity and unity

The doctrine of specification advanced above, shows also clearly why a form of being is not a whole of parts.<sup>3</sup> For although it has already been remarked negatively<sup>4</sup> that there cannot be a whole (the specific form) consisting in one real (the generic form) and one unreal (the specific difference) part; we now see positively that the composition of a form of being is that of the explicit manifestation,<sup>5</sup> or of the result of an internal development or transformation, when considered as including as a quasi-element what is manifested (the manifested) or, in other words to the same effect, the source of the development. I say 'quasi-element'; for what is manifested *qua manifested* just is the (result of the) manifestation; and, on the other hand, that which is manifested *qua* not actually manifested but capable of manifestation (i.e. as implicitly containing the form of the manifestation concerned), simply is *not* at all a real element *in* the result of

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. I, Art. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. also *supra*, Ch. V, Arts. 67-68.

<sup>3</sup> Obviously it is not a mixture of ingredients either. Cf. *supra*, Ch. IV, Art. 63, Ad (C), for the distinction. Cf. also *supra*, Ch. V, Arts. 72 (sub in.), 76 and 78.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. V, Art. 78.

<sup>5</sup> I am, of course, speaking of the result rather than of the activity.

manifestation, but is rather the source (remaining separate from, and extraneous to, the result), out of which as from a transcendent principle the result came.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, distinct from both what is manifested (the manifested) as manifested and that which is manifested as not actually manifested but capable of manifestation, is what is manifested (the manifested), as what it barely and nakedly is apart from any question of capability or actuality of manifestation, i.e. in its mere being-content (much like the form of being in its first moment<sup>2</sup>). And in this way, one may contend, there are to be distinguished two elements within a specific form of being (the result of manifestation), namely the generic form of being in its first moment (that is, as a bare being-content) and the required form of specific difference.

This is to cling desperately to the discredited SFB theory but also to repeat uncritically what we ourselves claim. For if we correct the statement by remarking that, firstly, the second alleged element is not extramentally real (outside, that is, the order of the mind concerning it) as a form, and that, secondly, the generic form of being in its bare determinateness of being cannot be strictly and properly considered as an element *in* the specific form (since it would then illegitimately arrogate to itself the status and function of the third moment of the form of being involved); and if, in general, we view that statement in the light of the negative results of the preceding chapter, as well as of our doctrine of the moments of being; then we see that what the above contention really contends is no more than that forms of being are not *absolutely* simple. Which is, of course, true; there *is* composition in a form of being. Only this composition is not the one of the wholes or of the complexes involving proper elements. We may, of course, speak, if we

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<sup>1</sup> In this respect, 'manifestation' has the didactic advantage, over 'transformation' or 'development' or similar terms, of not ordinarily connoting annihilation of the respective source or origin in the course of the processes denoted by these names. Manifestation is not a transmutation eliminating the manifested, or transforming it into its result.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, Art. 86.

wish, about elements in a form of being; and we have in fact spoken sometimes about elements and sometimes about quasi-elements. But what is important, is to be noticed that, here, *the one element is already contained in a certain way in the other element*: the one element consists in nothing more than the *explicit emphasis* on what is already included in the other element not as an element of it, but still in such a way as to ground a distinct power of it. Clearly, we have to do with peculiar elements; and peculiarly strong is their union, and the unity of the form of being. It is in this sense, though we shall not pursue the matter further here, in which we can really speak of elements, utilizing the second sense of the term discerned in Ch. 4, Art. 63, sub fin.

Saying that the composition and unity of a form of being is that of a compound of matter and form, can only be understood *analogically*, and thus presupposes our explanation and does not *offer* one.

That the saying rests on analogy is obvious; for forms of being not being things, nor indeed even objects, they cannot properly have any matter of form. *They are* (identical with) *forms*.

And even analogically construed, the saying is misleading. For matter in the concrete World does not involve in its potentiality to assume forms the power to effect such assumptions. Whereas generic forms of being do involve such power in their capability of eidetic division.

#### **90. Determinables are the efficient causes of their determinates**

It has been already shown that individual determinants stand in need of metaphysical explanation. They do not have uncaused being.

Further, it has also been shown both that, in general, the being of determinants does not depend on anything extra-“determinantal”,<sup>1</sup> and that, in

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. V, Art. 67.

particular, the causality operating in each unit of the nexus of determination and specification must have sources which are internal, as regards the unit.<sup>1</sup>

By applying these principles, we have already concluded that the determinable of a certain determinate is the latter's paradeigmatic cause with respect to its total formal being.<sup>2</sup>

We now ask, What is the efficient cause of a determinate determinant's being?<sup>3</sup>

The generic form of being as such, that is, as the unique Form of a determinable as such, possesses intrinsic power of eidetic division.<sup>4</sup> And this power is a necessary possibility, indeed a potency in itself involving the principle of its own actualization.<sup>5</sup> But its necessary self-actualization constitutes the specific forms as such and in their explicit and manifested actuality (in contrast to their latency in the generic form); that is, it constitutes the Forms of the corresponding determinates *in their actuality*; or, seeing the same fact from its other end, it constitutes the determinates as *actually having* their Forms; or, better, it constitutes the actual having or possession of the Forms (the specific forms of being) by the said objects-subjects. But this means that the determinable as such (i.e. as exhibiting a generic form of being as such) is the efficient cause of the determinate as such. Which is the answer to the question asked above.

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<sup>1</sup> This was, in effect, the conclusion of the development in Ch.V, Arts. 71-78.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, Art. 85.

<sup>3</sup> We ask the question in this form, about *determinate* determinants, and not about determinants simpliciter, because we have already observed that the determinate is the metaphysically posterior thing (cf. *supra*, Art. 83), the one, therefore, in need of metaphysical explanation.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *supra*, Art. 84.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *supra*, Art. 88.



## 91. Determinables are the material causes of their determinates

P<sub>1</sub>-ness *qua* exhibiting fP<sub>1</sub>-in-itself, or fP<sub>1</sub> in its bare particular determinateness of Being-Something, or fP<sub>1</sub> in its first moment, is P<sub>1</sub>-ness as a determinant simpliciter.

P<sub>1</sub>-ness *qua* exhibiting fP<sub>1</sub> in its second moment, is P<sub>1</sub>-ness as a *determinable* determinant.

Now P<sub>1</sub>-ness *qua* exhibiting fP<sub>1</sub> in its third moment, that is *qua* exhibiting fP<sub>1</sub> *in its activity* (of eidetic division) *but still apart from the results of its activity*,<sup>1</sup> is the *proximate matter* of its determinates.

But then the proximate matter of P<sub>2</sub>-ness as a determinant comes from P<sub>1</sub>-ness as separate and transcendent determinant by way of determination. And if the proximate matter comes *from it, a fortiori* the ultimate matter comes also *through it* (i.e. *from it* as a mediate cause).

Which entitles us to affirm that P<sub>1</sub>-ness is the material cause<sup>2</sup> of P<sub>2</sub>-ness.

## 92. Production, Weak Creation, Creation

An efficient cause *produces* the thing (as being) whose efficient cause it is, and in the relevant respect.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Or alternatively, *qua* exhibiting fP<sub>1</sub> in its *actualization* of its intrinsic powers, but still apart from their full *actuality*.

To emphasize our cautious indifference regarding the linguistic expressions of ideas, we maintain that the *same* objectively distinction could be communicated thus:

*qua* exhibiting fP<sub>1</sub> in its action *but apart from its action while in its action* –

in this way distinguishing P<sub>1</sub>-ness as matter of its determinates from P<sub>1</sub>-ness as transcendent genus, where we should say correspondingly:

*qua* exhibiting fP<sub>1</sub> apart from its action *and also* in advance (a-temporally meant, of course) of its action.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. for the explication of the term, *supra*, Ch. 2, Art. 39. It may be noted that matter in abstract things is different from matter in concrete things. But the exact definition of the way in which they differ cannot be given here. Cf. also *supra*, Ch. II, Art. 35.

<sup>3</sup> The variety of uses and formulations of the cause-idiom in this article is systematically connected, and can easily be reduced to the relevant definition in Ch. II, Arts. 38-39. For an indication of the correct way of reduction, cf. e.g., *supra*, Art. 85, n. 2 [p. 158].

In production, a certain matter susceptible of a certain form is made to actually assume that form. Both the matter and the form are given and what is strictly speaking effected is their compounding.<sup>1</sup>

An efficient cause which is also the paradeigmatic cause of a being *creates in a weak sense* (as we define it) the thing in question as that being.

In creation both the formal and the existential being of an entity come from, in the sense of being caused by, the same source.

When the creator, in a weak sense, of an entity is also its material cause, then we shall say that this constitutes (full or total) *creation*.<sup>2</sup> A creator, as the originator of both the material and formal elements of a thing and also of their connection to form a compound, is the Absolute Cause or Principle of the created thing.

### 93. Determination as Procession

From what has been established above, it follows that the proximate Absolute Cause of a determinant is its determinable.

Thus determination in determinants is a kind of creation.<sup>3</sup>

We call the particular kind of creation involved '*procession*', in order to emphasize that the derivation of the caused from its Absolute Cause in our case is no strict and proper *creatio ex nihilo*, nor any mere positing of the effect through the *external* agency of the cause, but rather a coming out or a flowing forth, a development or growth of the cause towards its result; the cause goes forth out of

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<sup>1</sup> This formulation of what an efficient cause effects is equivalent to the one normally given in our inquiry in terms of subject, form and existential act of the subject towards the form, in view of the doctrines of the hylomorphic composition of all individuals on the one hand, and of the distinction of Being into act and form of Being on the other.

<sup>2</sup> We do not affirm that there are such weak creations and strong creations – apart from the one case we shall mention in a moment. In this sense, but only in this sense, our definition of these expressions are *nominal*.

<sup>3</sup> Again, it is not affirmed that there are other real (whether possible or actual) kinds of creation, and if there are, which.

itself while remaining in itself, and *becomes* the effect, without ceasing to be distinct from it, in its part alienation from itself.

Of course these expressions are quasi-metaphorical. But the means have already been provided above for the understanding of their literal meaning.

We briefly recapitulate, simultaneously applying the results to the abstract things themselves.

There is given an abstract thing. This exhibits as its Total Form a certain form of being. A form of being involves, and consists in, a certain *explicit content* of determinateness in being, together with the forms of all proximate specifications, of which the said content as such, i.e. in its very particular determinateness and by reason of this its particular determinateness, is susceptible. These specificatory forms constitute the *implicit content* of the form of being in question, and ground its power to develop itself in eidetic division. And whereas the abstract thing in its exhibition of the explicit content of being involved in its Form, is the *determinant* considered *in, and by, itself*; in its exhibition of the implicit content (which exhibition necessarily follows upon the former), it is the principle of further determination, the principle which possesses the power of its operation and the power to move to its operation: it is the determinant as *determinable*.

The determinant in itself and the determinant *qua* determinable are one and the same thing both numerically *and* in respect of being; for it is *one* particular *form of being* which is in question. They differ in respect of *aspect* or *moment* of being. *An identity in respect of (formal) being is susceptible of a diversification in respect of moment of being.*

The explicit content of the form of being concerned manifests itself in one of the available ways<sup>1</sup> (it also, of course, manifests itself necessarily in all other available ways); it assumes one of the corresponding specificatory forms with

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<sup>1</sup> Their availability and their very nature being determined by the nature itself of that explicit content, which "calls for" these ways and not others.

which it is intrinsically associated; it develops to a new explicit content in which one of the previously implicit forms is rendered explicit or is ontologically affirmed making up a new and increased particular determinateness of being, while *ipso facto*, the others are renounced and cancelled in their availability, or are ontologically negated and rejected, *without being extinguished*. Thus, the power of being has been realized; the activity of being has been completed; the form of being involved has been incorporated, in its third moment, in one of its species as an element of it. The form of being concerned has *become* one of its species; the determinable determinant, one of its determinates.

But this becoming (or development, or growth) are not such as to entail the extinction of what was there to become (to develop or to grow). Moreover, this non-annihilation is not the ordinary one in which what was to become is preserved *in the outcome* of becoming. On the contrary, in determination the determinable determinant becomes its determinate while remaining distinct *and* separate from it: for determinable and determinate are different both numerically and in respect of being (though they, of course, have common formal being). Thus, we may say, the determinable goes outside itself, while remaining, and *in remaining*, in itself; it becomes something else, while remaining identical with itself – and it *can* become something else, precisely *by preserving* its transcendent self-identity (in so far as the power of eidetic division belongs to the transcendent genus).

And, of course, the determinable “becomes” all other proximate determinates as well; whose Forms are incompatible, in the sense that each one of them ontologically affirms (i.e. renders positively explicit) what all others ontologically negate or cancel (nullifying its availability or implicitness, not absolutely and in general, but for the particular result envisaged).

[This last remark shows clearly the falsity of any conception to the effect that determination is a kind of splitting or dividing or dismembering or dissolving

of the determinant carried on *in itself and within itself* (that is, immanently, as contrasted to a going forth out of itself in its division).

On such a view determination would be a kind of internal growth of parts within a whole containing them implicate right from the beginning.<sup>1</sup>

But this is impossible. For it would require from a form of being to develop in itself, and as parts of itself, explicitly incompatible forms, while remaining one real form of being].

With regard to each determinate which is the outcome of the activity of a determinable in accordance with one of its power (and which is also what the determinable becomes as a result of its activity), there is distinguished the (determinable) determinant in its particular activity concerned, but apart from the result of its activity (i.e. from the final actuality of its potency); and this is the (determinable) determinant as the proximate matter of its determinate. (Mutatis mutandis with the corresponding forms of being, where instead of 'proximate matter' we should read 'element').

The kind of creation described above, then, which is a becoming where the cause transcendent to its effects becomes its effects (without being transmuted to them) in a process whose stages are disposed as detailed in this chapter, – we signify appropriately by the term '*procession*'.

It is needless to add that this procession is eternal.<sup>2</sup>

#### **94. Solution to the problem of the nature and structure of determinants**

We are now in a position to answer succinctly the fundamental questions asked in Art. 66 (Ch. V), and thus to solve, to that extent, the problem of the nature and structure of determinants.

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<sup>1</sup> An attraction of the view consists in the circumstance that one would no longer be committed to the claim that the determinable becomes something *external* to itself, while remaining itself and in itself.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. III, Arts. 55-56.

It is thus stated:

A. D-D connection is a procession. (Thus, it is a fully causal connection<sup>1</sup>).

B. A particular determinant has a certain nature (i.e. Form or form of being) by reason of its having proceeded in the specified way from its determinable, which is its (proximate) Absolute Cause.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *supra*, Ch. IV, Art. 63, Ad (A). By “fully causal” I mean causal of the type (b).

<sup>2</sup> The two questions are connected, as it was *a priori* ascertained that they should above (cf. Ch. V, Art. 67).

## SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

I referred in the Introduction to “select philosophical Traditions” as an essential background to the present investigation, indeed as the firm ground in which my inquiry may be viewed as securely rooted, and in the context of which the point of the problems and the doctrines here expounded can the better be understood and evaluated. Two of the traditions alluded to, may receive here a brief explicit notice.

The first and primary, is the Platonic-Aristotelian Tradition, the mainstream in Ancient Greek Philosophy, which beginning with the controversies in Early Academy aroused and originated by Plato’s speculative inquiries and doctrines and their first analytical systematization in Aristotle’s theory, and passing through the philosophy of Plotinus on the one hand, and under the influence of that enigmatic figure, Iamblichus, on the other, found its consummation in the latest Neoplatonic developments of the School of Athens, as typically exemplified by the immense articulation of the Proclean grand synthesis, or the abstruse subtleties in the disquisitions of a Damascius.

On this occasion I should like to refer characteristically to the following works which reveal and manifest those later developments – works undeservedly not widely studied from a philosophical point of view (as distinct, in so far as it is distinct, from a merely historical and scholarly one).

- Syrianus: *In Metaphysica Commentaria* [ed. H. Usener, Berlin, 1870. (Now incorporated into Vo. IV of the Berlin Academy edition of Aristotle’s works). Also, ed. G. Kroll, Berlin 1902. (In the “Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca” series of the Berlin Academy)]
- Damascius: *Dubitationes et Solutiones de Primis Principiis, in Platonis Parmenidem* [ed. C.A. Ruelle, Paris, 1889]

From the great works of Proclus, I may mention in particular:

- *Elementatio Theologica* [ed. E.R. Dodds, Oxford, 1963<sup>2</sup>]
- *Theologia Platonica* [ed. Ae. Portus, Hambourg, 1618. Two volumes of the new edition by H.D. Saffrey and L.G. Westerink in the Budé series have so far appeared: Vol. I (Book I), 1968; and Vol. II (Book II), 1974, Paris]
- *Commentarium in Platonis Parmenidem* (ed. G. Stallbaum, Leipzig, 1839. Also, by V. Cousin, Paris, 1864<sup>2</sup>. (In Parm., VII, in the latin translation by G. de Moerbeke, edited by R. Klibansky and C. Labowsky, London, 1953)).

The second Tradition alluded to above is the Scholastic one, especially at its stage of flourishing systematic expositions of metaphysical doctrine in the 13<sup>th</sup> century of our era.

In this connection, apart from the metaphysical inquiries dispersed in the writings of, mainly, St. Thomas Aquinas and Johannes Duns Scotus, one may mention in particular:

- St. Thomas: *de Ente et Essentia* [ed. M.D. Roland-Gosselin, Le Saulchoir, Kain, Belgium, 1926]
- Giles of Rome: *Theoremata de Esse et Essentia* [ed. E. Hocedez, Museum Lessianum, Louvain, 1930]

\_\_\_\_\_ : *Quaestiones Disputatae de Esse et Essentia* [Venice, 1503].

One should also consult the relevant “quaestiones” from Henry’s of Ghent: *Quaestiones Quodlibetales* [Venice, 1613], especially in view of his important controversy with Giles of Rome concerning the reality of the distinction between existence and essence. (A few of suggested relevant “Quaestiones” in this work are the following: 1,9; 3,2; 3,9; 4,4; 8,9; 10,7; 10,8; 11,3).

Finally, one cannot but conclude such a reference to Scholastic Metaphysics with a mention of the imposing work of Fr. Suárez: *Disputationes Metaphysicae*. [In two parts, volumes XXV and XXVI of the Vivès edition, Paris, 1877].



Strict philosophical utilization, for not merely historical and scholarly purposes, of past Traditions (especially ones like those above indicated), can appear, as such and in principle, otiose and outlandish only to an adherent of the belief in linear progress in philosophy on the whole. I do not happen to entertain a view of the nature of philosophy, which could permit me to share in that belief: far from it. Nor do I think that unquestionably and uncritically taking for granted the prevalent current of philosophical thought (at any time and place) is conducive to right philosophical understanding. Philosophy, if anything, must be *broadly based*; it must be a matter of *confluence*. The common ground for communication should be provided by as many (valid) Traditions as possible. Thus, the interests of substantial communication can never be offered as a valid reason against a proposed broadening of the basis in tradition of philosophical thought at any time and place.

Conformably with these roughly put ideas, if I emphasize the connection of my inquiry with the above mentioned Traditions, it is not that I invoke them in order to claim immunity from criticism proceeding, say, from contemporary analytical currents. On the contrary; for I am of the opinion that these currents, in their important (sub specie aeternitatis) manifestations, have not alienated themselves from the Great Tradition in European Philosophy, as perhaps some other contemporary currents on the Continent may have done. Further I believe that I follow in my inquiry the *spirit* of the Analytical Tradition (e.g. in the way the various theses are argued for and established). Surely the ideas and their formulation, the content and the jargon, are not those of the *presently dominant embodiments* of the analytical spirit. But if I am right in my understanding and interpretation of my inquiry here, and provided that I have succeeded in rendering the formulation of the doctrine here expounded “analytically”

meaningful,<sup>1</sup> then one can concretely see, what one should believe anyway, namely that metaphysical speculation and the (true) spirit of analytic techniques and Analytical Philosophy in general, are not necessarily at variance, nor really incompatible, with each other.

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<sup>1</sup> It does not matter at all, for the purpose at hand, whether there is a clash *as regards truth* between my doctrine and what many philosophers who practice a certain kind of *Analytical Philosophy* at a certain period of time (say, for the last half-century) hold as true.