

TRANSCENDENTAL METAPHYSICS IN OUTLINE

1. To be real in the most general sense of the word is to make a difference to something else that is real in the same general sense. Everything makes a difference to something, and only nothing makes a difference to nothing.

2. But if to be real at all is to make a difference to something that is also real, to be ultimately real is to make a difference to something, no matter what else may or may not make a difference to it. And to be strictly ultimate in reality is to make a difference to everything, no matter what other things may or may not make a difference to it.

3. There is a difference in ontological type, however, between things that are real solely and simply in that they make a difference to other things and things that are real in that other things also make a difference to them. In other words, there is an ontological type difference between things that are objects and only objects and things that are subjects as well as objects. Things that are only objects are properties and as such abstracts, while things that are also subjects are precisely subjects and as such concretes.

4. As between subjects or concretes there is a further difference in ontological type insofar as some of them can, while others of them cannot, make a difference to the same things that make a difference to them. Things of the first type are individuals, those of the second, events. Although things of both types are subjects or concretes and, therefore, are such that others make a difference to them, events are such that the things that make a difference to them have to be different from the things to which they make a difference, whereas individuals are such that the things to which they

make a difference need not be different from the things that make a difference to them. Among such other differences as may be involved in this difference between events and individuals is a difference between types of identity--the identity of events being strict, that of individuals, genetic.

5. There is yet another difference in ontological type between particular individuals to which at least some things make a difference and the universal individual to which all things make a difference.

Consequently, the two types of individuals also differ in that particular individuals can make a difference to only some things, while the universal individual must make a difference to all things. Obviously, in the nature of the case, there can be an indefinite number of particular individuals, but only one universal individual. Individuals are distinguished from one another by the different things that make a difference to them and to which they make a difference. But since any universal individual as such would make a difference to all things, even as they would make a difference to it, there cannot be any such distinction between any one universal individual and another.

6. Still another ontological type difference between individuals is the difference between those that are not and those that are self-understanding and hence capable of, among other things, the kind of transcendental metaphysics outlined in these theses. If any individual may be said to exist insofar as its defining properties are somehow actualized in events, a self-understanding individual may be said to exist in an emphatic sense of the word. All individuals who exist in this sense may be distinguished from other nonself-understanding individuals as existents.

7. Two other differences in ontological type pertain respectively to subjects or concretes and properties or abstracts. The first such difference is that between singulars and aggregates. Although things of both types are subjects or concretes, the difference between a singular and an aggregate is the difference between any one individual or event, on the one hand, and any group of individuals and/or events having less subjective unity than any of its member individuals or events, on the other.

8. The second difference pertaining to properties or abstracts is the difference between transcendental properties, on the one hand, and ordinary properties, on the other hand, whether these be categorial, generic, or special properties. Transcendental properties are strictly universal and therefore such that they belong to anything whatever, either regardless of ontological type differences, in the case of convertible transcendental properties, or else allowing for such differences, in the case of disjunctive transcendental properties. Thus, for example, the transcendental property of being real in the most general sense of making a difference to something else having the same property belongs to anything whatever, regardless of its ontological type. The same is true of any other transcendental property with which the property of being real can be converted--such as (to mention the most prominent of the traditional "transcendentals") being good, being one, being true, being beautiful. By contrast the transcendental property of being a subject or a concrete is disjunctive with the transcendental property of being a property or an abstract. Consequently, it belongs to everything only insofar as allowance is made for this difference in ontological type between subjects or

^ concretes and properties or abstracts. On the other hand, all ordinary properties, whether categorial, generic, or special, are less than strictly universal in that they belong only to subjects or concretes and not to properties or abstracts and, moreover, distinguish one kind of subject or concrete from some other kind. Thus, although categorial properties are the most universal of such other properties, they are like generic and special properties in belonging to only some individuals and events and not to others. Even such categorial properties as living or nonliving, mental or material admit of the possibility of negative as well as of positive instances, whereas transcendental properties belonging to subjects or concretes admit of the possibility of positive instances only. But if even categorial properties are so many determinates in relation to the determinables constituted by transcendental properties, the same is true, as it were, a fortiori, of generic properties in relation to categorial ones and of special properties in relation to generic ones, although the distinctions between the different levels of ordinary properties are more or less arbitrary and therefore are not themselves distinctions in ontological type.

9. It will be evident from the preceding theses that of the several differences in ontological type, two are fundamental to all the others, even if in somewhat different respects. One such fundamental difference is that between properties or abstracts, on the one hand, and subjects or concretes, on the other. All of the other differences in type, not excluding that between particular individuals and the universal individual, presuppose this difference between things that only make a difference to other things and

things to which other things also make a difference. Indeed, in one respect no difference could be more fundamental, since to be real at all is to be either an object that is only an object or an object that is also a subject. And this is true even though the other differences between the different types of properties or abstracts and between the different types of subjects or concretes indicate that there is more than one way in which a thing can be either.

10. In another respect, however, the fundamental difference is the difference between particular individuals, on the one hand, and the universal individual, on the other. To be sure, this is a difference with respect to types of subjects or concretes and, even at that, with respect to types of individuals. But it belongs to the very meaning of an individual that it exists only insofar as its defining properties are somehow actualized in events, so that the difference between particular individuals, on the one hand, and the universal individual, on the other, necessarily implies an ontological difference between the type of events required to actualize any particular individual and the type by which the universal individual can alone be actualized. Moreover, the defining properties of particular individuals must in part be ordinary properties--categorical, generic and specific--while all the defining properties of the universal individual have to be transcendental. Consequently, the distinction between particular individuals and the universal individual is, in this other respect, fundamental to all the other distinctions in ontological type, including even that between subjects or concretes and properties or abstracts.