

Language has many uses, and it may or may not be used cognitively or intellectually. But if it is so used, it unavoidably makes reference to reality. Language so used, like the thought it formulates, is always about something other than just itself. It is about the process we call "nature," or "the creative advance," and the products that this process either has produced or is capable of producing. Take away all reference to the process and its actual or possible (conceivable) products, and there is no longer any reason to suppose that one is still thinking or speaking coherently, provided one's intention is to use language cognitively.

Meaning in science—and, arguably, in the extraordinary ontological science, metaphysics, as well—is a relation requiring a term; and, although the term need not, in ordinary cases, have the mode of actuality, it must in all cases have some mode of reality, the minimal mode, and the only alternative to actuality, being real, ontological possibility.

In the extraordinary cases relevant to metaphysics, the term that meaning requires is ^{ontological} ontological necessity, understood as the least common denominator of all possibilities simply as such, or as what must obtain no matter which possibility is actualized.

An idea about nothing is not an idea, unless the idea of "nothing" itself. But, then, to say that logical questions are "merely" logical and therefore "not about existence" is an anti-metaphysical dogma, not a self-evident truth

There is nothing for thought to think about other than reality, which is to say, creativity and/or its manifestations, actual or possible.

The real is that to which true affirmations refer—the object of correct affirmations, that which measures their truth.

Logic in the broad sense, as the a priori theory of reasoning or rational inference, includes:

(1) an a priori theory of reality as such, of what it is to be thinkable and knowable; and

(2) an a priori theory of thinking and knowing as such, of what it is to think or know something.

Thus metaphysics, as comprising just these two kinds a priori theory, does what the logician would do were she or he to give serious thought to the a priori or strictly universal traits of her or his first-level entities and to what it is to think or know them.

Logic cannot deal with a simply empty universe. Therefore, properties universally instantiated cannot be uninstantiated. The widest possible class of entities cannot conceivably be null.

All pure determinables must be particularized and concretized somehow. But there cannot be any ultimate reason for just this, that, or the other particularization or concretization. Actualization is brute fact, capricious, undeducible.

Distinction must be made between "pure, or eternal possibilities," on the one hand, and "spatio-temporally located possibilities," or "what is possible in a given time and place," on the other.

In order to complete the unification of real and logical possibility, the final step is to regard even natural laws, so far as genuinely contingent or with thinkable alternatives, as themselves products of the creative advance—as themselves emergent aspects of reality

Logical possibility implies something about reality, as does logical necessity.

The necessary is whatever is common to a set of possibilities. To be necessary is to be implied by the actualization of no matter which of the set of

possibilities in question. If the set is all possibilities whatever, all that is genuinely conceivable, or coherently thinkable, then what is common to the set is strictly, unconditionally necessary. If, on the contrary, the set is not all possibilities whatever, but only, say, all *human* possibilities—or all possibilities of any *understanding existence*, human or not—then what is common to the set is only broadly, conditionally necessary, i.e., necessary to any and all human possibilities, or to any and all possibilities of an existence that understands.

The modality of x is x 's classification according as its appropriate mode of exemplification in existence is either contingent or necessary—or, alternatively, according as whether its nonexistence is or not conceivable.

The conventional view of logicians is that existential statements can be true only contingently. But the more adequate view is that existential statements *on lower logical levels*—those mentioning definite particulars, or the special properties of such—can only be contingently true. But it's arguable that existential statements *not* mentioning definite particulars or the special properties thereof are not contingently, but necessarily, true.

If this argument is sound, it is a mistake as to logical level to take the statement, "God exists," which mentions no definite particulars or the properties of such, as asserting a merely contingent truth. If this seems strange because "God" can be consistently construed only as designating an individual, the response is that the designatum of "God" is not a *particular* individual, even the greatest, but the one and only *universal* individual. If, then, "individual" is taken in the strict sense in which it is applied ordinarily to persons and things enduring and changing through time, it is to be distinguished from the still lower, indeed, lowest, logical level of events or states (of persons and things). This means that, although events or states are and must be in every case particular, this need not be so with individuals, and cannot be so with the universal individual "God."

The lowest logical level is the level of events or states, which alone are fully concrete or particular. The highest logical level is the level of transcendentals, which alone are utterly abstract or universal. In between are levels that are relatively lower or higher depending on whether they do or do not involve mentioning definite particulars or their special properties. Thus particular individuals such as things and persons, although more abstract than events or states, are more still concrete and particular than individualities, species, genera, categories. Categories, on the other hand, although more concrete than transcendentals, are still more abstract and universal than genera, genera still more abstract than species, and species still more abstract than individualities.

Any possible fact can only be an aspect of events or happenings, actual or potential. Things or persons, accordingly, can only be certain stabilities or coherences in the flux of events. The stabilities, however, are in the events, not the events in the stabilities.

The grammar of the most general terms is philosophically significant as that of more special terms is not. Why? Because the most general terms are somehow illustrated in any conceivable experience, whether or not we're good enough phenomenologists to realize it.

The sufficient reply to Post and others who object to "subject-predicate literalism, according to which 'God' must refer" is that "'God' cannot be consistently construed except as a proper name with an individual designatum" (Hartshorne).

If the essence of God integrates all metaphysical truth; and if to know this essence—"the abstract, impossibility unexemplified essence of deity"—is "to know next to nothing," then to know metaphysical truth is to know next to nothing. And this, of course, is why we may be able to know it after all.

There is nothing for empirical atheists to be thinking of when they speak of the conceivable nonexistence of God, taken as also capable of existing.

They cannot be thinking of the incoherence of the idea of God, since they have already granted its coherence in taking God to be capable of existing.

Nor can they be thinking of the actual history of the world process, since that would imply that God's existence somehow depends on what creativity produces instead of being inherent in creativity itself.

But if the idea of a possibly nonexisting God is of neither of these, it is of nothing and has the same content as nothing, and therefore is not an idea of God after all.

Although necessary truths are implied by any and every contingent fact, this is only by virtue of what any such fact has in common with any other even conceivable fact.

The world is the final subject of change, which, as such, cannot be a mere aggregate or collection. The world can be the final subject of change only if it have a unity in some sense maximal, absolute, and exceeding the unity of any of its parts. This world unity is the ground of all plurality as well as of all unity in the world parts. No "real" aspect of anything can be omitted from the final unitary subject of change.

There is and must be something, relationship to which is the universal meaning of reality, and which itself is real by its own measure, is self-existent.

The world in its generic features does not imply its inhabitants. But its inhabitants imply the world with themselves as its existing parts.