Coming to Understanding

2000

AMMONIUS

With Critical Reviews By:

Ermanno Bencivenga
Jan A. Cover
Jonathan Dancy
John Hawthorne
Brian Leftow
Trenton Merricks
Eugene Mills
Gideon Rosen
Michael Scriven
Theodore Sider
Ted A. Warfield
Dean W. Zimmerman

VOLUME ONE

THE AMMONIUS FOUNDATION PRESS

The Ammonius Foundation Press
South Plainfield, NJ

Published by The Ammonius Foundation Press
375 Metuchen Road, South Plainfield, NJ 07080

Printed in the United States of America

www.ammonius.org

Table of Contents

Coming to Understanding

Critical Reviews

Section 1: Introduction

Is there any substantive knowledge of the nature of things that transcends and makes more intelligible the detailed knowledge provided by the natural sciences? Near the end of the *Tractatus,* Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote "We *feel* that after all the results of natural science are in, the real questions still remain to be answered." Yet his own despairing conviction was that the sense of the world and the contents of ethical demands are strictly inexpressible, and so could never have the status of knowledge. Wittgenstein's despairing conviction has a revealing history. His view, *viz.* that the fundamental structure of our language prevents us from giving sense to the questions which transcend empirical science, recapitulates Immanuel Kant's claim that the most general Categories of our thought, the very Categories of substance, causation and necessity with which we are tempted to frame world pictures, only have legitimate application within sensory experience. And Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* in its turn was an inspiration for Rudolf Carnap and the Vienna Circle. These self-styled "Logical Positivists" streamlined and demystified Wittgenstein's outlook by insisting that the only "cognitively meaningful" statements, besides stipulative or merely conventional definitions, were the verifiable or falsifiable statements which constituted the domain of empirical science. No substantive knowledge of the world was available *a priori*, i.e. independently of the operation of the senses. Which was to say that there is no original source of substantive knowledge of the world besides observation. Philosophy in general therefore had no ground to occupy. Metaphysics—a subject that Aristotle characterized as the study of Being qua Being—was treated as a subject devoid of a subject matter. At best, the great works of metaphysics were taken to represent a kind of abstract poetry, which happened to have appealed to certain quirky sensibilities.

Much of the best work in philosophy over the last century has consisted of one or another attempt to escape from this stultifying beginning. The rumors of the death of metaphysics have been greatly exaggerated. This should come as no surprise, for the very kind of understanding provided by the natural sciences is itself an impetus to metaphysics. The defining focus of the natural sciences is the explanation of events in terms of antecedent events and very general non-accidental regularities or laws of nature. Why does this sort of explanation work at all? Is it that the laws of nature represent a real structure of necessitation among universals, which we come to grasp in more detail as natural science develops? Is this structure of natural law absolutely necessary in the sense of being incapable of being otherwise, or is it something contingent that in turn needs explanation? If the structure of natural law is merely contingent, as it seems to be, then surely the

explanation of why this structure has the character it does cannot ultimately consist in another empirical explanation in terms of antecedent events and natural law. Here we are in the midst of metaphysics, the quest for a more global understanding of reality than science attempts to provide.

The appeal to natural law and antecedent events cannot explain why there is something rather than nothing, why the supposed Big Bang—or at least its original physical antecedents—occurred, why the original fundamental laws of nature take the particular form they do, why things are intelligible at all, whether there is any large-scale purpose embodied in the details revealed by science. These questions reach beneath anything that can be accounted for by embedding events in law-like patterns, yet they are manifestly real questions. Such questions do not ask for a causal explanation or a statistical reckoning of an event or series of events in the world. They concern reality as a whole, and its purpose if any.

The traditional metaphysical name for reality as a whole is Being. Being is exemplified in individual existents or beings. Metaphysics, as we shall understand it, is the study of Being qua Being in that it views reality as a whole. Which is to say that it views individual beings as exemplifications of Being and it inquires into the structure of Being.

The structure of Being is not the topic of scientific investigation. Science is focussed on individual beings of this or that contingent kind. So we should not expect a scientific answer to questions like:

> What is the structure of Being?
>
> Why is Being intelligible?
>
> What is the purpose, if any, of the exemplification of Being in individual beings?

Many conclude that there is no answer to these questions, just because there is no answer forthcoming from natural science. For they have no idea of what an account of Being would look like. Because of a lack of intellectual options, they reject the question of why Being is exemplified, i.e. why things which are contingent, which therefore do not themselves account for their own existence, *happen in fact to exist.* Yet much of our local scientific knowledge addresses precisely that sort of question concerning contingency, albeit directed locally at this or that type of event or object. Why banish the same sort of question concerning contingency when it is asked globally rather than merely locally?

To explain reality in the most general and comprehensive way would be to say what it is and why it exists, to articulate its form or nature and to extract its

purpose. Why does this author suppose that he can advance these antique, impassable questions? Partly because of an innovation in method, the details of which will emerge below. Yet the reader may rightfully ask for more than this vague promissory note at this stage, so that prior to the full development he can see the direction in which we are moving.

A useful division of metaphysics distinguishes speculative cosmology from analytic ontology. Speculative cosmology is the enterprise on which we are engaged, namely to provide a large-scale account of reality, its origin, purpose and how it hangs together. Analytic ontology is most famously exemplified by Aristotle's *Categories*, an account of the fundamental Kinds of Being, where these Kinds of Being or Categories are best understood as necessarily existing universals. *The most general methodological insight shaping the present work is that analytic ontology is the key to speculative cosmology.* This is because the structure of Being or of reality as a whole is the structure of necessary universality whose various distinguishable aspects are none other than the Categories themselves. Therefore to the extent that we can chart the structure of the Categories and their necessary interrelations, to that extent we can gain insight into the structure of Being and the purpose or point of its exemplification in individual beings. With the notable exception of Hegel, the flaccid, arbitrary, list-like quality of the theories of the Categories provided by the tradition has obscured the pivotal importance of the theory of Categories for an account of the structure of Being, and so of the nature and purpose of reality as a whole. *When we comprehend the real Categories and the structuring relations among the Categories, the nature and purpose of reality as a whole will be laid bare.*

Section 2: Why is Being Exemplified?

Why is Being exemplified or instantiated? Equivalently, why are there individual beings? Among individual beings there are contingent universals and all the particular things that inhabit our world. Like the merely contingent universals—those universals not deducible from the necessary structure of Being—none of these many particulars is a necessary existent. Each might have not have existed. The same holds for the natural kinds, if any, which classify these particulars in an ideal scientific taxonomy: Not only might there have been no electrons, but the natural kind Electron would not have existed if there had been no electrons. Likewise for the laws or relations among natural kinds that provide efficient causal explanations of particular detail. Had there been no electrons, there would have been no laws governing them. The laws of nature are as contingent as the kinds they relate. For like the existence of particulars, natural kinds and the laws that relate them are not deducible from the necessary structure of Being. Why then do contingent beings exist? The speculative cosmological hypothesis to be defended here is that contingent beings exist so that Being itself can be grasped or understood. This original cosmological hypothesis is better placed to account for contingent beings than any of its more familiar competitors: Theism, Spinozism, and the Many Worlds Hypothesis.

The Theist says that contingent being was created from nothing by a perfect particular, an all-powerful and all-knowing particular existent—God as conceived by traditional natural theology. Contingent being is an artifact of a creator, who is a perfect particular existent. The inevitable question is why the perfect particular existent exists and why it creates the world—the totality of contingent being—as it actually is. If we are told that the perfect particular exists necessarily and necessarily creates the world as it actually is, then there is indeed nothing left to explain. But then, as Baruch Spinoza famously elaborated in his *Ethics,* the result of forging these necessary links is to obscure the difference between God and so-called contingent being. Contrary to the original intention of Theism, necessarily created contingent being is not contingent at all.

Thus Spinoza's name for reality was *"Deus sive Natura"*—"God or equivalently Nature." Spinozism is an unrelenting series of purported deductions from the alleged insight that God or Nature is absolutely necessary in each and every detail. The trouble with Spinozism, like the kind of Theism which mutates into it under the pressure of cosmological questioning, is that there is an original intuition of contingency, at least with respect to finite particulars. All of our practical life including most notably planning, hope, praise, blame and regret is built around the idea of open possibilities that become closed with the passage of

time. So much of what might have existed does not and much of what does exist might not have. This thing that was to be explained—the *contingent* existence of the many particulars which make reality up—is, on views like Spinozism, explained away. For according to Spinozism, all the many apparently contingent particulars are in fact, each of them, necessary existents, necessary aspects of a necessary being. Likewise, if Theism meets the cosmological question by saying that God just had to create this world with these details then what is clearly contingent is misrepresented as the necessary outcome of the necessary intention of a necessary being.

The same misstep is to be found in the "explanation" of contingency by appealing to multiple worlds, each taken to be as real as any other. The Many Worlds Hypothesis states that all the possible ways things could be are equally real and are all included in a super-ensemble which exhausts reality. Since this ensemble includes all possibilities, the ensemble and all its parts and aspects are necessary, just as with Spinoza's *Deus Sive Natura*. We inhabit one (or perhaps some) of the worlds which make up the ensemble and so what is necessary merely appears to be contingent from a local point of view. Once again, this falsifies our original intuition of contingency. What we wanted was the explanation of *contingent* existence, not an account that tells us that it is an illusion and so not there to explain at all. The explanation of why Being is exemplified, of why there are contingent existents, must therefore explain without necessitating. And there is a deep puzzle as to how this result could be achieved.

The puzzle is deep enough that many are inclined to react by rejecting the very demand for an explanation of contingent being. The reaction may take the form of insisting that to *understand* that mere beings are contingent is to recognize that there can be *no* explanation of why there are mere beings. This, however, is just to recapitulate Leibniz's mistake of supposing that all explanation must ultimately provide absolutely sufficient reasons for what is being explained, i.e. reasons such that it is absolutely impossible for the thing being explained not to exist given those reasons. Against Leibniz, teleological or purposive explanation renders an outcome intelligible without absolutely guaranteeing it. As we shall see, this is the very kind of explanation required to explain *contingent* existence.

Here is the sort of explanation that would do what is required. There is something—Being itself—that exists necessarily. It has the contingent capacity to issue in particularity, the capacity to be instantiated in particularity. This capacity happens to be realized for the sake of a distinguished end, namely that Being itself should be comprehended. To understand this end is to understand the point of all contingent coming into being and passing away. Because this explanation is purposive it accounts for contingent existence without covertly treating it as necessary. For a purpose explains without necessitating what it explains. "The

spider built the web in order to catch and eat the fly." does not entail that the spider had to build the web. Nonetheless it makes the web-building intelligible. Similarly with a plant's turning toward the sun for the sake of nourishment, or a dog's burying a bone in order to chew on it later.

Of course, the striking thing about this explanation of the existence of contingent beings is that as with the plant turning toward the sun, the purpose in question is not the result of anyone's intended plan. As we shall see, Being itself is necessary universality. It has no will, no intellect, no drives and thus no plans. The purpose that explains the existence of contingent beings is an impersonal purpose. Understanding this is crucial to making full sense of reality. For an appeal to a personal plan leaves many aspects of reality behind as unassimilated embarrassments.

"Impersonal purpose" will strike many as an oxymoron, since the dominant idea of purpose is that it requires a planner. But the idea of an impersonal purpose is no more than the idea that some things happen because they should, i.e. because it is good that they do. In the end, this very idea is what makes sense of someone's forming and acting on a plan. What really makes intentional goal-directed action intelligible is the perceived good or reason for which it is done. The trick is to make room for the possibility that what we know as intentional goal-directed action is just a late stage in the development of an impersonal purpose, which finds its expression and culmination in intentional activity.

The idea that at the heart of intentional explanation there is an appeal to a notion of something's happening because it should applies in the case at hand. For consider Theism's explanatory appeal to the creative intentions of a divine person. Theists claim that their God is a perfect particular who creates contingent particulars in order to love those many things. In appealing to purpose this explanation may have the right form. Nevertheless, upon reflection, in appealing to a personified intention the Theistic explanation can be seen to have the wrong content. If our intuition of the contingency of finite particulars is to be respected, then God's having and acting on this creative intention must be contingent. God must have the capacity to form and act on this intention; but it must be possible for this capacity to remain unrealized. What then explains the realization of a capacity that could remain unrealized? On pain of an infinite regress we cannot now appeal to some other contingent intention. What then is left is to explain the realization of God's capacity to form a creative intention? Only an objective final end: as it might be, the capacity was realized for the sake of this or that outcome that the existence of finite particulars secures. To be concrete, let us say that God formed and acted upon his creative intention for the sake of the turning of finite particulars toward the Divine. This has the force of an explanation only in so far as we take the turning of finite particulars towards the divine as a fundamental good. This

fundamental good explains God's forming and acting upon his creative intention, and so explains the existence of contingent beings.

Theism's beautiful explanation ultimately consists in this: It is because contingent existence—with its inherent turn towards the divine—is good that God wills it. God's will, as Plato had Socrates argue convincingly in the *Euthyphro*, cannot be the arbitrary *source* of goodness but is only intelligible as aiming at goodness. Thus Theism's fundamental explanation embodies the idea that some things happen because they should. Once that is admitted, the appeal to divine intention drops out as no longer fundamental. The sheer appeal to a good to be realized can itself be explanatory. Why then suppose that such end-invoking explanation must be mediated by an intention? A good, such as coming to understanding, can account for the existence of a process directed at that good. Here again we have the explanation that explains without necessitating. Theism's mistake was to personify this explanation in a creative intention.

There is still another metaphysical problem with Theism, which has to do with the fact that the Theistic explanation of contingent existence appeals ultimately to a necessarily existing *particular* rather than to an all-inclusive necessary *universal*, such as Being itself. The ultimate explanation of the existence of contingent beings must appeal to something unique of its kind. For if the thing appealed to had kindmates, i.e. other things of the same sort as it, then the question would arise as to why the thing in question—rather than these other things of the same sort—accounts for the existence of contingent beings. Noticing this, the old geniuses of natural theology famously insisted that God was necessarily unique of his kind: necessarily, there is no god, but God. What has not been widely noticed is that this face-saving claim of Theism is actually inconsistent with our fundamental intuition of the contingency of finite particulars. It is inconsistent with supposing that there is any contingency anywhere. In this sense it entails the very Spinozism which it seeks to avoid.

The argument for that claim is worth stating. Not merely as still another criticism of Theism, but more fundamentally because the argument is a kind of proof that the only thing which can properly play the role of God in accounting for contingent existence is the unique—because all-inclusive—necessary universal, namely Being itself.

According to Theism, God is a necessary and perfect particular who has a capacity to form and act out of a creative intention. Since the world—the object of that creative intention—is, on pain of Spinozism, contingent, this creative capacity could have remained unrealized. But if an instance of the kind Necessary and Perfect Particular could come with a certain capacity realized and also without that capacity realized then two instances of the kind Necessary and Perfect Particular seem conceivable, hence possible, hence *actual* by the nature of the kind in

question. For to be a necessary being is to be such that your possibility implies your actual existence. So we have a *reductio ad absurdum* of Theism: if there is one God, who created the world—one instance of the kind Necessary and Perfect Being—then there is The Other God, who did not. (Notice that what is appealed to in the supposition is the co-possibility of the two Gods. They are co-possible because the full intrinsic description of one does not exclude the full intrinsic description of the other.)

This argument that the uniqueness of God is not consistent with the contingency of the world is not perhaps completely original. Spinoza made the same point long ago in the early sections of the first part of his *Ethics*. More original is the proper interpretation of this neglected argument. Spinoza himself drew the wrong conclusion, namely that since God must be unique, there can be no contingency for him to be related to, so everything is thoroughly necessary. Instead, Spinoza should have concluded that the *arche* or explanatory source of the world is unique for another reason. The *arche* or explanatory source of the world is not able to be duplicated because it is not a necessary particular but a necessary *universal***.**

This, after all, is the core of the Categorical distinction between universals and particulars. Particulars are capable of being duplicated, whereas universals are not. Nothing could be a duplicate of the universal White, anything with just the intrinsic properties of this universal would be this universal. So it is for each universal. For to be a universal is to be potentially found in many particulars. The nature or intrinsic character of a particular is just a conjunction of universals. That conjunction, being itself universal, is able to be instantiated in many particulars. Such particulars with a common universal nature are each duplicates of each other. But while the universal nature in a particular can be in principle found in another particular, the universal nature of a universal just is that universal. This is why a universal is not duplicable while a particular is duplicable.

This observation is crucial for the re-interpretation of Spinoza's argument. What confers uniqueness on the explanatory source of the world is not the absence of contingency but the Categorical status of this source. It is because Being itself is a universal that it does not admit of duplication.

Moreover, Theism has never really come to grips with the ontological status of the Categories. The Categories are fundamental kinds of Being. As such they are necessary universals, and so they are necessary existents. If we suppose that there is also a particular—God—who is a necessary existent we then must face the question of the relationship between the necessary universals and this necessary particular. One familiar Theistic thought is that the Categories are no more than fundamental ideas in the mind of God. But the candidates that are plausibly taken to be the Categories involve aspects of Being—like Particularity and

Universality—which seem more fundamental that any particular instance of Being could be. Nowhere is this more obvious than with Being itself. If the Categories are Kinds of Being then the *Summum Genus* of the Categories will be Being itself. God as a being, will like all other beings, merely exemplify Being. Being cannot then be an idea in the mind of God. God has to be a being, has to exemplify Being, to have a mind at all. Being thus emerges as more fundamental than any particular being could be. If Being is prior to particular beings and God is a particular being then Being is prior to God. We need to understand this structure of Being which is in itself a condition of God's thoughts being thoughts. And we need to understand why it is exemplified.

The upshot is the following. If we are to explain the contingent existence of beings then:

1. The explanation must appeal to a capacity of some entity that has two features: the capacity might not have been realized, and its contingent realization is the existence of contingent things.

2. The entity with this capacity must be intrinsically unique, i.e. incapable of having duplicates.

3. The entity so appealed to in the explanation of contingent existence must exist necessarily, so that the issue of why *it* happens to exist does not arise.

4. The entity appealed to in the explanation of contingent existence must be intelligibly related to the necessary universals, which are the Categories.

5. The explanation must be a purposive explanation, where the purpose is not mediated by the intention of some pre-existing mind.

There is still a sixth condition for an adequate explanation of contingent existence, which develops from this fifth condition.

Section 3: The Fundamental and Supreme Good

A purposive explanation that is not mediated by an intention must appeal to some good which is the end for the sake of which the thing being explained occurs, exists or obtains. Now in the case of explaining all of contingent existence, it can be seen that the Good in question must be fundamental and supreme. It must be a fundamental good in the sense of not being good because it is a means or condition of some other good. For if the Good in question were good only as a means or condition for another good then that other good would be the end for the sake of which contingent beings exist. Our explanation would not have terminated at the right point if the Good to which we appeal is not fundamental in this sense. Moreover, the Good in question must be Supreme, in that it cannot be outweighed or counter- balanced by any combination of goods. For if it could be in this way counterbalanced or outweighed by some combination of goods then the question would remain: why do contingent beings exist for the sake of the Good you allege, rather than for the sake of this combination of goods which counterbalances or outweighs it? Unless the Good in question is supreme, our explanation would not have terminated at the right point.

The Supremacy of the Good entails that the Good is unimprovable. This means that we cannot make something better than the Good by realizing other goods along with it. For if we could add other goods to the Good and thereby make a bundle of goods better than the Good, this embarrassing question would still remain: "Why is it not the case that contingent beings exist for the sake of realizing this larger basket of goods, which includes your alleged Good and these other goods which make something better?" Our explanation of the existence of contingent beings would not have terminated at the right point.

The supremacy of the Good also entails that the Good cannot be the bundle of all actually realized goods. For that bundle is improvable by the addition of further goods that are not actually realized. So if we were to identify the Good with the bundle of all actually realized goods then we would face this embarrassing question: "Why does this totality of just these contingent existents with these realized goods exist rather than some other, better totality of contingent existents with the same realized goods and more to boot?"

Could it be then that the Good for the sake of which contingent beings exist is just the bundle of all actual goods along with the further goods that the existence of contingent beings makes possible? No, this would not be consistent with the supremacy of the Good. There is no reason to suppose that there is a unique bundle of all possible goods which is best. There may be many inconsistencies and tension among goods, requiring tradeoffs here and there to make a better bundle of

goods. Some of these tradeoffs can be made in different ways without one way being better than the other. If that is so then there will be more than one maximally good bundle of actual and possible goods. None of these maximally good bundles will be supreme, for each is balanced by the other. There is no reason why one maximally good bundle rather than another should be *the* bundle for the sake of which contingent beings exist. Thus none of these bundles is the unique explainer of contingent being. None will be the Good for the sake of which contingent being exists.

The supremacy of the Good entails that contingent being does not exist for the sake of the good of any particular contained among contingent beings. It could not be that contingent beings exist for the sake of the spread of democracy, or for the survival of the Earth, or for the pleasure of the gods. Even if such goods were fundamental they could not be supreme. For these goods are improvable in the sense that a situation in which they are realized along with other goods is better than a situation in which they are realized alone.

We have argued that six conditions must be satisfied if we are to explain contingent existence:

1. The explanation must appeal to a capacity of some entity that has two features: the capacity might not have been realized, and its contingent realization is the existence of contingent things.

2. The entity with this capacity must be intrinsically unique, i.e. incapable of having duplicates.

3. The entity so appealed to in the explanation of contingent existence must exist necessarily, so that the issue of why *it* happens to exist does not arise.

4. The entity appealed to in the explanation of contingent existence must be intelligibly related to the necessary universals, which are the Categories.

5. The explanation must be a purposive explanation, where the purpose is not mediated by the intention of some pre-existing mind.

6. The purposive explanation in question must appeal to a Good which is fundamental, supreme, and hence, unimprovable. The world must exist for the sake of this Good.

If we could satisfy these six conditions we would then have an explanation of

contingent existence, an explanation that did not covertly treat it as necessary.

The required explanation turns on the recognition of a universality that is necessary and yet has a contingent capacity to be instantiated. Its contingent instantiation would have to be none other than the totality of contingent being. We shall argue that this necessary universal is thus none other than Being Itself. As a universal, it is not duplicable. So it is an intrinsically unique explanatory source of contingent being. But just how does positing Being explain the existence of the world? As we have seen, in order to explain without necessitating, the explanation must be teleological. It must appeal to the fundamental and supreme Good which essentially involves Being. Being *is contingently exemplified or instantiated for the sake of this Good. Equivalently, contingent being exists for the sake of this good. What then is this fundamental and supreme Good for the sake of which Being is exemplified or instantiated?*

The only initially plausible candidates to be the fundamental and supreme Good are:

1. Reality as a whole.

2. Loving affirmation of the real, the adequate response of the will to reality.

3. Comprehensive understanding of the real, the adequate response of the intellect to reality.

By reality as a whole we mean Being itself and all individual beings thought of as instantiating or exemplifying Being. As applied to this account of the real, the three candidates to be the Good generate six alternative accounts of the Good, for the sake of which the world exists.

According to the first, the Good is just Being itself (or perhaps some necessary aspect of it). According to the second, the Good is the contingent instantiation of Being itself, equivalently the existence of contingent being. According to the third, the Good is the loving affirmation of Being, which requires the existence of contingent being and the development of mind in order that it should obtain. According to the fourth, the Good is the loving affirmation of contingent being, which requires the existence of contingent being and the development of mind in order that it should obtain. According to the fifth, the Good is the understanding of Being, which requires the existence of contingent being and the development of mind in order that it should obtain. According to the sixth, the Good is the understanding of contingent being, which requires the existence of contingent being and the development of mind in order that it should

obtain.

The first view—that the Good is Being itself—can be rejected immediately. For recall the central idea of explaining the existence of contingent being. If there is to be an explanation of the existence of contingent being then that explanation must leave contingent being contingent. It should explain contingent being without necessitating it. The explanation must therefore be a purposive explanation, for purposes explain things without guaranteeing that those things occur. (Recall that "The spider built the web in order to catch and eat the fly" does not entail that the spider had to build the web. Nonetheless it makes the web-building intelligible.) But a purposive explanation must appeal to some good secured by the thing to be explained—in this case the existence of contingent beings. But then the good in question cannot be a good that would obtain whether or not contingent beings exist. If Being is the Good then since Being is a necessary universal that exists whether or not the contingent being exists and exemplifies it, the existence of contingent being is not explained by this alleged Good. This is contradictory, for what makes a good *the* Good is that contingent being exists for its sake. That is our defining grip on the Good, and so what allows us to go on to ask whether this or that is the Good.

Obviously, the same argument would obviously disqualify any claim to the effect that some necessary aspect of Being Itself—such as its form—is the Good. That form would exist anyway, whether or not contingent being exists. So it cannot be that for the sake of which contingent being exists.

The second view counts the exemplification of Being, which is to say, the very existence of contingent being, as the Good. On this view it is not just that God considered his creation and "saw that it was good." Rather, the view implies that contingent being exists just because its existence is the Good. But doesn't this entail the absurd, Panglossian view that everything in the world is just as it should be, so that a better totality of contingent beings could not exist? The world—the totality of contingent beings—is obviously improvable in many ways. Some good things could be added to the world and some bad things could be taken away, in either case without compensating losses. Hence the existence of contingent being cannot be the Good, for the Good is supreme and so unimprovable.

Furthermore, if a good is to be supreme then it cannot be embedded in a different good that contains it as a constitutive part. For the realization of the more inclusive good will be better than, because inclusive of, the good which it embeds. This is relevant because the existence of contingent being seems to be a possible object of understanding. Now understanding is the presence of the object of understanding to a mind adequate to grasp what it is to be that object. Understanding in this sense is, at very least, *a* good, and it presupposes the existence of what is understood. So if the existence of contingent being is itself

good then understanding contingent being is a further good, which embeds this good of existence. But then it follows that the existence of contingent being cannot be the supreme Good.

What then of loving affirmation of Being and loving affirmation of contingent beings? Could either of these be the Good? The fact that the Good is supreme and hence not embeddable in any larger good rules out identifying loving affirmation of Being as the Good. For if loving affirmation of Being were a good then presumably loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being in contingent beings would also be a good. But then, loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being in contingent beings would necessarily involve loving affirmation of Being. So loving affirmation of Being is not the Good because if it were a good there would be another good—loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being by contingent beings—which embeds it.

Does this mean that the Good is loving affirmation of the totality of contingent being, i.e. loving affirmation of the world? No; for there is much in the world which is simply bad and which it would be bad to lovingly affirm. Nor is the medieval rationalization that everything which is bad in the world is none of it positive being, but only a "privation"—an absence of what ought to be there—at all tenable. Arthur Schopanhauer once wrote "The world has learnt a thing or two from me which it will not soon forget." Yet one of his most forceful and irrefutable insights often bears repeating, namely that there are aspects of the natural world which are positively horrific and which it would be deluded to love. Schopanhauer asks us to attend to the vast system of animal predation, which is at the core of mammalian life on Earth. The hungry lions run down and maim the zebra and then begin to devour it while it still lives. Their pleasure in the hunt and the satisfying of their hunger is objectively far less considerable than the terror and agony of the zebra. So it goes with predator and prey. Predation is a system whose characteristic transactions produce a hefty bonus of animal pain over animal pleasure. Nor is the terror and pain of being eaten alive a mere privation, a mere absence of calm and bodily integrity. The terror and pain have their own awful qualitative character. The sentimentality which supposes that whatever is natural is therefore good is a blind sentimentality. There is much in nature that is simply bad, and which it would be perverted to lovingly affirm. So loving affirmation of the totality of contingent being would be partly good and partly bad. As such, it could not be the Good.

While it is bad to love the bad, it is not likewise bad to understand it. So understanding contingent being, even though the totality of contingent being is partly good and partly bad, is not thereby disqualified as the Good. But then there really are four possible objects of understanding that we should consider, when we inquire after the Good for the sake of which contingent being exists.

1. Contingent being

2. The exemplification of Being Itself by contingent beings

3. Being itself

4. The form of Being Itself, i.e. that aspect of Being Itself which is grasped by the intellect when Being Itself is understood.

The understanding of which of these is the Good?

Again, the choice is forced by the thesis that the Good, because Supreme, is not embeddable in a more comprehensive good. Other things being equal, understanding more is better than understanding less. So applying this principle of comprehensiveness it may seem that the second object of understanding embeds the other three and omits no possible object of understanding. The Good would then be the understanding of the exemplification of Being by contingent being.

However, this simple application of our principle of comprehensiveness is mistaken. It is not in general true that objects of understanding add together in simple ways. To understand the U.S. economy is in part to understand the role of the price of oil in contributing to prices quite generally. Because of this, someone who thought that understanding the price of oil in relation to the U.S. economy was a more comprehensive form of understanding than merely understanding the U.S. economy would be wrong. The same sort of mistake is made by someone who thinks that understanding the exemplification of Being Itself by contingent beings is a more comprehensive form of understanding than the "mere" understanding of Being Itself. For to understand Being Itself is to understand why it has issued in contingent being. Nothing that left that unexplained would count as a complete understanding of Being Itself, just as nothing which omitted the issue of the price of oil and its systematic effect on other prices would count as a complete understanding of the U.S. economy. Thus, despite the surface form of the description of the objects of understanding set out above, the understanding of Being Itself a more comprehensive object of understanding than the instantiation of Being Itself by contingent beings. For a comprehensive understanding of Being Itself would include an understanding of why it is instantiated in contingent being. And all that could count as a comprehensive understanding of contingent being, as opposed to instrumental scientific knowledge of how to manipulate it, is an understanding why it exists.

Now an observation of the very same kind can be made about the form of Being Itself, i.e. that aspect of Being Itself which is grasped by the intellect when

Being itself is understood. Nothing could count as an understanding of the form of Being Itself without it involving an understanding of the relation between that form and any other aspect of Being Itself. Thus the understanding of the form of Being Itself is not a less comprehensive object of understanding that Being Itself.

So the Supreme, Final and Most Comprehensive of goods—the Good, if you like—is the comprehensive understanding of (the form of) Being Itself.

Contingent beings thus exist for the sake of the arising of such a comprehensive understanding of the form of Being Itself. The central theme of the whole drama of reality is the disclosure of the form of Being Itself.

With the broad shape of this explanation of the existence of contingent beings in place, let us now explore what its precise details come to: Contingent being exists for the sake of the coming to understanding of the form of Being Itself by contingent being. If this is true then there are accordingly two urgent tasks to undertake. The first is to explicate what understanding the form of Being Itself involves, so that we can then understand contingent being as the exemplification of Being Itself. The second is to explain how understanding the form of Being Itself and hence contingent beings as exemplifying Being Itself is not only fundamental and supreme, but also "sovereign", i.e., how it is a good by virtue of which all other goods (i) derive their authority as objects of pursuit and admiration (ii) stand in a hierarchy of higher and lower with respect to each other. (The sovereignty of the Good is thus akin to Plato's idea that the Good is an ideal to which ordinary goods approximate to varying degrees.) Only then could there be any question of an articulation of an objective ethic, based around the idea that badness in intention and action is the subordination of a higher good to a lower good. Only the first task is addressed in this work.

That the Good is the comprehensive understanding of the form of Being Itself is not a completely unheard of idea in philosophy or religion. It has obvious affinities with Hegel's claim that the point of existence is the self-understanding of the Absolute Spirit embodied in the world. It also resonates with the divinization of *sophia* in the wisdom literature of the Hebrew Bible, and with the announcement in the prologue of the Gospel of John to the effect that Logos or intelligible form is the transcendent source of the world.

We now turn to an examination of what it would be to have a comprehensive understanding of the form of Being Itself.

Section 4: Being as the *Summum Genus*

The key to a comprehensive understanding of the form of Being itself is the correct Theory of Categories, for the Categories are none other than Kinds of Being.

That is to say, the explication of the nature of Being is a Theory of Categories, not entirely unrelated to the traditional theories provided by Aristotle, Porphyry, Kant and Hegel. The Categories described by each of these philosophers were universals whose existence and interrelations were necessary and so accessible to philosophical reflection rather than to empirical discovery.

This claim, as applied to Aristotle's seminal work *The Categories,* has been long a matter of controversy among the commentators, some of whom dispute that Aristotle's conception of Categories was primarily metaphysical. Because we are interested in just such a metaphysical conception, it may be worth briefly reviewing the positions that have been taken on the nature of Aristotle's concern with the Categories.

After Andronicus' edition of Aristotle's work in the first century B.C. there developed a tradition of philosophical commentary on the Categories which stretched from Alexander of Aphrodisias, Eudorus of Alexandria, Albinus, Lucius and Athenodoros, on to Olympiodorus, Plotinus and Porphyry. A central item of disputation in this tradition concerns Aristotle's exact purpose in *The Categories*, in particular whether the classification he offers is primarily grammatical or metaphysical or conceptual. On the grammatical interpretation, *The Categories* is concerned with the basic classification of significant words, items which are applied to or 'said of" substances understood as the subjects of all meaningful sentences. On this interpretation, *The Categories* represents merely the first crude steps toward what has become empirical linguistics, and more specifically syntax, the study of the grammatical structure of this or that language. This sort of categorizing can only have philosophical significance on the shaky assumption that some language in ordinary use could be a privileged guide to the structure of the real.

Let us move then to the ontological interpretation of Aristotle's Categories. On this interpretation, Aristotle's classification concerns the different Kinds of elements of Being, or equivalently, the fundamental components of Necessary Universality, not simply as reflected in the recurrent patterns of what we say, but as *educed* or drawn out by intellectual insight and reflection.

One of Aristotle's commentators, Olympiodorus, splits the difference between the ontological and grammatical interpretations, maintaining that the Categories are concepts. Olympiodorus writes

> Of things that are, some only refer to others, some are only referred to by others, and some others both refer and are referred to. For instance, vocal signs only refer, existing things are only referred to, but the concepts both refer and are referred to. For the concepts are referred to by vocal signs and themselves refer to existing things. Therefore they are placed between words and things. Now other commentators say that Aristotle deals with words, and still others with things. But between them are the concepts. Thus the purpose of the Categories is to deal with concepts.
> *Commentarium in Aristotelum Grecia*, Vol 12, 1, A. Busse ed. p 19.

This Conceptualist interpretation of Aristotle simply compounds the problems of the grammatical interpretation. For there are two choices in understanding Categories as concepts, associated with two different models of grasping a concept. On one model, grasping a concept is possessing a structured psychological ability, the ability to meaningfully use a word or conventional sign in accord with its conventional meaning. So just as an empirical linguistics replaces any archaic classification of words which earlier thinkers might have articulated, an empirical *psycho*linguistics replaces any speculative account of the structure of those psychological abilities which issue in the meaningful use of words. The other model of grasping a concept is explicitly Platonic: a concept is a universal, to grasp a universal is to have an intellectual insight into its nature, which insight guides one in seeing significant similarities and differences among particulars and so guides the true classification of particular things. But this model leads us back to the onto- logical interpretation of the Categories; Aristotle's Categories are Universals of a certain sort, namely Kinds of elements of being, the fundamental components of the real. We are left with a very good question, which so vexed commentators like Plotinus: How can Aristotle remain silent about the relation between his account of the fundamental kinds of realities and the account of his master Plato?

We take Aristotle's theory of Categories to be a theory of the fundamental kinds of Being. His theory of the fundamental Kinds of being is organized around the central Category of Substance, where a substance is a bearer of properties not itself borne, or as Aristotle puts it, something of which things are said or predicated, but which is not itself said or predicated of anything else. The organization of Aristotle's Categories is thus in terms of their relation to the basic Category of Substance. (Though some things that appear in Aristotle's text suggest that Substance is higher than the Categories, so that to be a category is to be a certain kind of "accusation" made of a substance. But this need not detain us here.) So, as well as the *Substance,* we have the *Qualities* and *Quantities* which are predicated of substances, the substances' *States,* the *Relations* which hold of

the substances, the substances' location or *Place,* their *Posture* or spatial orientation in that place, their duration or *Temporal Aspect,* their *Actions* or things which the substances do or bring about, their *Passions* or things which they undergo.

Clearly the other nine of Aristotle's ten Categories concern ways substances can be. Here is a Theory of Categories which starts with a class of distinguished particulars—the substances—and works out from there. It explores the kinds of being there necessarily have to be if there are such distinguished particulars.

Despite its grandeur, *The Categories* may be faulted for a lack of absolute generality. Granted, if Substance is to be then the various aspects and modifications of Substance have also to be. But a more inclusive question is: what follows if Being is to be. This question naturally leads into the study of Necessary Universality as such.

Moreover, even given the unifying theme of substance, *The Categories* still exhibits a curious list-like quality. Nothing significant is said about inter-relations among the Categories, and whether these inter-relations would themselves count as Categories. (As we shall argue, they must.) Nor are we told how the Categories stand to the later hylomorphic analysis of substances, and to efficient and final causes. Nor, as Plotinus emphasized in the *Enneads,* are we given any indication of how Aristotle's substance-based list of Categories is supposed to relate to the structure of forms that Plato described.

Although Aristotle allows that substances fall under *genera* or kinds, nothing is said in *The Categories* about the relations among these kinds. This is an omission of some significance, for those relations would have also to be Categorical, i.e. Necessary and Universal. It is this lacuna which Porphyry partly addresses by way of his tree of definition. Porphyry's distinctive contribution is not so much his own list of Categories but the idea of a tree of Categories whose highest node is the most abstract or general of Categories—the *Summum Genus*—and whose immediate Sub-categories —sub-species of the *Summum Genus*—are distinguished by their differentia or special features. This downward structure of species, each defined by (i) the genus under which they fall and (ii) what differentiates them from other species of the same genus, reiterates at every node thus generating Porphyry's Tree. The relation between a species and a genus emerges as itself Categorical. This small advance opens up a whole arena of inquiry. How are we to think of the structure of the Categories if the relations among the Categories are themselves (polyadic) Necessary Universals, and hence Categories? Whereas Aristotle's concern with Categories was arguably a concern with Kinds of Being, illuminated by close attention to the structure of what we say, Porphyry's explicit focus is on the nature of real definition, useful, as he emphasizes, for rhetoric and logic. Kant radicalizes this formal approach to

Categories by treating them as none other than the logical forms of judgement, which he extracted somewhat haphazardly from the logic textbooks of his day. Kant's approach is guided by his central question: How can such Categories as Cause, Substance, Possibility and Necessity—concepts which according to him are not given in experience—apply to empirically given objects? He is struck by the idea that these concepts apply to objects even though they could not be acquired by experience-based generalizations. Hence Kant's aim is to account for the a priori or non-experiential basis of his Categories and at the same time explain how such a priori concepts could apply to the objects we experience. His infamous solution is that the objects we experience are "phenomenal", the products of a kind of mental activity of binding together or *synthesizing* sensory impressions, a synthesis guided by the Categories themselves.

Hegel rightly finds this an all-too-subjective account of the Categories. As he says in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophical Sciences*

> But after all, objectivity of thought in Kant's sense is again, to a certain extent, subjective. Thoughts, according to Kant, although universal and necessary Categories, are *only our* thoughts—separated by an impassable gulf from the thing, as it exists apart from our knowledge. But the true objectivity of thinking means that the thoughts, far from being merely ours, must at the same time be the real essences of things.
> *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*, Section 412.

Hegel reinstates the old idea that the Categories must correspond to the basic elements in the necessary and universal structure of an independent reality, and not merely be facets of our most general style of thinking. Surely he is right in this respect: how could the structure of Being itself be subordinate to the structure of our thoughts. Those thoughts as mere existents or beings must themselves exemplify the pre-existing structure of Being. And in order to be 'objective' or true the contents of our thoughts must conform to this pre-existing structure.

In the same anti-subjectivist vein, Hegel treats synthesis not as a mental process but as a quasi-logical relation among the Categories themselves. In this way, Hegel introduces for the first time a dynamic, generative structure among the Categories, the so-called Dialectic, which he also takes to be the hidden key to the development of nature, consciousness and history. The Dialectic is a story of stages in the overcoming of objective incompleteness, an incompleteness found even at the level of necessary universality. As Hegel puts it in an earlier work:

> Each being is, because posited, thereby op-posited and so is both

> conditioned and conditioning. The Understanding completes these limitations by positing the opposite limitations as their necessary accompaniment. These require the same completion, so that the Understanding's task develops into an infinite one...as it completes a relative identity through its opposite and produces again, through the synthesis of the two, a new identity, which again is in its way incomplete.
> *Differenz des Fichteschen und Schellingschen Systems der Philosophy.*

Thus Hegel's idea of the dialectical structure of the Categories is built around two claims (i) that to be a definite thing is to be demarcated or delimited by one's opposite, and (ii) that these opposites make up a Genus, which will in its turn be delimited by its opposite, and so on ad infinitum. To see this dialectical process at work, begin with a Category, call it the Thesis. Standing as the delimiting opposite of the Thesis, as its *negation* as it were, is the Antithesis. Taken together the Thesis and the Antithesis comprise the Synthesis, in some respects like a Porphyrian Genus made of two Sub-categories.

The odd thing is that Hegel deploys no real analog of Porphyry's differentia. Hegel gives no account of how a Thesis is delimited within the Genus by anything other than its Antithesis. As we shall see, this omission leads to a radical indeterminacy in the Hegelian system of Categories. The vertical structure of the Categories is clearly determined as a downward tree beginning with the Summum Genus at the topmost node, with each node of the tree (i) occupied by some Genus and (ii) branching into nodes occupied by two Sub-categories corresponding to a Thesis and an Antithesis respectively. But we are given no idea of how the Hegelian Categories are related "horizontally" i.e. when they are at the same level of generality while not being themselves Thesis and Antithesis of the same Genus. The branches at a given horizontal level in the tree are not themselves in any interesting Categorical relation. By omitting the notion of the differentia, crucial connective tissue is lost in the resultant Theory of Categories. We intend to restore just such connective tissue, under the heading of the Unifying Relations.

For Hegel, so long as we are short of the *Summum Genus*—Being Itself—any Genus or Synthesis in its turn functions as a Thesis, which finds its own Antithesis, and then comprises a new Thesis, with its own opposing pair or Antithesis. Here, by iterating the Thesis/Antithesis structure, Hegel is offering an account of the shape of Categoricity or Necessary Universality. But what Hegel does not do is present an overall picture of the resultant structure. Once the "infinite" task of the understanding is complete, what exactly would the structure it contemplates be like?

Since Hegel, Category Theory has been left fallow and undeveloped. We aim here to capture and elaborate its original impulse. Indeed, we shall present a fully explicit elaboration of the structure of necessary universality. In contrast to Aristotle, who teased his Categories out of the notion of substance, we aim to show that the real Categories, which we take to be the most fundamental Kinds of Being—are none other than the Categorical sub-divisions of Being itself, given according to a certain systematic method. We now begin on task of setting out the Categorical sub-division of Being. Perhaps in this task mistakes will be made, but at least it is the right task. (That one's errors may be the pre-condition of a break-through—this is the best hope.)

Section 5: The Structure of Being

Each thing that is, is a being. But then all things that are have Being in common.

What is it for many things to have something in common? It is for them to be of a kind, or equivalently, for there to be some universal which they each instantiate.

So, as already noted, at the heart of reality there lies this distinction, the distinction between particulars on the one hand and universals on the other. Particulars are located in space and time. Universals are instantiated at various locations in space and time. If we call these two ways of being related to space and time *being at* a place or a time then whereas a particular can be at different places at different times, a universal can be at different places at the same time. As some say, universals are repeatable across space, whereas particulars are at most repeatable across time. This is connected with another distinction emphasized earlier. One can in principle suppose that there is something that duplicates any particular, another particular of precisely the same sort. But no sense is to be made of 'copying' or duplicating a universal. So whereas a particular is in principle duplicable, a universal is not. A universal is what many particulars could have in common. That common aspect can't be copied. So among the things that exist or have being are particulars and the universal they have in common.

But now if everything has Being in common then Being must be a universal. It must therefore exist and have being. So here we have a universal, which is properly predicated of itself. Being exists. Being has being. Without Being—if sense can be made of taking Being Itself away—there could be no mere beings. So Being has something in common with mere beings. Like them, it also exists. It also is a being. So Being is predicated of itself.

But is it merely contingent that Being is predicated of itself? The universal, Being, applies to itself. Can this be an accident, due to the fact that there are other things, where these other things themselves might not have existed? No, whether a universal applies to itself seems just to lie in the very nature of the universal itself. The universal, Weighing One Gram weighs nothing and so does not apply to itself. Is this fact of not applying to itself a grace of fortune conferred on the universal by the ways in which other things stand? No. It would be absurd to explain this in terms of how other things stand. It lies in the very nature of a universal that fails to hold of itself that it fails to hold of itself.

On the other side of the ledger, the universal Being One Thing, which is instantiated by units and not by pluralities, applies to itself. For the universal Being One Thing is not a plurality but a unit. Is this fact of self-predication a grace of fortune conferred on the universal by how other things stand? No. It would be

absurd to explain this in terms of how other things stand. It lies in the very nature of a universal that holds of itself that it does hold of itself.

Being holds of itself. Which is just to say: Being exists. But it lies in the very nature of a universal to hold of itself, if it does so hold. So it lies in the very nature of Being that it holds of itself. So it lies in the very nature of Being that it exists. This is just to say that Being exists necessarily. Being is a *necessary* universal.

This is not to say that mere beings exist necessarily. Mere beings instantiate Being. But although Being exists necessarily, it is not necessarily instantiated by anything else that lies outside its nature. We think naively that there could have been nothing, and Heidegger asks 'Why is there something rather than nothing?' But there could not have been nothing, for Being exists of its very nature. However it might have been that *only* Being (and the necessary structure that exhausts it) existed. The world of particulars might have been null or empty, and all those contingent universals, whose existence depends upon their instantiation by particulars, might not have existed. That is the truth that lies behind the confused thought that there might have been nothing. The real question is: Why is Being instantiated by anything other than itself? Why are there mere beings, beings that just happen to exist; beings, which unlike Being, do not exist of their very nature? If you would like a metaphor, why was Being not content to remain in itself? Why is it instantiated in other beings?

What is Being up to? That is the central question of metaphysics. If this question admits of an answer then it would seem that the only way to answer it is to inquire into the very nature of Being and discern there a significant structure that discloses the telos, i.e. the impersonal purpose, of Being.

To inquire into the very nature of Being, what would that be like?

And where should one begin?

But notice that we have already begun. For we have already discerned two kinds of, or aspects of, Being—what we might call Universal Being and Particular Being. These represent the two fundamental ways in which beings can be. A being can be Universal, i.e. repeatable (at a time) and non-duplicable. Or a being can be Particular, i.e. duplicable and non-repeatable (at a time).

Clearly Universal Being applies to itself. Universal Being is an aspect of Being, therefore it is something that exists. Therefore it is a being. (It is not a *mere* being, something that merely happens to be. For it is an aspect of Being, and so exists necessarily.) Yet as an aspect of Being, which is a universal, it also is a universal. So Universal Being is both a being and a universal. It applies to itself.

Not so with Particular Being. It does not apply to itself. Particular Being is

an aspect of Being, therefore it is something that exists. Therefore it is a being. (It is not a *mere* being, something that merely happens to be. For it is an aspect of Being, and so exists necessarily.) Yet as an aspect of Being, which is a universal, it also is a universal. So Particular Being is both a being and a universal. It is not particular so it does not apply to itself.

Let us say that the form of a thing—any thing, equivalently, any being—is that aspect of a thing that is properly cited in response to the question: What is it to be this thing? So if we ask 'What is it to be Being?' we ask after the form of Being. The most general account of what it is to be Being is this: to be a thing that is a universal. So Universal Being can be thought of as the most general form of Being.

This presents a difficulty, the solution to which provides a deep hint as to the structure of Being. Like Being, this aspect of Being—Universal Being—is universal. So both Being and Universal Being have the same most general specification of their form. What then distinguishes Being from Universal Being? What distinguishes Being is this: as well as having Universal Being as an aspect, it also has Particular Being as an aspect. Particular Being is an aspect of Being and not an aspect of Universal Being. Since Universal Being is the form of Being, Particular Being can be thought of as the matter of Being, the other aspect of Being which distinguishes it from its form. Particular Being is the matter of Being in the following quite literal sense: it is what distinguishes two universals—Being and Universal Being—with the same most general form.

So Being divides into two aspects: Universal Being and Particular Being. They stand to Being as the most general specification of Being's form and the most general specification of Being's matter, respectively.

We may now summarize our first simple discovery about the structure of Being in this way. Being is one of those necessary universals that is predicated of, or holds of, itself. The form of Being, the most general feature cited in answer to the demarcational question "What is it to be Being?" is Universality. But this form of Being—Universal Being—is also such that it is universal. But then the form of Being holds of two necessary universals. What can make them distinct? Only different 'matter' could individuate or make distinct the universals in question. The matter of Being is Particular Being. And this is not the matter of Universal Being. Though both Being and Universal Being are universal, they have different matter, in virtue of which they are distinct.

What then is the matter of Universal Being? Our simple discovery suggests a strategy. First find the most general form of Universal Being. Then argue that it applies to itself. Then ask of Universal Being and the form of Universal Being, "What distinguishes these two universals?" It will be an aspect of Universal Being which is not an aspect of the form of Universal Being. Thus it will distinguish two

universals which can have the same form predicated of them. It will thus in a quite literal sense be the individuating matter of Universal Being.

Let us apply the strategy. We know that Universal Being has two fundamental aspects or Sub-categories: Necessary Universal Being and Contingent Universal Being. For all universals are either necessary or contingent, this being a division which lies in the very nature of the universals in question. Contingent universals exist only if they are instantiated. If there were no plastic things then the universal that is the *property* being made of plastic would not have been. If there were no contracts then there would be no universal *relation* of contracting. If there were no 16th Century operas then there would be no *kind* of work The 16th Century Opera. Such universals do not exist *ante rem,* i.e. before their instances. This means that they would not exist if they were not instantiated.

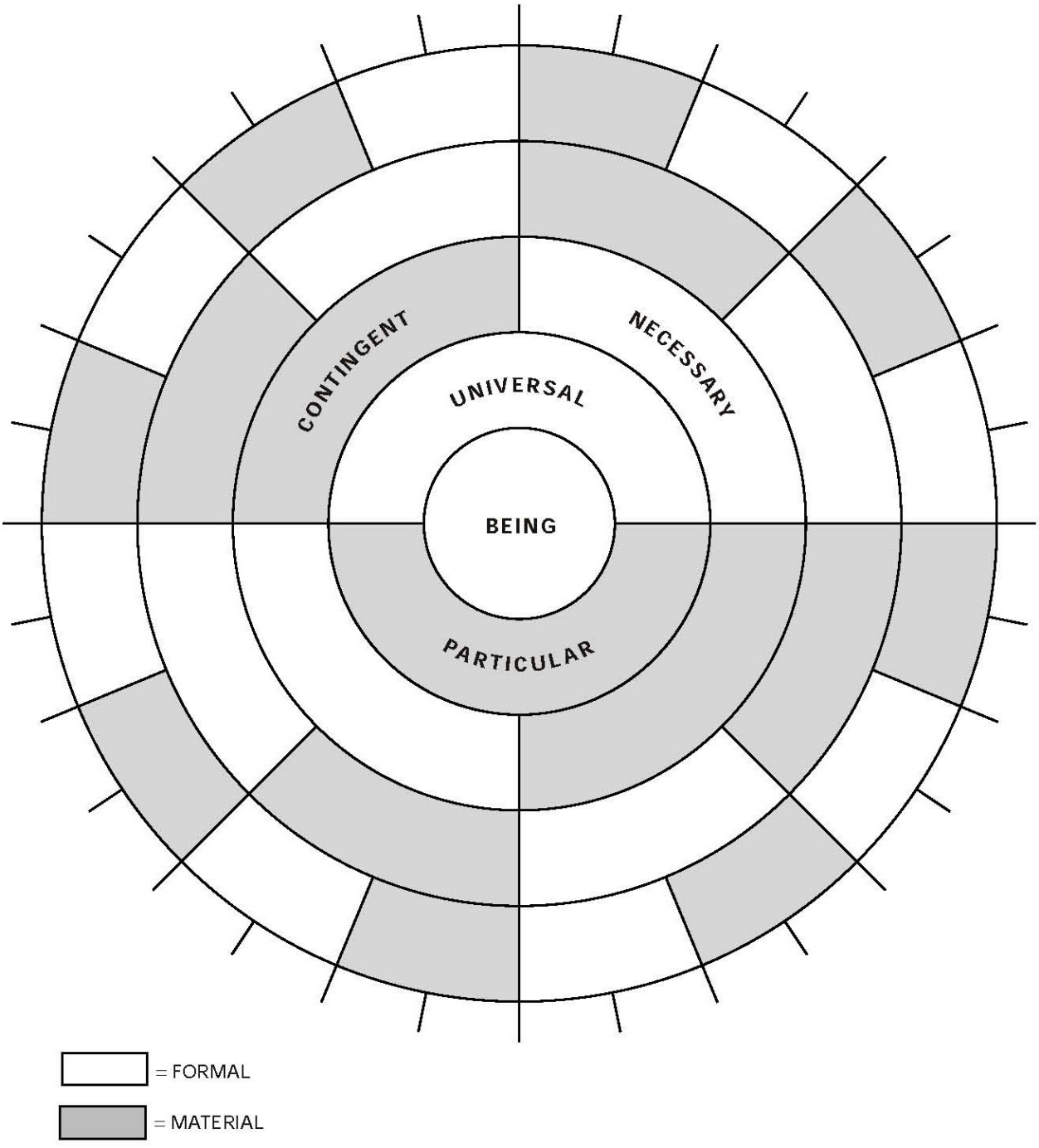
By contrast, Universal Being, like all aspects or sub-Kinds of Being Itself, is necessary and not contingent. So the most general specification of the form of Universal Being is Necessary Universal Being. But Necessary Universal Being is also a necessary universal, since it is an aspect of Universal Being and hence of Being. So the same form can be predicated of Universal Being and its form Necessary Universal Being. What then distinguishes the two? It must be that aspect of Universal Being that functions as its matter, an aspect of Universal Being that is not an aspect of Necessary Universal Being. There is one candidate: Contingent Universal Being. So Universal Being has Necessary Universal Being as its form and Contingent Universal Being as its matter.

The generalization of our basic discovery is this: Necessary universals make up the structure of Being. The form of a necessary universal is not only predicable of that necessary universal. It is self-predicable, i.e. predicable of itself. The form of a necessary universal applies to itself. This in its turn implies that for each necessary universal there must be a principle or aspect of the universal in question that distinguishes the universal from its form. We call this distinguishing or individuative principle the matter of the universal.

So every necessary universal has an aspect that stands to it as its form, along with another aspect that stands to it as its matter. The key to grasping this fact is to see that the form of a necessary universal is predicable of itself!

We can diagram our rudimentary insight into the structure of Being in the following way

DIAGRAM 1


CONTINGENT
NECESSARY
UNIVERSAL
BEING
PARTICULAR
= FORMAL
= MATERIAL

What then is the form of the Category that is Necessary Universal Being? We know these things—first it will be the most general characterization of what it is to be Necessary Universal Being, and second, like all formal aspects of the necessary universals which make up the structure of Being, it will apply to itself and so be properly predicated of itself.

Consider Diagram 1 and imagine it completely filled out in all directions. This would be the specification of every necessary universal aspect of Being. By displaying the necessary universals it would display the *form* of Being—the full characterization *of what it is to be* the privileged universal that is Being.

Here we have a hint as to the most general nature of Necessary Universality: Necessary Universality is formal, it indicates the form of Being. This then is the most general account of what it is to be Necessary Universal Being—to be Necessary Universal Being is to be form. So the formal aspect of Necessary Universal Being is Formal Necessary Universality.

Clearly the universal Formal Necessary Universal Being is also formal. So we have our familiar structure: two universals satisfy the same very general characterization. They are both formal universals. What then is the material element that distinguishes one universal from the other? Material Necessary Universal Being is the obvious candidate to be the matter of Necessary Universal Being, the aspect of Being which combines with Formal Necessary Universal Being to exhaust the nature of Necessary Universal Being. Here again the material sub-category plays the two distinctive roles of matter: it is a component of a whole, and it individuates that whole from others with the same formal characterization.

We may press the same line of thought further. What is the form of Formal Necessary Universal Being—the most general aspect of the formal aspect of necessary universality? We have already tipped our hand on this. It lies in the nature of the formal aspect of necessary universality to apply to or specify itself. This is the observation at the heart of the principle of self-predication of form that we have been exploiting.

So we can see that the formal aspect of Formal Necessary Universal Being is Self-specifying Formal Necessary Universal Being. But as a formal aspect it applies to itself, leaving us with the question of what plays the role of matter in distinguishing Formal Necessary Universal Being from its form, i.e. Self-specifying Formal Necessary Universal Being.

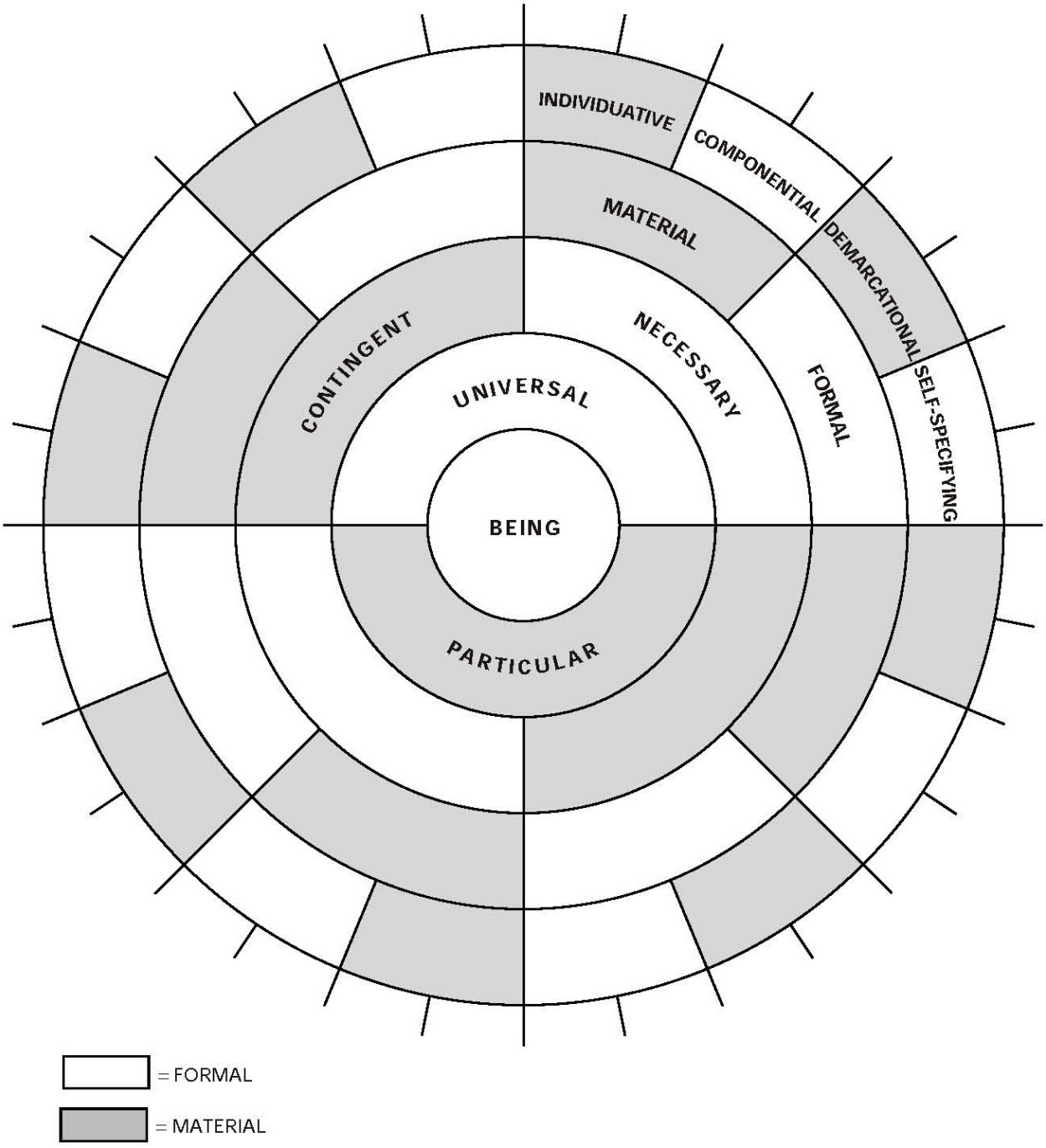
This will be another very general aspect of form distinct from the self-specifying aspect. Now form or the what-it-is-to-be of a thing sets off or demarcates one kind of thing from another. This Demarcational aspect of form, its making a thing with form be of one kind as opposed to another is, along with the Self-specifying aspect of form, a fundamental aspect of form. This is what distinguishes Formal Necessary Universal Being from Self-specifying Formal

Necessary Universal Being. The first but not the second has Demarcational Formal Necessary Universal Being as an immediate sub-kind.

Corresponding to these two divisions of Formal Necessary Universal Being are two divisions of Material Necessary Universal Being, which isolate the two metaphysical roles of matter. On the one hand, matter individuates or distinguishes things that are otherwise alike. On the other, matter is a component or element of a whole, which it makes up. Which of these is the more formal aspect of matter? Recall our requirement that the formal aspect of a Necessary Universal should be such that it applies to itself. So this settles the issue: Componential Material Necessary Universal Being is itself a component.

So we have discerned the following very abstract structure at the heart of Being:

DIAGRAM 2


INDIVIDUATIVE
COMPONENTIAL
DEMARCATIONAL
SELF-SPECIFYING
MATERIAL
FORMAL
NECESSARY
CONTINGENT
UNIVERSAL
PARTICULAR
BEING
= FORMAL
= MATERIAL

How then are we to proceed in filling out the Sub-categories of Contingent Universal Being? So far the only hints we have are these:

1. They are to stand to each other as matter and form.

2. They are to lie at the same level of generality as the Material and Formal aspects of Necessary Universal Being.

Let us then consider for a moment the provenance of the idea of matter and form. The original Aristotelian application of these ideas was to particulars, and had to do with the fundamental aspects of particulars corresponding to the answers to certain basic questions concerning those particulars. Along with these two basic questions:

What is it to be that particular? (form)

What composes or makes up that particular and so individuates it from particulars of the very same kind? (matter)

Aristotle distinguished two other fundamental questions, which point to two more causes or explanatory factors: efficient causation and finality. In order to have a comprehensive understanding of a particular, we must come to know:

What are the various causal transactions in which the particular is involved? (efficient causation)

What purpose accounts for the particular's existence? (final causation)

An even more striking claim can now be made. These modes of understanding not only apply to and exhaust the nature of particulars; *they apply to and are reflected among the Categories themselves.* Before showing that, let us be quite explicit as to how we construe Aristotle's four causes or explanatory factors.

Consider how each of these explanatory factors is apparent in Aristotle's primary case of an artisan who shapes bronze into a statue. The kind of thing which has been made is a statue, something whose conditions of persistence through time require that it remains a statue and hence more or less in the shape of and with the powers characteristic of a statue. In specifying the kind of thing in question what we crucially invoke is a *form*, a unified aggregate of powers, something potentially in common to many things. Such things would be genuinely of a *kind,* alike in an objective way, which our schemes of classification must

respect. What individuates the statuesque form common to many statues is the *matter of the statue,* in this case the specific quantity of bronze from which the statue was originally made. That quantity of bronze individuates the form common to many duplicate statues. It is what makes this statue a distinct statue from its duplicates. Some think of the bronze statue as a matter/form or *hylomorphic* compound; bronze in the form of a statue, or equivalently, that statuesque form embodied in that bronze. On this view the compounded particular is made up of *a component form* and *constituting matter.* Yet this conception is actually rejected by Aristotle himself, and on compelling grounds. The form is not another component along with the matter. It is a principle of organization or unity that is embodied in the matter and as a result explains why that matter so organized makes up a further thing distinct from it. For if the form were another component we would be left with the question of what unites the form and the matter into a thing distinct from either and distinct from the mere sum of form and matter.

Aristotle also makes an observation that qualifies his use of the statue as a paradigm example. Artifacts exhibit a derivative or merely analogical sort of form because they have no internal principle which makes certain changes mere alterations, and which would be destroyed when the artifact ceases to exist. Contrast the primary case of living things which have a capacity for various life functions that organize and maintain the constituting matter in such a state as to continue to provide a basis for that very capacity. This is form in the primary sense, an active principle of organization responsible for the unity of a hylomorphic particular.

So far we have elaborated something like Aristotle's account of hylomorphic particulars. Famously, Aristotle adds that hylomorphic particulars stand in two other fundamental explanatory relations, the relation between particulars and their efficient causes, and the relation between particulars and their final ends, purposes or goals on the other. To revert to the example of the bronze statue, we may inquire after what it is in virtue of which this bronze came to have this statuesque form, or equivalently that in virtue of which the hylomorphic compound that is the statue came to be. The answer has reference to the artisan: he is the agent or *efficient cause* of the statue's coming to be.

We may also ask why has the artisan caused the *matter* that is the bronze to take on the *form* of a statue? What was the end or purpose or *final cause* of his doing this? Perhaps we may suppose it was his desire to provide aesthetic delight. This was the end he had in view, and which guided his forming of the bronze. Indeed, it is the content of the artisan's end which partly explains why what he made counts as a statue whose point or purpose is to give aesthetic delight, rather than a bludgeon or a paperweight, with their very different purposes.

This brief and simplified review of Aristotle's four causes was in the service

of an answer to the question of what Categories lie at the same level of generality as the Material and Formal aspects of Necessary Universal Being, and so are the candidates to be the Categories of Contingent Universal Being.

For if it is granted that these questions:

> What is it to be that particular? (form)
>
> What makes up that particular and so individuates it from particulars of the very same kind? (matter)
>
> What are the various causal transactions in which the particular is involved? (efficient causation)
>
> What purpose is the particular taken up in? (final causation)

apply to and have real answers in the case of each particular thing then this cannot be an adventitious, contingent feature of things but must rather be part of what it is to be a thing or a being, i.e. it must lie in the nature of Being itself. So we can expect that the aspects which ground the four basic kinds of understanding will appear in the Categorical division of Being itself. The four causal template must fit at some point in the Categorical division of Being.

For these reasons, we locate the Teleological and the Efficient as the sub-Kinds or sub-Categories of Contingent Universal Being. After all, any instances of teleological or efficient relations have to be instances of the necessarily existing Category that is Contingent Universal Being. It is clear that the Category of the Teleological is the Category that stands as form to the Category of Contingent Universal Being. For as we shall see, it is itself a teleological Category, embedded in a purposive relation which the yet to be articulated category of the General bears to the Category of the Necessary. Moreover, it is natural to think of efficient causal relations as constituting teleological connections, as matter does form.

How then do the Categories of the Teleological and the Efficient subdivide? The teleological operation of a particular has to do with that aspect of its functioning by which it achieves what it is directed towards. Now in one sense, the actuation of any *disposition* of a particular is a type of directed functioning. For a disposition is conditional power directed at an outcome, which it will produce only when an antecedent condition is satisfied. Thus the disposition to digest food is the conditional power directed at the outcome of digestion when the antecedent condition of swallowing the food is satisfied. Likewise the disposition to see things in the environment when the lighting is adequate is a conditional power directed at the outcome of seeing things. Such dispositions of a hylomorphic

particular together constitute a pattern of functioning that is directed at the end characteristic of all the particulars of the same kind. This end sets a norm or standard by which we can say that the thing is healthy or defective of its kind. In this way, the dispositions of a thing constitute and help realize a norm or standard that the thing can also be said to be directed at. So a natural, merely dispositional, directedness comes to be the basis of a norm-governed, teleological activity. We move from a world in which there are merely particulars with directed dispositions to a world in which such particulars are better and worse of their kind, a world in which directedness is governed by norms.

Here then we have two sides to teleological functioning, the one merely Dispositional and the other strictly Normative. These two sides of teleological functioning stand to each other as matter and form, in that the merely Dispositional constitutes the Normative. Accordingly, we should take the sub-division of the Teleological aspect (of the Contingent aspect of the Universal aspect) of Being to be given by the Sub-Categories of the Dispositional and the Normative, with the first being the matter of the Contingent, and the second its form.

How then does the division of the Category of Efficient Contingent Universal Being proceed? The efficient causal operation of a particular has to do with how the particular stands in a pattern of causes and effects. The totality of causes and effects can be conceived in two ways; as a *general* pattern of causal regularities, a set of laws or law-like generalities, or on the other hand as a dense network all of whose nodes are *singular* causal transactions among particulars. The general pattern gives the form of the efficient causal functioning of particulars, while the singular causal transactions taken together exhaust its matter, that which constitutes and realizes the general pattern. So it is a law-like generality that potassium explodes when it contacts water. This law specifies the form of a whole class of singular connections between events of potassium coming into contact with water and events of potassium exploding. The law-like generality tells us that events of the first sort cause events of the second sort. Just as we can think of the form of a hylomorphic particular as maintaining its matter in a certain viable shape, and its matter as in turn constituting its form, we can think of such law-like generalities as shaping or determining which singular causal transactions take place and also in their turn being constituted by such singular causal transactions.

Here we have a hylomorphic solution to an old problem about law-like generalizations and the particular singular causal connections that make them true. On the one hand the generality—

Pieces of potassium explode when they contact water.

explains the singular causal statement:

That piece of potassium exploded when it contacted water.

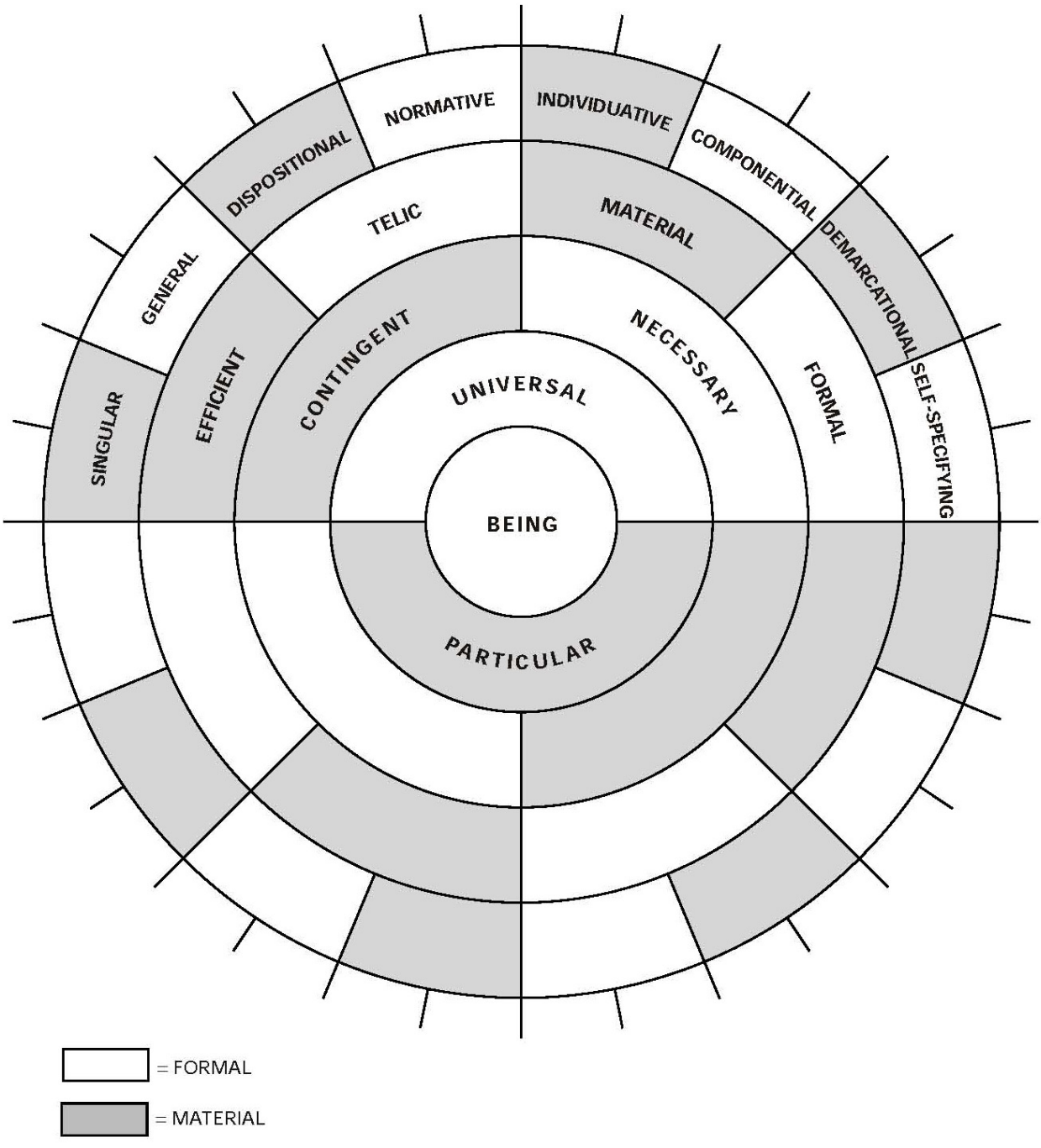
On the other hand the generality seems to be *made true* just by a host of singular causal connections such as the one just cited. So the puzzle is this: We seem to be explaining a singular causal connection in terms of a generality which is no more than a conjunction of singular causal statements including the very one we are explaining. Yet a conjunction P&Q&R&…is itself impotent to explain Q. For it simply entails Q in virtue of including it as a conjunct.

Thinking of the law-like generality as form-like and the singular causal connections as matter-like shows us the way out of the puzzle. Form is an active principle of organization that delimits the possibilities for material change. Likewise, a law-like generality is not a mere conjunction of its instances, it too represents a formal constraint on what singular causal transactions *can* take place. It is not a mere agglomeration of singular causal claims, no mere sum of this matter.

Our solution to the puzzle of explanation implies that we should take the sub-division of the Efficient aspect (of the Contingent aspect of the Universal aspect) of Being to be given by the Sub-Categories of the Singular and the General**.** The second is the formal element of the pair. For the Category of the General is itself general, and so exhibits self-application, the hallmark of form.

Our emerging structure now looks like this.

DIAGRAM 3


BEING
UNIVERSAL
PARTICULAR
NECESSARY
CONTINGENT
MATERIAL
FORMAL
TELIC
INDIVIDUATIVE
NORMATIVE
COMPONENTIAL
DISPOSITIONAL
DEMARCATIONAL
SELF-SPECIFYING
GENERAL
EFFICIENT
SINGULAR
= FORMAL
= MATERIAL

Section 6: Particular Being

In articulating the Sub-categories of Particular Being we are guided by the general picture for which we initially argued. Particular beings exist for the sake of the understanding or comprehension of Being Itself. From this point of view, the totality of particular being is to be thought of as exhibiting a material aspect—the vast spatio-temporal realm of both kinetic and stable phenomena—and a formal aspect based in and developing out of this material aspect—the very coming to understanding or comprehension of Being Itself. Thought of in isolation, the vast spatio-temporal realm of kinetic and stable phenomena is a certain way surd, for it is not comprehensible in terms of a point or purpose. By contrast, the comprehensible aspect of Particular Being is the form of this spatio-temporal realm, namely the way in which that realm is taken up in the process of coming to understanding. This suggests a Categorical division of Particular Being into the Comprehensible and the Spatio-temporal. Clearly by our criterion of taking the formal aspect to be self-specifying, Comprehensible Particular Being is the formal aspect here, for it itself is Comprehensible, in the sense of subsuming a point or purpose which mere Spatio-temporal Particular Being does not.

The same criterion requires that we find in the Categorical division of the Spatio-temporal an aspect which applies to itself and so is the formal Sub-category of Spatio-temporal Particular Being. We have already suggested that the Spatio-temporal divides into the Stable and the Kinetic, understood respectively as Categories subsuming relatively persistent spatio-temporal items as opposed to more or less instantaneous changes. The Stable is thus the obvious candidate to be the formal aspect of the Spatio-temporal. For it applies to itself since it is an unchanging universal and so a paradigm of stability. (Notice that we do not require as part of the doctrine of the self-predication of Stable of the Category Stable Spatio-temporal Particular Being that the other attributes of the Category also apply to the Category. This would be absurd. In the present case that would amount the requirement that the Category Stable Spatio-temporal Particular Being be Particular and not universal. In general it would amount to the absurd claim that the form of a Category that was itself a material Category would satisfy this material condition.)

Can we carry this systematic Categorical Division still further? Concentrate for the moment on the Category of Stable Spatio-temporal Particular Being, a Category of particular items that are extended in space and persist through time. There seem to be two very different ways in which spatio-temporal particulars can be related to time. They can be all there at each time at which they exist, in the sense of having all their parts there at each time, or they can be merely partly there

at each time at which they exist, in the sense of having *varying* parts over time. So a true atom or simple might be, all of it, present at each time at which it exists: what-it- is-to-be-the thing in question—its identity—continues through time. Such continuing things are subsumed under the Category of Continuing Stable Spatio-temporal Particular Being. Their identity continues though time, so they are wholly present at each time at which they exist. Notice that this very Category satisfies this condition. For as a Category it is a Necessary Universal and so exists necessarily and at all times. But as a Universal it is wholly present at each time at which it exists. It thus has a continuing identity. So the Category of Continuing Stable Spatio-temporal Particular Being is a formal Sub-category, since it specifies or applies to itself.

What then is its material counterpart? It would have to be the Category that subsumes those stable spatio-temporal particulars that are merely partly present at each time at which they exist, in the sense of having *varying* parts over time. Such complexes as animal bodies or repairable artifacts that can undergo change of parts are paradigm examples. Their identity over time is best thought of sequentially, i.e. as consisting in different things at different moments of time. It is in this way a merely Aggregative rather than a Continuing identity. The stability of a merely aggregative spatio-temporal item comes from its aggregating together the various different conditions that make up the item over time. Clearly Aggregative Stable Spatio-temporal Particular Being is not a formal Sub-category, since it does not specify, or apply to, itself. For as a Category it is a Necessary Universal and so exists necessarily and at all times. But as a Universal it is wholly present at each time at which it exists. It thus has a Continuing and not merely Aggregative identity.

Similar remarks apply to the Categorial division of Kinetic, a Category that subsumes more or less instantaneous changes. Among such changes, there are those that are part of a pattern and those that are random or without any larger significance. This suggests the Categories of the Random and the Patterned as the division of the Kinetic, with the latter being the formal aspect since the Category that is Patterned Kinetic Spatio-temporal Particular Being is itself part of a pattern.

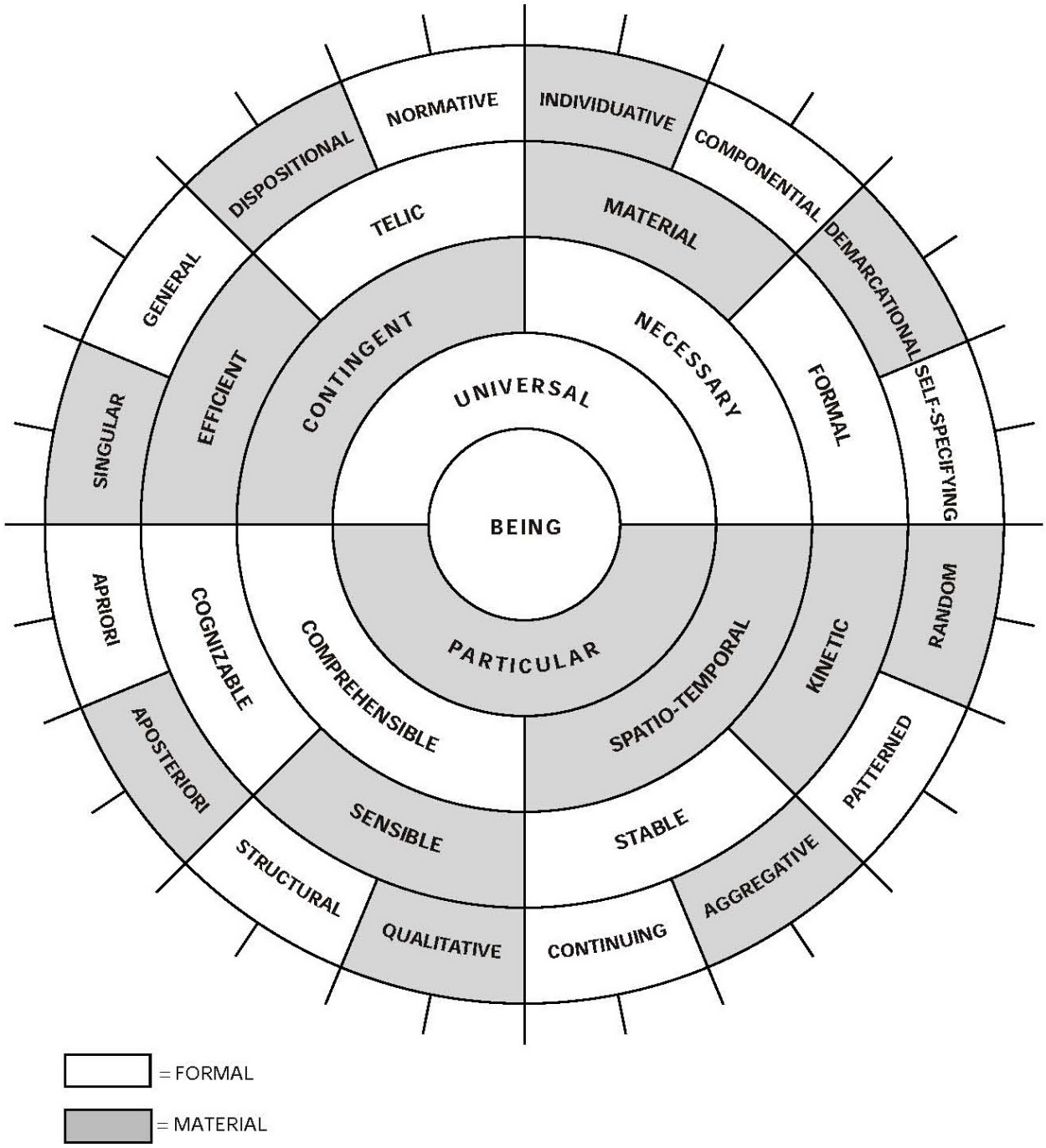
Let us now turn to the formal aspect of Particular Being, the aspect we picked out as Comprehensible Particular Being. How does its division into Sub-categories go? There are two very general ways in which things can be comprehensible. They can be the sort of things that can be immediately given to the senses—i.e. they can be Sensible—or they can be immediately given to cognition—i.e. they can be Cognizable. Clearly of the two corresponding Categories, it is Cognizable Comprehensible Particular Being that applies to itself. As a Category, it is not given to sense but to cognition.

Notice the particular way in which Categories are given to or grasped by

cognition. They are graspable in a way that is logically *prior* to any empirical knowledge of the detailed instantiation of Being in beings. Such empirical or *posterior* knowledge is the province of the particular sciences, while it is metaphysics that explores the realm of prior or, as it is typically styled, *a priori* knowledge. Here then we have a fundamental division in the ways in which things are cognizable— in a prior or *a priori* fashion as opposed to a posterior or *a posteriori* fashion. This suggests that Cognizable Comprehensible Particular Being divides into A Priori Cognizable Comprehensible Particular Being and A Posteriori Cognizable Comprehensible Particular Being. Of these two, it is the latter which is the formal Sub-category, for it is itself graspable *a priori,* as we have just demonstrated by our *a priori* "deduction" of this Category.

This leaves the specification of the formal and material aspects of Sensible Comprehensible Particular Being. When we think of the Sensible—what is given to the senses—in the most general or abstract way it is then very natural to distinguish the qualities given to the sense in question and the arrangement or structure of those qualities which the sense in question also takes in. So when we see a blue square and a red circle the qualities taken in are redness, blueness, circularity and squareness. But there is a certain arrangement or structure also sensed, for otherwise what we see could not be distinguished from a red square and a blue circle— a different structure embedding the same qualities. So the Sensible—what is given to the senses—divides into the Qualitative and the Structural. Both of these Sub-Categories are essentially located in and so pertain to a structure, the structure of the Categories themselves. So the Structural applies to itself and so is the formal element in the pair. Thus we arrive at the following Categorical Structure of Being.

DIAGRAM 4


BEING
UNIVERSAL
PARTICULAR
TELIC
NORMATIVE
DISPOSITIONAL
GENERAL
SINGULAR
EFFICIENT
CONTINGENT
NECESSARY
MATERIAL
INDIVIDUATIVE
COMPONENTIAL
DEMARCATIONAL
SELF-SPECIFYING
FORMAL
APRIORI
APOSTERIORI
COGNIZABLE
COMPREHENSIBLE
SENSIBLE
STRUCTURAL
QUALITATIVE
STABLE
SPATIO-TEMPORAL
CONTINUING
KINETIC
AGGREGATIVE
RANDOM
PATTERNED
= FORMAL
= MATERIAL

Section 7: The Principles Behind the Articulation of the Categorical Structure of Being

It may now help to step back and be explicit about the structuring principles on which we have relied. As well as drawing on specific insights into the material and formal sub-divisions of the Categories, we have so far been relying on three very general principles or "Axioms" to guide us in the articulation of the structure of Being. They are:

> Axiom 1: (Axiom of Unity) Being itself is the *Summum Genus*, the most inclusive of all the necessary universals that are the Categories.
>
> Axiom 2: (Axiom of Dichotomy) Every Category or necessary universal has an immediate Sub-Category, which stands to it as its form, and another immediate Sub-Category, which stands to it as its matter.
>
> Axiom 3 (Axiom of Self-application): Self-application is the hallmark of the formal Sub-Category of a given Category.

At this point we wish to introduce another Axiom that will serve to further constrain the structure we are developing.

The reader will recall the complaint made about Hegel's system of Categories, namely that the system simply sets out vertical or "downward-connective" relations among Categories, relations between Categories and their respective sub-Categories. We too have explored such downward relations under the heading of the material and formal aspects of a given Category. These, we argued, exhaust the sub-Categories of a given Category. But in diagramming our Categorical division of Being in the way we do, we imply that there are significant relations among Categories which do not stand to each other as sub-Categories or super-Categories or in the ancestrals of these relations. Recognizing these other "cross-connective" relations makes for a distinctive insight into the structure of Being itself.

We now make a radical suggestion that will take some space to fully explain. We maintained that Aristotle's four causes correspond to four fundamental modes of understanding that apply to particulars and universals alike. We have seen that the material and formal modes of understanding are not only reflected as Categories in the Categorical division of Being, but are also the crucial vertical structuring relations in that division. We claim that something similar applies to the

efficient and teleological modes of understanding. They are not only properly reflected as Categories in the Categorical division of Being. *They are also the crucial "cross-connective" structuring relations in that division.* To formulate this as an axiom:

> Axiom 4. (Axiom of Connective Relations) The connective relations among the Categories are none other than analogs of the four causal relations— being the matter of, being the form of, being the efficient cause of, and being the purpose of.

At this stage the reader may well ask "But what could possibly be the counterpart among universals of efficient causation among particulars, let alone the counterpart among universals of final causation or purpose?" A very legitimate question.

Section 8: "Causation" Among Necessary Universals.

Notice first off that we cannot say that the counterpart of causation for universals is the relation that holds among universals when their instances stand in the corresponding causal relation. For the counterpart of the relation of efficient causation is to be a structuring relation holding among the necessary universals making up Being itself. Being necessary universals these universals would exist anyway, whether or not they had instances to stand in causal relations. In searching for the counterpart for universals of efficient causation among particulars, we want a relation that would hold among the relevant universals anyway, whether or not there were instances of these universals.

Before we turn to universals, what in fact is the relation of efficient causation among particulars? Some say that one particular event, state or substance is a cause of another when the first is *sufficient for* the second, thereby capitalizing on the idea that the cause creates, brings about or generates the effect. Others emphasize the fact that the effect owes its existence to the cause, insisting therefore that if the cause had not occurred the effect would not have occurred, so that the cause is *necessary for* the effect. Neither the first relation of being sufficient for nor the second relation of being necessary for makes any sense as applied to necessarily existing universals. Since no one such universal could fail to exist, no other such universal is necessary for its existence. Since no such universal could fail to exist, every universal is in a trivial sense sufficient for the existence of every other, since for any two arbitrarily chosen necessary universals u and u′ there would be a true conditional of the form: *Necessarily if u exists then u′ exists.* So the relations of being a sufficient condition and the relations of being a necessary condition make no interesting discriminations among pairs of necessary universals and so neither could be the counterpart of causation among such universals.

This is, after all, no real problem since it seems clear upon reflection that neither relation is in fact the relation of causation among particulars. When it comes to necessity, we can see that the relation of being necessary for the effect is not the relation of causation just from the fact that the non-occurrence of every possible preventer of the effect is also necessary for the effect. To say that each such non-occurrence is a cause would be hopelessly to obscure the difference between an actual operating cause, which brought the effect about, and all the merely possibly preventing non-occurrences that did nothing at all. To say that the effect would not have occurred without the cause is to say something very weak, certainly very much weaker than the claim that the cause *brought about*—a rough synonym for "caused"—the effect.

When it comes to sufficiency we can see in the case of parameter-constraining

functional laws, such as PV= RT, that a change in one parameter causes a change in the other, while the law entails that each change is sufficient for the other. So for example an increase in temperature T might cause and be sufficient for an increase in the pressure P of the gas (under conditions of fixed volume V). But given that PV= RT, the increase in pressure under conditions of fixed volume is also sufficient for the increase in temperature. So being a cause of a particular event is not the relation of being sufficient for that event.

These brief remarks suggest that causation among particulars is a basic relation which can only be understood by using equivalent notions: the cause is ontologically prior to the effect in the sense that the cause *brings about* the effect, so that the effect in this way owes its existence to the cause. What is the analog of this ontological priority for universals in general, and more specifically for necessary universals?

Universals do not bring each other about, but they do exhibit relations of ontological dependence and priority. For one universal can be part of what it is to be another universal and so can properly enter into the account of the nature of the second. Take some examples where the defined universal is contingent. To be a bachelor is to be a male *of marriagable age but unmarried.* To be an angel is to be a creature that *is sempiternal.* To be a man is to be an animal that *is rational.* These definitions exhibit the form of analyzing what it is to be a kind or species in terms of a more inclusive genus and *a differentia, a feature that marks the species off within the genus.*

Now the genus and the species seem interdependent, for just as the species can be defined in the manner above in terms of the genus, the genus can be defined as a disjunction of its constitutive subspecies, as in: To be a creature is to be a man, or a dumb animal or a plant or an angel or… . On the other hand, although the species is defined by way of the differentia, the differentia is not definable in terms of the corresponding species. The differentia is in this sense ontologically prior to the species. *This ontological priority of the differentia to the species is the counterpart of causation for universals. The species is in this way ontologically dependent on its defining differentia. The differentia is in this sense the ground or cause of the species.* This relation of priority is not only exhibited in the definition of contingent universals, but also in the definition of the necessary universals which are the Categories.

But just which relation among the Categories is the relation of being the differentia of? Return to an example given earlier: To be a man is to be an animal that is rational. This definition displays what it is to be of the kind or species Man in terms of a more inclusive genus, Animal, and a differentia, Rationality, a feature that demarcates the species off within the genus.

Now we argued that the genus Animal and the species Man are

interdependent, for just as the species can be defined in the manner above in terms of the genus, the genus can be defined as a disjunction of its constitutive subspecies. On the other hand, although the species is defined by way of the differentia, the differentia is not definable in terms of the corresponding species. The differentia is in this sense ontologically prior to the species. The species is in this way ontologically dependent on its defining differentia.

Clearly the differentia cannot be a sub-species of the Genus. For if it were, then the differentia—say Rationality—would have to be at the same level of specificity as the species which it partly defines, in this case the species Man. Then the relevant genus for Man, namely Animal, would include among its sub-species Rationality and Man, a motley pair indeed. Worse, Rationality, now considered as a sub-species along with Man, would itself have a definition in terms of the higher genus Animal and some differentia, call it *X*. But if the genus includes the differentia of each of its sub-species as a further species then the genus *animal* would have to include among its sub-species Man, Rationality, X, the differentia of X, the differentia of the differentia of X and so on ad infinitum. This is a patent absurdity. The sub-species of a genus must all be at the same level of specificity. It is thus clear that a genus does not include the differentia of its sub-species among those sub-species.

We can now state a very general problem which arises for any Category theory which begins with a single dominant Category and proceeds by appeal to differentia to divide it into sub-species and sub-species of sub-species and so on. Walter Stace, discussing Hegel's dialectical method in *The Philosophy of Hegel,* puts the problem this way:

> The more general and abstract concept is always prior to the less general and abstract concept. And this principle not only decides for us that the first Category is Being, but also determines the order of the subsequent Categories…Therefore the logic will proceed from the *Summum Genus*, Being, through further and further specifications, to the least abstract category of all, whatever that may be. Our method will be to proceed from the genus to the species and then, treating the new species as a genus, to pass from it to a further and lower species, and so on. But we can only proceed from the genus to the species by adding a differentia to the species….To get from genus to species we have to add differentia. We have therefore to show that the genus contains the differentia. *But the genus is expressly defined as excluding the differentia.*
>
> W.T. Stace *The Philosophy of Hegel* (Dover, 1955) Sections 121-2

Stace's plausible suggestion is that Hegel's logic is structured around a particular "solution" to this problem. Hegel, like Spinoza before him, was impressed by what we would describe as the Demarcational aspect of Form. For Hegel, to define is to demarcate, to mark off a thing from its opposite. But then Hegel pro- posed that a definable Category must in a certain sense imply the existence of its own opposite, as the source of the demarcation or boundary between the two. His idea was then that this opposite may be extracted and made to do the work of the differentia, thus converting genus into species. This is the deeper idea behind the claim that Hegel denied the law of non-contradiction; he did not assert contradictory statements, but rather claimed that, as a condition of definition by genus and differentia, Categories and their opposites must in a certain way live parasitically off each other. So beginning with Being, Hegel proposed to define that aspect or sub-species of Being which is Becoming by appeal to the co-present opposite of Being, namely—what else would you expect?—Non-Being. Becoming is thus defined as the sub-species of the genus Being that involves Non-being. This is a very abstract way of saying that in order to become, a thing must exist but also include some potentiality or not-yet-ness, which its becoming can realize or fill up.

Among the many difficulties with Hegel's solution to the problem of locating the differentia, the first is just that it actually negates the very idea of a *Summum Genus* or first Category. By his own account a Categorical explication properly begins with the co-equal, inter-defining pair Being/Non-Being.

There is however a different solution to the problem of locating the differentia. To be sure, the differentia cannot be a sub-division of the genus at the same level as the very species which that differentia defines. It must be more specific than the species and so at a lower level of abstraction than the species. For the differentia defines or generates the species from the genus, which is inevitably more abstract than the species.

Consider how this idea applies to the Categorical division detailed here. The *Summum Genus*—Being—divides into two "sisters"—Universal Being, the formal aspect of Being—and Particular Being, the material aspect of Being. (It would not be unfair to think of this as an application of a hylomorphic version of the Hegelian idea of co-equal Categorical Opposites). Thanks to the Axiom of Dichotomy, which tells us that each Categorical Genus has just two sub-species, one differentia is sufficient to generate this division into sub-species, since once we have one Sub-Category demarcated we know that its opposite is the Category which is the other hylomorphic "component" of the Genus in question.

Now although the Categorical Sub-species of a given Categorical Genus are by definition on the same level of specificity, there is also an important sense in which the material element of the pair is more determinate than the formal

element. So it is natural to suppose that this material determinacy is in its own way prior to the more determinable formal element. Accordingly, at any level of Categorical division, *the differentia in question is the differentia of the quasi-material member of the Categorical pair.*

But where does this determinacy of the material member of the Categorical pair come from? Remember that the form of definition is

(Unspecific) Genus + (specific) Differentia = (moderately specific) Species

Accepting that it is the quasi-material member of a Categorical pair which is defined in this fashion, we have

Genus + Differentia = (Material) Species.

So the differentia not only has to add specificity lacking from the Genus, it also has to add the determinacy characteristic of the material element of a Categorial pair. Thus the differentia must itself be a quasi-material Category that is more specific than the Category which it is defining.

There is one remaining piece required to solve the puzzle. We know that the differentia of a Category cannot be a sub-species of the Category. For the sub-species of a given Category stands to it as an analog of matter or form, not as an analog of the relation of being the efficient cause of, which as we argued above is the relation of being the differentia of. *This means that in order to locate the differentia of a material element in a Categorical pair we must look to another material Category which is not only more specific than the elements in the pair, but is not a Category found in their sub-division.* Take for example Universal Being, the "material" element in the Categorical pair which make up Being. The next level of specificity involves the Categories: Contingent, Necessary, Comprehensible and Spatio-temporal. Two of these—the Comprehensible and the Spatio-temporal—are ruled out because they are Sub-Categories of Particular Being. The Necessary is ruled out since it is a formal Sub-Category. The remaining Category—the Contingent—has then to be the differentia of Particular Being. For it is

a. a "material" Category

b. at the next level of specificity

c. not part of the Categorical division of what it differentiates.

And the result that the Contingent is the differentia of Particular Being looks right. It is only because of the contingent instantiation of Being in beings that there is any Particular Being at all. This is not a mere side remark about Particular Being, rather it is so central to the very nature of Particular Being that it is suited to figure in its real definition.

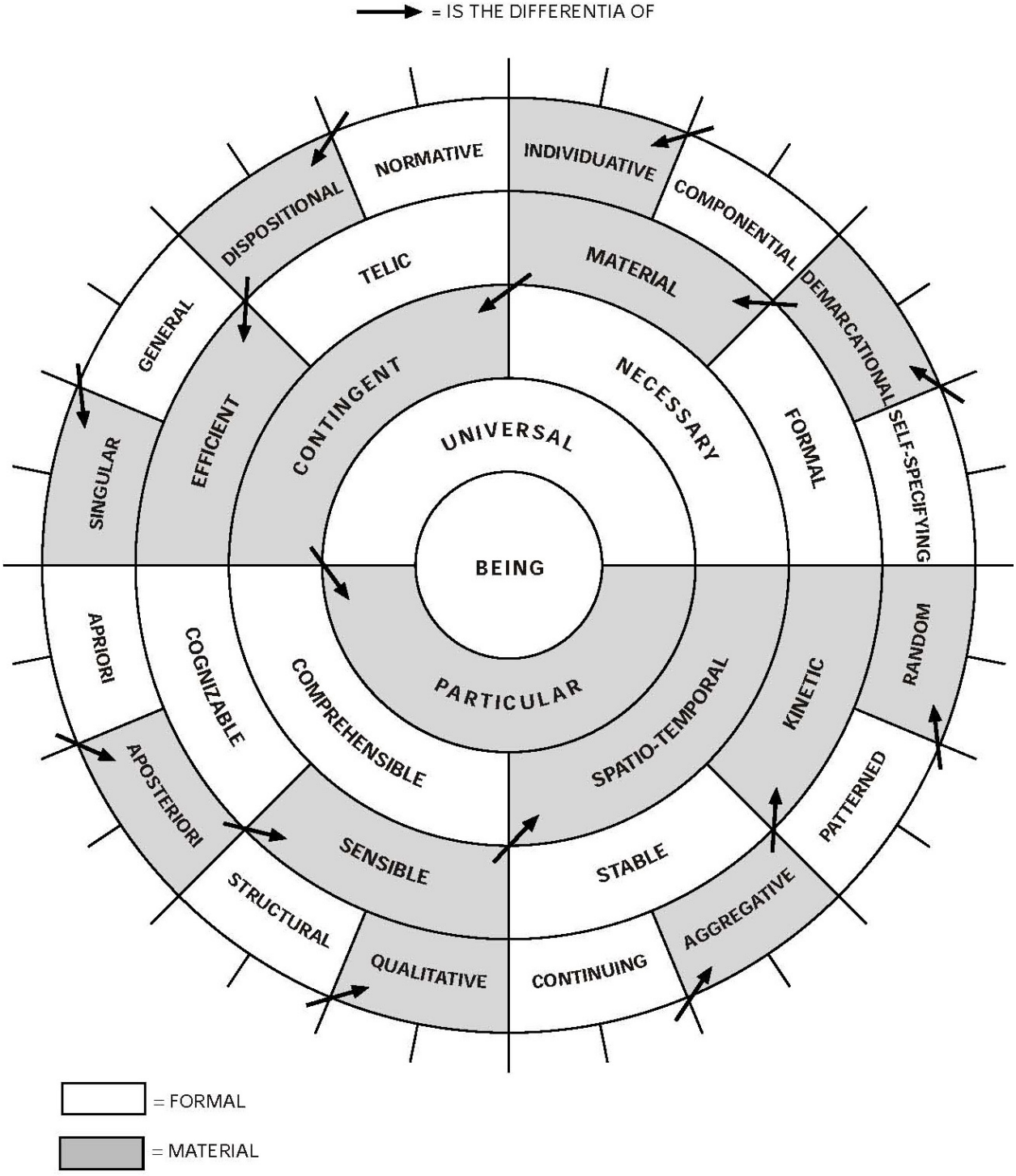
The upshot is that we are now in a position to solve the problem that so distorted Hegel's system. We can give a general specification of just which Category is the differentia of a given Category. Here it is.

a. Only material Categories have differentia.

b. The differentia of a given material Category is found in this way: Go to the genus above the given Category. Then descend to the sister of the given Category, which together with the given Category exhausts that genus. *The material Sub-category of the sister of the given Category is the differentia of the given Category*

In terms of our diagram, the examples of the relation of being the differentia of—the counterpart for necessary universals of the relation of being the efficient cause of—are marked by arrows.

DIAGRAM 5


= IS THE DIFFERENTIA OF
BEING
UNIVERSAL
PARTICULAR
CONTINGENT
NECESSARY
TELIC
MATERIAL
FORMAL
NORMATIVE
INDIVIDUATIVE
COMPONENTIAL
DEMARCATIONAL
SELF-SPECIFYING
DISPOSITIONAL
GENERAL
EFFICIENT
SINGULAR
APRIORI
APOSTERIORI
COGNIZABLE
COMPREHENSIBLE
SPATIO-TEMPORAL
KINETIC
RANDOM
PATTERNED
SENSIBLE
STABLE
STRUCTURAL
QUALITATIVE
CONTINUING
AGGREGATIVE
= FORMAL
= MATERIAL

Section 9: Purpose As A Relation Among Necessary Universals

There remains a final question to be addressed by way of a preliminary motivation for Axiom 4

> (Axiom of Connective Relations) The connective relations among the Categories are none other than analogs of the four causal relations—being the matter of, being the form of, being the efficient cause of, and being the purpose of.

What could it possibly mean to say that one universal finds its culminating point or purpose in another?

This is after all not so puzzling, since arguably the *primary* use of statements of purpose is to assert a purposive relation to a universal. Purposes are goals. If talk of goals is too redolent of deliberate or intentional purposes pursued by a mind, then a purpose is an end to which an agent, an activity or a process is directed. Between the directed agent, activity or process and the achieved end falls the shadow of contingency. Failure is possible; purposes may not be achieved. So to ascribe a purpose to something is to relate it to an outcome—the end—that may or may not be achieved. It is confused to think of this end as a possible particular. Someone aims to run a four- minute mile. Suppose he succeeds, then it makes no sense to ask: Was that the particular four-minute mile he was aiming to run? (The runner might not be that picky; any four-minute mile will do for him. But even if he were picky and a particular unstylish four minute mile would not satisfy him, his end would still be universal and not particular; it would be the universal that is the act-kind: his running a *stylish* four minute mile.) In formulating the runner's end we must have recourse to a universal or kind—in fact it is the act-kind: his running a four- minute mile. His having that end means that any instance of the universal would count as success. The end is a universal that in all likelihood will never be instantiated. Not only is the end a universal, but in many cases such ends are assigned to whole kinds or universals. So it is with the ends in which we are interested, the ones associated with form, ends which specify the dominant purpose of the things whose form is in question. So Aristotle held that the dominant end of Man is contemplation, where it makes no sense to ask, "Which man?" or "Which act of contemplation?" Here is a typical attribution of purpose where the primary terms of the relation are universals. So it is with the claims concerning purpose that we will make when it comes to the structure of Being.

But just which relation among Categories is the purposive relation of being directed at? We have articulated the Categorical division of Being and illustrated

how the Categories in question are connected by counterparts of the relations of being the form of, being the matter of and being the efficient cause of (= being the differentia of). Now, the Axiom of Connecting Relations requires that we also discern the holding among the Categories of the purposive relation of being directed at. This is the crux of the matter. Our extended argument has been that once this is done, we will *find in the structure of the Categories themselves* a vindication of the central claim argued for earlier. The purpose of the instantiation of Being in beings, that for the sake of which all beings exist, is that Being should be understood.

In order to properly locate the purposive relation of being directed at, let us dwell for a moment on the notion of teleological directedness. We argued earlier that the very idea of a disposition, a potentiality to produce an outcome under certain conditions, already incorporated the notion of directedness. The disposition is, at least conditionally, *directed at* the kind of outcome it is a disposition to produce. We also maintained that the formal aspect of the idea of directedness was captured by the idea of a norm or standard of correct functioning. This is the idea that a certain outcome, at which a thing is directed, is right, fitting or proper for the thing to produce. Thus we have the idea of something being directed at an end which sets the standard of right functioning for that thing. So we say that the function of the eye is to see and that the function of the bird's wings is to enable it to fly. An eye that could not see would be defective of its kind, as would wings that did not enable its owner to fly.

The characteristic mode of functioning that allows us to evaluate a thing as defective or successful of its kind derives from its form, the aspect of a thing that *demarcates* the thing or sets it off from other things. As a thing of a specific kind, an eye has the very same end as all other things of that kind. The end or proper function of all eyes is to see. A particular eye gets to have this end because of the form it shares with all other eyes. So our first principle is that *finality derives from form*.

Secondly, when we say that a thing's purpose or end is to X (see), the X-ing (seeing) in question is a universal, which is capable of having many instances. Moreover, this end will be merely determinable, allowing this or that more specific realization in different types of cases. (Think of the enormous range of types of things that one can see.) It is in that sense more form-like than matter-like, although in this case we are talking about an end as an outcome of a certain form rather than an object of a certain form. So finality—having some outcome as an end or purpose—is not only grounded in form, but the outcome itself should be thought of as a formal universal, something which can be particularized in different material embodiments of the same specific type. Hence our second principle is that *finality is directed at form.*

The third principle for which we shall argue will be this: The merely determinable or form-like universal, to which finality is directed, is always less specific than the form in which finality is grounded. Seeing is the final end of the human eye. The human eye has a certain specific form that developed for the sake of seeing. Now there are detailed aspects of the form of the human eye which make it differ from, say, the eye of a bird or of a bee. So it is said that the human eye is "trichromatic" or organized around three systems of cones, while the eye of the bird is organized around four such systems, and the eye of the bee is hard to classify in this respect. These different kinds of eyes have different forms or organizing structures and yet they all have the same purpose or final end: to (enable the animal in question to) see. Despite specific differences in form, a common end is served. Nor is this an idiosyncratic feature of the eye and seeing. It is a banality that there is more than one way to skin a cat. In the present context this banality amounts to the observation that things with different specific forms can serve the same end. (The converse does not hold, things with the same specific form cannot have different ends, at least when those ends are intrinsic or determined by form, rather than by the external purposes to which things are put.) But if form determines finality, and the same final end can be served by many different forms, then the common end cannot be as specific as the various forms which serve or aim at it. *Thus the end is less specific than, i.e. more general than, the form from which it derives*.

So far then we have established that finality—having some outcome as an end or purpose:

a. derives from form,

b. is itself formal in character,

c. is more general, i.e. less specific than, the form from which it derives.

Turning now to the Categories, this implies that if one Category is to be directed at a second Category as the first Category's end or purpose then:

a. the first Category will be a formal Sub-Category of its Super-Category or Genus,

b. the second Category will also be a formal Sub-Category of its Super-category or Genus,

c. this second Category or the end at which the first Category is directed

will be the more general of the two.

We are now in a position to locate the relation of *being directed at* in the structure of the Categories. We know that the final end of a Category cannot be the Category of which it is a sub-species. For the sub-species of a given Category stands to it as a counterpart of matter or form, and so not as a counterpart of the relation of being directed at that category as its final end. *This means that in order to locate the end of a formal element in a Categorical pair we must look to another formal Category which is not only more determinable or less specific than this formal element, but is also not the Category which has this formal element as its sub-species.* Recall for example that Being divides into the material Sub-Category of Particular Being and the formal Sub-Category of Universal Being. At the next level, we attain more specificity with the Categories: Contingent, Necessary, Spatio-temporal and Comprehensible. Consider now the Category of the Comprehensible, which is the formal Sub-Category of Particular Being. What is the Category of the Comprehensible directed at? We know that it has to be a Category that is less specific than the category of the Comprehensible.

This leaves two candidates: Universal Being and Particular Being. It cannot be Particular Being, for two reasons. First, this is the material Sub-Category of Being, and finality only holds between *formal* Sub-Categories. Secondly, the Comprehensible stands as form to Particular Being and nothing can be both the form of and directed at the same thing. The remaining Category—Universal Being—has then to be the Category that the Comprehensible is directed at. The meaning and significance of this claim will be explored in detail below.

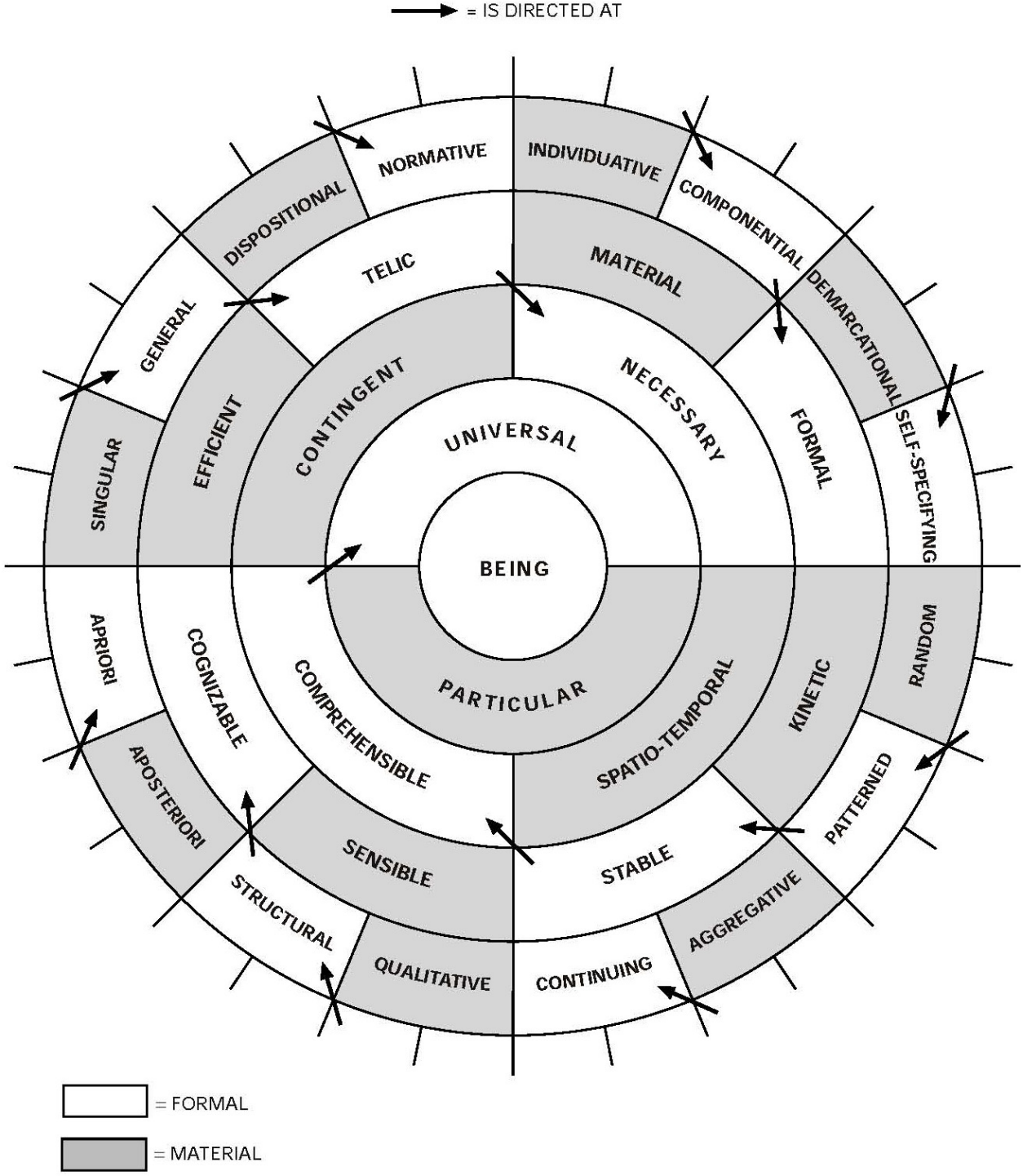
We are now in a position to provide a general specification of just when one Category is directed at another Category as its end. Here it is:

a. Only formal Categories have ends to which they are directed.

b. If a given formal Category has an end then it is found in this way: Go to the genus above the given Category. Consider the sister of the genus. Is this sister a formal Category? If so, then this sister of the genus of the original Category is what this original Category is directed at.

That is to say that *the end of a formal Sub-Category is the formal sister of the genus of that Category*. In terms of our diagram, the examples of the relation of being directed at are marked by bold arrows.

DIAGRAM 6


= IS DIRECTED AT
NORMATIVE
INDIVIDUATIVE
COMPONENTIAL
DEMARCATIONAL
SELF-SPECIFYING
RANDOM
PATTERNED
AGGREGATIVE
CONTINUING
STABLE
KINETIC
FORMAL
NECESSARY
UNIVERSAL
BEING
PARTICULAR
SPATIO-TEMPORAL
COMPREHENSIBLE
SENSIBLE
QUALITATIVE
STRUCTURAL
APOSTERIORI
COGNIZABLE
APRIORI
SINGULAR
EFFICIENT
CONTINGENT
TELIC
MATERIAL
DISPOSITIONAL
GENERAL
= FORMAL
= MATERIAL

Let us now explicate the specific claims represented in Diagram 6. Beginning in the left upper quadrant, the diagram embodies the claim that the General is directed at the Telic, which in its turn is directed at the Necessary. The General is that aspect of the Efficient that is concerned with efficient causal law. This realm of general law constrains the possible patterns of efficient causal interaction, thus preparing the way for teleological connections to emerge. For one thing happening for the sake of another is a relation that can only be instantiated against the background of General regularities ordering nature. Moreover, this emergent Teleology finds its end or purpose in the Necessary, which then gets comprehended as a result of the final achievements of Teleology.

In the upper right quadrant of Diagram 6 we have the claim that the Componential aspect of Matter is directed at Form. That is to say that Matter in its role of component of the hylomorphic particular, finds its point in sustaining Form. Matter is not merely arbitrarily located varieties of kinds of stuff governed by natural law. Contrary to the Reductive Materialist, Matter is there for the sake of Form.

In the lower left quadrant, we have the claim that the Structural aspect of the Sensible exists for the sake of the Cognizable. This is the very plausible idea that the point of sensing structure is to provide the materials for Cognition. This fits with a picture of the mind as a set of abilities in which the lower abilities such as sensing are for the sake of the higher such as cognition. This is of course very different from the picture provided by a reductive empirical psychology where all of our mental capacities are on the same level, so that nothing is made of mind being for the sake of anything that transcends individual human interests. But throughout we have emphasized that the mental is a late manifestation of an inherent purpose in the very structure of things.

We now come to a sequence of teleological connections that is the most important of all. Indeed, it is a pictorial representation of the culmination of our whole argument.

Diagram 6 displays this series of claims: The Patterned aspect of the Kinetic is directed at or exists for the sake of the Stable, which is directed at the Comprehensible, which in its turn is directed at Universal Being—the form of Being itself.

Here is a teleological arc that sweeps across the whole of the Particular aspect of Being and finds its culmination in the fact that the Comprehensible is directed at the Universal aspect of Being. As is depicted in our diagram, the Universal aspect of Being resolves, via the Contingent and the Necessary, into the four aspects of Being that ground the four fundamental kinds of comprehension or understanding, namely the Efficient, the Teleological, the Material and the Formal. The emergence of Stable Spatio-temporal Particulars out of Kinetic Pattern thus finds

its completed purpose in the Comprehending of the Universal aspect of Being.

Our name for this long teleological arc *from* the Patterned aspect of the Kinetic aspect of Spatio-temporal Particular Being *to* Universal Being itself is *Coming to Understanding*. It is the thing for the sake of which there is Patterned Kinetic Spatio-temporal Particular Being. But since the Categories are themselves necessarily interconnected in the way we have detailed, if the Category of the Patterned aspect of the Kinetic aspect of Spatio-temporal Particular Being is instantiated then Being is instantiated, i.e. contingent beings exist. Thus it can be truly said that contingent beings exist for the sake of the Coming to Understanding of the form of Being, which is Universal Being. This then is the detailed content of our fundamental claim that Being is instantiated in contingent for the sake of understanding.

Our method of deriving this result may be distinctive, our insistence on the four causes as the structuring relations among the Categories may be surprising, and our emphasis on Being Itself as the pivotal Category in terms of which all other Categories are to be explained may be controversial. But our destination will now seem utterly familiar to anyone who is fortunate enough to recall Socrates' speech from Plato's *Phaedrus:*

> The place beyond heaven, none of our earthly poets has ever sung or will sing its praises enough! Still, risky as it may be, I must attempt to speak the truth about it, especially since Truth is my subject. What is in this place is without color and without shape and without solidity. Found there is the Being that really is what it is, the subject of all real Knowledge, the soul's steersman, which is visible only to intelligence. A god's mind is nourished by this pure Knowledge, as is the mind of anyone that is concerned to take in what is appropriate to mind. Such a person is delighted at last to be seeing what is Real and watching what is True, and so feeds on all this and feels wonderful, until the circular motion brings it around to where it started. On the way around it has a complete view of Knowledge. This is not the knowledge that is close to change, the knowledge that becomes different as it knows the different things that we consider real down here. This is instead the Knowledge of what really is what it is. And when one has seen all things as they really are and feasted upon them, one sinks back inside heaven and goes home… Now this is what it is to participate in the life of the gods.
>
> *Phaedrus* 247c –248a.

Review 1: Ermanno Bencivenga

Coming to Understanding is metaphysics without apology. When it comes to metaphysics, and philosophy in general, it says at the beginning, ours is a time of despair, where the view is common that "[n]o substantive knowledge of the world... [is] available *a priori*, i.e. independently of the operation of the senses." But "[t]he rumors of the death of metaphysics have been greatly exaggerated." And, to prove such rumors wrong, the work immediately immerses itself into "the study of Being qua Being." "To explain reality in the most general and comprehensive way would be to say what it is and why it exists, to articulate its form or nature and to extract its purpose"—and it is precisely these "antique, impassable questions" that its author A.M. Monius tackles in a sixty-page lucidly written essay.

Coming to Understanding is no "scholarly" work. Though it displays some good knowledge of the history of philosophy and is peppered with references to Plato and Aristotle, Olympiodorus and Porphyry, Spinoza and Kant, Hegel and Schopenhauer (curiously turned, twice, into "Schopanhauer"—in a text in which I found no [other] typo), there only one quote from a text of secondary literature: Walter Stace's *The Philosophy of Hegel*. So, clearly, this is no engagement with the subtle *distinguos* of professional journal articles, and with the complex intellectual genealogies which often make those articles illegible to anyone other than a selected few. It is rather, in the grand tradition of the *Meditations*, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and *The World as Will and Representation*, a self-standing piece of reflection which asks to be judged on its own merit. Which makes it also an ambitious piece of work; whether the ambition is warranted, is the question we need to consider here.

There are two main parts to the essay. In the first one, Monius addresses the Heideggerian question of why there is something rather than nothing. In the second one, he turns to the Aristotelian, Kantian, and Hegelian issue of uncovering the categorial structure of reality. I will review the two parts in turn, though it will also become apparent that they are subtly interrelated—and so, to some extent, will my review of them have to be.

In the first part, Monius sets a basic condition for counting an answer to his question as satisfactory. He wants an explanation of *contingent* existence, an explanation of the existence of (contingent) individual beings and of contingent universals (all of which might not have existed); hence he will disregard any account "that tells us that [contingent existence] is an illusion"—that is, that what might seem contingent is really necessary, could not have been different than it is.

That is enough to rule out Theism, Spinozism, and the Many Worlds Hypothesis, and leaves him with the prima facie puzzling task of finding an account which "explain[s] without necessitating." The task is fulfilled by a teleological or purposive explanation, and an example indicates how that is different from, say, an efficient or a logical one: "'The spider built the web in order to catch and eat the fly' does not entail that the spider had to build the web." This solution creates the additional problem that "teleological" and "purposive" seem to invoke a personal, conscious plan; but Monius gets around this problem by talking about an "impersonal purpose" which, in particular, Being would have. Unfortunately, "impersonal purpose" is just a name for a mystery, which itself calls for solution. A Kantian strategy here would be to bring in a(n ideal) spectator, and claim that a purpose is something that such a spectator would feel inclined to impute; but Monius has no sympathy for Kant—he calls the latter's theory of synthesis "infamous" and subscribes to Hegel's criticism of it as "subjective." Whether Monius himself is more objectively grounded will be considered later; for the moment, his treatment of impersonal purpose essentially reduces a teleological explanation to an ethical one: "the idea of an impersonal purpose is no more than the idea that some things happen because they should, i.e. because it is good that they do." Which, of course, will soon create the problem of what this "good" is.

In further qualifying the kind of explanation he is looking for, Monius establishes that it must appeal to a necessary, intrinsically unique entity. This entity is Being, whose necessary existence is proved as follows: "if everything has Being in common then Being must be a universal. It must therefore exist and have being. So here we have a universal, which is properly predicated of itself. Being exists. Being has being.... But is it merely contingent that Being is predicated of itself? The universal, Being, applies to itself. Can this be an accident, due to the fact that there are other things, where these things themselves might not have existed? No, whether a universal applies to itself seems just to lie in the very nature of the universal itself. [There follow two examples of universal that do and do not, respectively, apply to themselves: Being One Thing and Weighing One Gram.] Being holds of itself. Which is just to say: Being exists. But it lies in the very nature of a universal to hold of itself, if it does so hold. So it lies in the very nature of Being that it holds of itself. So it lies in the very nature of Being that it exists. This is just to say that Being exists necessarily. Being is a *necessary* universal."

There are three major non sequiturs in the above argument: three places where Monius's position is one among many, but definitely not the single one the argument is supposed to necessitate. First, it does not follow from the fact that everything has Being then Being is a universal. Despite Monius's frequent references to Aristotle *and* his equally frequent characterizations of Being as a *summum genus*, Aristotle famously claims (in the *Metaphysics*) that Being is no

genus, that Being presents itself as radically split—split into categories, than which *there are no* more inclusive genera (it is not a tree of Porphyry that accounts for his definitional scheme, but a forest with ten independent members). This position creates a serious problem for Aristotle, in that, if "Being is said in many ways," it is not clear how indeed there can be a "science of Being qua Being." Aristotle addresses this problem by a move Monius himself discusses elsewhere in his text: by arguing that the various senses of the word "Being" are clustered around a "focal meaning" (the one the word has when it applies to substances), and hence are "correlated" so as to make a systematic account of Being (such as a science would have to provide) possible. Maybe Monius wants to reject this whole line of thought, but then he would owe us an account of why that is; as things stand, one cannot deduce from the fact that everything has Being that there is *one thing* (Being) which everything has—for maybe everything has Being in different ways. The possibility of saying that everything is is compatible with that predicate being an ambiguous one—in Aristotle's own terminology, with Being being homonymous.

Second, it does not follow from the fact that Being is a universal that Being exists. That is *one* possible understanding of universals: the one favored by realists. But there are alternative understandings; specifically, one can be a nominalist with respect to universals, and then one will claim that a universal is nothing but a *flatus vocis*—nothing but a word uttered by someone, which "unifies" various things simply by being uttered in their presence. Again, nominalism might well be false; but, unless proven otherwise, it might be also be true, hence either Monius gives an argument that refutes nominalism or the sheer possibility of it will be enough to invalidate the step currently under consideration.

Third, there is a key ambiguity in the expression "applies to itself" predicated of a universal (or of anything else). Something may "apply," and specifically "apply to itself," in the sense that a sentence consisting of such an application would not be ungrammatical—in the most common terminology, would not be a "category mistake." "Thoughtful" does not apply to oceans (in this sense) because the sentence "The Pacific Ocean is thoughtful" is ungrammatical. Also, "thoughtful" does not apply to itself (in this sense), whereas "monosyllabic" does: the sentence "'monosyllabic' is monosyllabic" is grammatical whereas the sentence "'thoughtful' is thoughtful" is not. And it is indeed the case that, if something applies to something else in *this* sense, this is not (as Monius puts it) an "accident" or a "grace of fortune." What applies to what, in *this* sense, is not an empirical but a *logical* matter. However, this conclusion is not of any help to Monius, for his concern is with a stronger sense of "applying" and "applying to itself": that in which the result of such an application is not just grammatical *but true* (in this sense, "monosyllabic" does not apply to itself but "polysyllabic"

does). And here the reference to a couple of examples will not establish the point that the truth of "Being has Being" cannot be a contingent matter. Maybe that sentence is indeed necessary (Anselm and Descartes, and maybe Parmenides too, have provided reasons for thinking so—which Monius does not consider); but this will not follow from just bringing up the vicissitudes of some *other* universals like Weighing One Gram or Being One Thing. For one can simply bring up yet *other* examples which seem to have different vicissitudes: the universal Has Many Examples (for example) is self-applicable in the first sense (the sentence "Has Many Examples has many examples" is grammatical), but whether it is self-applicable in the second sense (whether the sentence above is true) is an entirely contingent matter—it depends on how many *other* universals happen to have *in fact* many examples.

In conclusion, Monius has not proved that Being exists necessarily. But let us grant him that point and consider where his argument is going next. Now he puts forward the following teleological explanation: there is a "fundamental and supreme Good which essentially involves Being" and "Being is contingently exemplified for the sake of this Good. Equivalently, contingent being exists for the sake of this good." To determine what this Good is, Monius begins as follows: "The only initially plausible candidates to be the fundamental and supreme Good are ..." Let's stop him right there and question the phrase "initially plausible candidates." If this phrase is given its most plausible reading, it means "those candidates which *at first sight* might look plausible"; in other words, it brings up a *provisional* sense of plausibility, which still needs to be subjected to scrutiny. Maybe these candidates will turn out not to be plausible after all—this Monius will take pains to show, for all but one of them, thus constructing an (alleged) argument by elimination. But, also, maybe there are other plausible candidates which will emerge long after this first look—and this Monius never even considers as a possibility. In other words, he never challenges his initial sense of plausibility in so far as that is used to completely determine the field of inquiry; which means that, whatever conclusion he reaches, it is marred by a failure of proper generality.

Let us consider then the "initially plausible candidates" Monius entertains. There are three of them: "1. Reality as a whole. 2. Loving affirmation of the real, the adequate response of the will to reality. 3. Comprehensive understanding of the real, the adequate response of the intellect to reality." And each of the three can be applied to either Being itself or to "all individual beings thought of as instantiating or exemplifying Being," thus giving a total of six possibilities. "The first view—that the Good is Being itself—can be rejected immediately," Monius says, and here his argument seems to be a good one: it would be no explanation of why Being is instantiated to say that it is for the sake of Being itself (though, in preparation for things to come, note that, though this account would make things no better

understood by us, it might very well provide the true [and unintelligible] *ground* for the instantiation of being: there is no reason to think that what is [the ground of something] should also be understandable by us—should also make things clearer to our eyes).

The third view (the Good is the loving affirmation of Being) is also ruled out by an argument that appeals to the formal characters of the alleged explanation. For it would be embedded in the fourth view (the Good is the loving affirmation of beings) since Being is a being, and the resulting Good would then not be the most fundamental and supreme one. (But note that this argument too depends on the shaky assumption that "if loving affirmation of Being were a good then *presumably* [italics mine] loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being would also be a good.")

The sixth view is rejected by claiming that a comprehensive understanding of Being would include an understanding of its exemplification by contingent beings, hence the latter would not be a more (but, "presumably," a less?) fundamental good than the former (perhaps so, and yet, why doesn't the same argument apply to a "comprehensive" affirmation of Being—or is it rather that "comprehensive" "does not apply" to "affirmation"?). But it is on Monius's reasons for rejecting views two and four that I want to concentrate, since they bring out some important (and unargued for) presuppositions in his notion of a good.

In discussing the second view Monius says that "[t]he world—the totality of contingent beings—is obviously improvable in many ways. Some good things could be added to the world and some bad things could be taken away, in either case without compensating losses." Now this is not very informative, since we have not been told what a "good" thing is—and indeed it is highly suspicious, since "good" is used in the course of defining "the Good." When discussing the fourth view Monius provides more detail (and here is where Schopenhauer becomes relevant: "The world has learned a thing or two from me," Monius quotes from him, "which it will not soon forget"): "there are aspects of the natural world which are positively horrific and which it would be deluded to love.... The hungry lions run down and maim the zebra and then begin to devour it while it still lives. Their pleasure in the hunt and the satisfying of their hunger is objectively far less considerable than the terror and agony of the zebra.... Nor is the terror and pain of being eaten alive a mere privation, a mere absence of calm and bodily integrity. The terror and pain have their own awful qualitative character." There is no denying that the picture thus drawn is horrific; the question is what exactly follows from the horror. The horror is something we feel, and, most likely, the zebra feels too; but how do we conclude that this horror is an unredeemable bad thing? Why is something that a human or a zebra feel conclusive evidence of its moral character? Why, indeed, is it even relevant to that character?

Let me clear about this. I am not *denying* that the zebra being devoured alive is an unredeemable bad thing. I don't have to. It's rather Monius who has to prove that it is, and of course there are any number of philosophers who have claimed the opposite, and referring to the most typical of them with the ironic epithet of Panglossian will not do the job of establishing that his views are (as Monius claims, with no argument) "absurd." (Monius's work has different goals from Voltaire's; so it needs to perform to, and to be judged by, different standards.) Once again, it is in a Kantian framework that what humans feel would be relevant, and "good" would have to be defined in such a way that our awe before the moral law or the starry heaven is at least an indication of something moral; but Monius has rejected this framework, hence it is totally unclear how the horror we undeniably experience at the prospect of (anything) being eaten alive is supposed to be evidence of the (comparative) badness of the real world. (An alternative account might bypass the horror altogether, and simply appeal to a utilitarian computation of the algebraic sum of pain and pleasure involved in the exchange between the zebra and the lions. But, *mutatis mutandis*, the same criticism applies to it: utilitarianism does not provide the only possible account of the good, and in any case Monius has not argued in its favor.)

The conclusion of this first part of the essay is that "understanding more is better than understanding less," hence the Good is "the understanding of the exemplification of Being by contingent Being." This is a very general answer to a very general problem, and earlier I mentioned the fact that Monius is not overwhelmed at the prospect of facing "antique, impassable questions." The reason, he says, is that (much as Descartes before him) he believes he can count on an important "innovation in method." What the innovation amounts to is the following: "The most general methodological insight shaping the present work is that analytic ontology is the key to speculative cosmology." Speculative cosmology, he explains, is "the enterprise on which we are engaged, namely to provide a large-scale account of reality, its origin, purpose and how it hangs together." Analytic ontology, on the other hand, is "an account of the fundamental Kinds of Being, where these Kinds of Being or Categories are best understood as necessarily existing universals." And, he continues, the basis for his "most general methodological insight" is that "the structure of Being or of reality as a whole is the structure of necessary universality whose various distinguishable aspects are none other than the Categories themselves." In other words, to study the most fundamental structure of what is is the same as to study the structure of what must be: necessity will give us the clue to the grounds of Being. "When we comprehend the real Categories and the structuring relations among the Categories, the nature and purpose of reality as a whole will be laid bare."

It is not a completely novel insight, as Monius himself recognizes. But those

who tried categorial thinking before him did not go very far, for different reasons. "With the notable exception of Hegel," the theories of the Categories provided by the tradition had a "flaccid, arbitrary, list-like quality"; and, when it comes to Hegel, Monius raises the curious complaint that, though according to him "[t]he vertical structure of the Categories is clearly determined as a downward tree beginning with the Summum Genus as the topmost mode," "we are given no idea of how the Hegelian Categories are related 'horizontally' i.e. when they are at the same level of generality while not being themselves Thesis and Antithesis of the same Genus." Here the problem is more with Monius than with Hegel, for Monius is reading Hegel as if the latter were still operating within an Aristotelian, analytic logic of static universals: each universal clearly delimited from its neighbors and in clear, *definitive* relations of agreement or opposition with them. Whereas of course Hegel's "universals" are live entities, constantly negating and superseding themselves *and turning into something other than themselves while they also retain their identity* (this is Hegel's *Aufhebung*: a canceling and a preserving at once); and the (dialectical) history of this development is the "vertical structure" Monius finds there—so there is good reason why no "horizontal structure" should also be found: every opposition is supposed to be sublated in a new phase of the one and only thing there is, that is, spirit.

I will not insist on the accuracy of this reading of Hegel—or, for that matter, on the accuracy of Hegel's own account. As I said from the beginning, Monius's is no historical, scholarly essay, and his references to the history of philosophy are only heuristic devices in developing his own position. The real difficulty in this area of his work is theoretical: Both Kant and Hegel had an account of *why* analytic ontology should be a key to speculative cosmology. Kant's is the "subjectivist" account Monius denounces, while Hegel claims that the world displays a necessary, rational structure ("the real is rational") *because* the world *is the same as* reason, and reason itself becomes progressively better aware of this relation, as it turns more and more into self-conscious spirit (the scientist who represents "observing reason," for example, still unconsciously relies on the identity between reason and reality without ever posing it as a problem). Aristotle has no such account; but paradoxically, under those circumstances, it is just the "arbitrary, list-like quality" of his system of Categories that makes the latter more credible—for it makes it look like the sort of result one would obtain by performing a reconnaissance operation in an alien, previously unknown field, it suggests an almost empirical character for it, as if one had just found out what basic characters the world *happened to* have (and what is "flaccid" about it, then, would derive from the *passive* stance one takes when letting oneself "be impressed" by data in the course of such an operation). If, on the other hand, one does develop an account of necessary Kinds and then uses it as a clue to what

reality is like, one has to explain why what *we judge* to be necessary should have anything at all to say about reality. Couldn't such a judgment simply express lack of imagination on our part? What about the many times scholars tried to prove the necessity of something they considered undeniable, only to be shown later that the thing was not only not necessary *but false*? (A good example was Girolamo Saccheri, a Professor of Mathematics in 18th century Italy who devoted a whole book, *Euclides ab omni naevo vindicatus*, to an attempt at establishing once and for all the "necessity" of something he definitely judged necessary [but was not], that is, Euclid's fifth [or parallel] postulate—and in doing this unwittingly constructed the first system of non-Euclidean geometry.) One need not accept Descartes's theism to agree with the essence of his theory of the creation of eternal truths: what is "eternally" (or necessarily) the case could be radically different from what appears to us, and could change in ways that we have absolutely no control over. In conclusion, Monius's "most general methodological insight" remains just that, an insight, a guess, whose legitimacy or veridicality he offers no ground for. Which matches the problems we found earlier in his characterization of "the Good": from both directions, the powerful suggestion comes that the implicit basis of this work may be far more "subjectivist" than its author would want to admit.

Let us put this fundamental difficulty aside, grant Monius his methodological insight, and explore where that will take us. "[W]here should one begin?", Monius asks, and "notice[s]" that he "ha[s] already begun," for he has (in the course of discussing Being in general) "discerned two kinds of, or aspects of, Being—what we might call Universal Being and Particular Being." So the very first division in analytic ontology (and one to be reflected in speculative cosmology) is between Universal and Particular Being. This whole line of argument sounds dangerously "arbitrary" (what if Monius had made different distinctions earlier? What if he had begun differently? Was he *necessitated* to make just that one distinction to begin with? And why?); but, more seriously, it is not so clear that *this* distinction is a necessary one. To be sure, it is a popular one, and Monius characterizes it correctly as the one between repeatable and non-repeatable Being; but it is also one that has been called in question, and for which there are important alternatives not considered (let alone refuted) by Monius. There is Hegel, for example, who would distinguish *three* parameters here: Universal, Particular, and Individual (his Individual can be assimilated to Monius's Particular, but his Particular is different—it corresponds to specification as such); and, perhaps more important, there is Leibniz, who would collapse particulars into universals by seeing them as *infimae species*, and hence would claim a general homogeneity of Being in this respect. It was Kant who once again posed (against Leibniz: see the Amphiboly section in the Analytic of the first *Critique*) the radical distinction between universals and individuals; but we know that Monius does not like Kant.

I can put the same point differently. Universal Being, Monius says, "applies to itself." Clearly, this is the strong sense of "applying": the one surreptitiously introduced above to argue for the necessity of Being. Particular Being, on the other hand, "does not apply to itself." Which is to say: It is true that Universal Being has Universal Being, but it is not true that Particular Being has Particular Being. But, then, how is it that Particular Being has Being at all? What if there simply were no particular beings? What if Being were not "instantiated or exemplified"? Monius's answer is: "Particular Being … is not a *mere* being, something that merely happens to be. For it is an aspect of Being, and so exists necessarily." Now that makes sense, except that it raises the question of what it is to be an aspect of Being. One might think that any Kind is an aspect of Being, so that Young Being or Round Being or Smooth Being do not merely happen to be but exist necessarily, independently of the existence of young or round or smooth things. Monius, however, rules that out, for he has a very strong reading of Contingent Being. "Contingent universals," he says, "exist only if they are instantiated. If there were no plastic things then the universal that is the *property* being made of plastic [Plastic Being?] would not have been. If there were no contracts then there would be no universal *relation* of contracting…. Such universals do not exist *ante rem*, i.e. before their instances. This means that they would not exist if they were not instantiated." Which creates three serious problems.

First (and most general) problem: Though Monius's position in this regard is perfectly understandable and consistent, it is by far *not* the only position that has these nice features; hence we need to know on what basis he can assert it so easily, as if it were a matter of course. Again, there are respectable positions in the history of philosophy (Plato's, to mention only one of the *most* respectable) according to which, though it is contingent that there be tables, it is not contingent that there be the Kind (or, in Plato's terms, the Form) Table. Any such position could well be wrong, or at least questionable; but Monius offers no argument to this effect. He just seems to take it for granted that it is so—an attitude that might be justifiable if he were a scholar working within a specific scholarly tradition, but one that is definitely not justifiable if he moves in a purely theoretical framework and asks for his position to be evaluated on its merit only. (This is precisely where one pays the price of ambition: ambitious projects need to stand on their own feet.)

Second problem: Assuming that there is a meaningful distinction between those universals that exist necessarily and those that exist contingently, how do we know enough *at this stage of the game* to argue that any given universal is one or the other? We have not even introduced Necessary Being yet (it will be the next step); so we don't even have the language to express, let alone the theoretical structure to support, any such distinction.

Third (and most specific) problem: Assuming that we have enough theoretical

machinery to distinguish between necessary and contingent universals, isn't it begging the question to claim that Particular Being is a necessary aspect of Being? To be sure, it would seem that there are particular beings; but shall we rely on that *empirical* fact (if it is one—see later) in the course of developing analytic ontology? For all we know at this point of the development of this highly abstract discipline, there might be *no* such contingent beings; after all, our main problem is to justify why there should be some, which we said is an explanation which does not necessitate, hence in the context of this explanation it should remain an open question whether there are any or not. Worse: how do we know that that alleged fact is indeed a fact? A position like Leibniz's is still a possibility, unless proven otherwise; and simply *stating* that Particular Being is a necessary aspect of Being will not prove it wrong. And, unless it is proven wrong, we just don't know enough to say that Particular Being is anything more than a contingent feature of reality.

Let's move on. Being is universal; so, Monius asks, what distinguishes Being and Universal Being? "Only different 'matter' could individuate or make distinct the universals in question." That "matter" be in quotation marks indicates that its use is metaphorical: we are talking about formal determinations of Being here, so we cannot expect the matter referred to to coincide with some three-dimensional occupier of space. It is matter in the Hegelian sense that is at issue: a further conceptual specification of a more general (more "abstract," Hegel would say) notion. It is concreteness as detail, not as (sensory) resistance to impact—or impenetrability. But, though putting "matter" in quotation marks might avoid some misunderstandings, it does not avoid serious problems. For Hegel's "vertical" reading of categories now comes back to haunt us: according to him, by articulating a concept (indeed, *the* concept, the only one there is) in greater detail we develop its *identity* more clearly, we do not establish any *distinction* of it from anything else—at least, not any radical distinction, not any which would be incompatible with the identity itself (identity in difference). The way this Hegelian point is relevant to Monius is as follows: assuming that the matter of Being be (as Monius claims) Particular Being, how do we know that that is (as he also claims) "not the matter of Universal Being"? The linguistic expressions "Particular Being" and "Universal Being" are distinct from one another; but that does not imply that Particular Being and Universal Being (what those expressions refer to) are also distinct. (Again, Hegel would argue that they are not: that what he calls Individual, and Monius calls Particular, is identical with [what both call] Universal.)

I insist that this is no defense of Hegel—nor am I committed to even believing him right. It is, rather, evidence of yet another gap in Monius's argument: It is absolutely clear how matter in the ordinary, empirical sense (matter without quotation marks) can individuate: two identical drops of water are distinct for being two distinct examples of the same concept Drop of Water, embodied in two

distinct bits of matter. But, when matter is conceptual detail, no such clarity is at hand. If I, say, take the Kind Detective Story, and then articulate it by providing the "matter" Long and Short, it is not at all clear that this "different" matter distinguishes *two* Kinds. One might say that only long detective stories can capture the imagination of their readers and absorb their interest to the point of being read "at a single breath,"of having the time spent in their reading fly so fast that they feel really short (in a move that is reminiscent of the famous line from the Abbot Terrasson, quoted by Kant in the first *Critique*, according to which "many books would be much shorther if there were not so short").

The above is only an example, of course; but the example has a point. Conceptual matter does not necessarily discriminate: however different *sounding* some Kinds might be, that is no proof that they really are different. So it might well be that the "matter" of Being is Particular Being and the "matter" of Universal Being is Contingent Universal Being; but, as long as "matter" stays in quotation marks, we don't know that we are not always talking about one and the same thing. Distinction of words does not amount to distinction of the things referred to by them.

From now on, Monius thinks that he has a simple device for generating new Categories. Given a Category A, he asks himself what the form and matter and A are, and uses them to generate two additional categories: Form A and Matter A. But, aside from the problems already noted, this procedure causes additional arbitrariness. Monius says: "Necessary Universality is formal, it indicates the form of Being. This then is the most general account of what it is to be Necessary Universal Being—to be Necessary Universal Being is to be form. So the formal aspect of Necessary Universal Being is Formal Necessary Universality." But consider the following alternative account: "Universality is formal, it indicates the form of Being. This then is the most general account of what it is to be Universal Being—to be Universal Being is to be form. So the formal aspect of Universal Being is Formal Universality." No criteria are provided for preferring the former account to the latter; and the latter would eventuate in a different categorization of Being—differently ordered, that is. One ordering would go from Being to Universal Being to Necessary Universal Being to Formal Necessary Universal Being; the other would go from Being to Universal Being to Formal Universal Being to Necessary Formal Universal Being. And the same would hold for any other subsequent division made by Monius: there is no reason why Self-specifying should follow Formal as opposed to preceding it, or why Individuative should follow Material, or indeed why Contingent should follow Universal. (We will see that this indeterminacy has major consequences for Monius's system.)

As I said a couple of times, Monius's major complaint with Hegel's Categories is that they lack "horizontal structure": "The branches at a given

horizontal level ... are not themselves in any interesting Categorical relation" and hence "crucial connective tissue is lost in the resultant Theory of Categories." In his own theory, he wants to repair this defect: specifically, by working on Aristotle's four causes, he wants to bring out "modes of understanding" which "apply to and are reflected among the Categories themselves." The four causes, indeed, fulfill two different tasks for him. First, they let him add more Categories to his structure: having already recognized Formal and Material Being, he will add at the same level of generality the other two "basic kinds of understanding"—that is, Efficient and Telic (but why are Efficient and Telic subdivisions of Contingent, and Material and Formal subdivisions of Necessary, Being? It would seem that Material and Formal apply to Contingent as much as to Necessary, hence that the two distinctions might be on a par). Second, by generalizing such connective relations to relations among the Categories themselves, he can find the structure he claimed was missing from Hegel's system. Let's see how.

There is no special difficult at this point in determining the analogues of material and formal causes as applied to Categories, since the notions of a formal and a material aspect of a Category were already introduced above. The analogue of efficient cause, on the other hand, is found as follows: "Universals do not bring each other about, but they do exhibit relations of ontological dependence and priority. For one universal can be part of what it is to be another universal and so can properly enter into the account of the nature of the second." More precisely, a differentia is ontologically prior to the species it is instrumental in defining (*rational* is ontologically prior to *human*, *sempiternal* to *angel*), and "this ontological priority of the differentia to species is the counterpart of causation for universals. The species is in this way ontologically dependent on its defining differentia. The differentia is in this sense the ground or cause of the species." In other words, and despite all talk of *ontological* priority, causal dependency is generalized here to logical dependency by purifying it of its empirical content, much the way the relevant Kantian category is related to the relevant Kantian form of judgment—this is the converse move from the one Kant makes in the first *Critique*: from transcendental logic to general logic.

Monius offers a simple way of finding the differentia of each Category, which (only applies to material Categories and) turns out to be a material Category at the next level of specificity that is not part of the Categorical division of what it differentiates. Certainly nothing prevents him from calling this an analogue of efficient cause, and as I said such labeling even has a distinguished tradition; still there are two specific difficulties I need to bring out. First, the definition in question is based on the existence of clear priorities among Categories; hence the indeterminacy noted above, according to which it was not clear why certain specifications came before certain others, turns out to be especially damaging.

Whether Material is the differentia of Contingent or vice versa is based entirely on which pair of opposites (Necessary/Contingent or Formal/Material) we consider first, and Monius has not offered any reason for his own choice. (Presumably, an analogue of efficient cause would have to be an asymmetrical relation, and indeed the talk of priority here confirms that suggestion; so there has to be a definite reason why the ordering goes the way it does.)

Second, the method is also based on a key feature of Monius's system, which he brings out explicitly in one of four axioms or structuring principles that guide his construction: "Axiom 2: (Axiom of Dichotomy) Every Category or necessary universal has an immediate Sub-Category, which stands to it as its form, and another immediate Sub-Category, which stands to it as its matter." But in *Parts of Animals* Aristotle claimed that a purely dichotomic system of definitions (such as Plato recommended) would make defining "often impracticable." To be more specific about it, since a definition brings out the essence of the relevant Kind, if we assume that Kind A is divided dichotomically between AB and Anot-B, it is not clear that not-B (hence Anot-B) always *has* an essence—that is, that it is not an haphazard connection with no unity to it. And, if it has no essence, then no definition of it is possible (one cannot define what has no essence, what has no unity to it). So Monius cannot just assume that, because one can always divide up a Kind verbally, by using a qualifier and its verbal complement, such verbal division also always identifies an ontological one—to put it differently, he cannot assume that language always "carves Nature at its joints." Hence dichotomy cannot just be stated as an axiom, or used as a structuring or guiding principle: it must be proved that in all cases at hand dichotomy is an ontologically reliable guide.

The last substantive step of Monius's project consists of finding an analogue for teleological causation among Categories. To do this, he notes first that "finality derives from form": "the formal aspect of the idea of directedness ... [is] captured by the idea of a norm or standard of correct functioning," and "[t]he characteristic mode of functioning that allows us to evaluate a thing as defective or successful of its kind derives from its form, the aspect of a thing that demarcates the thing or sets it off from other things." For example, "[t]he end or proper function of all eyes is to see. A particular eye gets to have this end because of the form it shares with all other eyes." But it is also the case that "the end is less specific than, i.e. more general than, the form from which it derives," hence a Category will be the end or purpose of another if it is the formal Category "which is not only more determinable or less specific than ... [it], but is also not the Category which has ... [it] as its subspecies."

Once this connective relation is added to Monius's system of Categories, the system itself comes to express the most basic claim of the first part of his treatise: "The emergence of Stable Spatio-temporal Particulars out of Kinetic Pattern thus

finds its completed purpose in the Comprehending of the Universal aspect of Being." "*Coming to Understanding* ... is the thing for the sake of which there is Patterned Kinetic Spatio-temporal Particular Being." Being is exemplified for the sake of the comprehension of Being.

The detailed analysis conducted above already implicitly indicates where Monius's work needs additional articulation. I will now explicitly bring out the main points where this need is felt:

1. Monius assumes without argument that Being is a genus, indeed the *summum genus*. This view was sharply contested by (among others) Aristotle, and indeed the categorial view of Being offered by the latter is an *alternative* to conceiving Being as the supreme Kind. (This view is certainly not obsolete: it was espoused in recent times, for example, by Gottlob Frege, according to whom there a radical, irreducible discrepancy between saturated and unsaturated entities—to the point that unsaturated entities cannot even be the object of meaningful discourse. As Frege puts it in his famous, paradoxical sentence, "The concept *horse* is not a concept.")

2. Monius must take a position with respect to the classic debate on the nature of universals. He clearly favors (and needs for the integrity of his argument) a realist understanding of Kinds; but he cannot just assume it as a matter of course. Conceptualist and nominalist accounts are just as respectable, and some argument must be provided of why they are to be refuted.

3. Monius needs to sort out the different senses in which a universal "applies to itself." And, because the sense relevant to his argument is "is true of itself," and it is not automatically the case that it is a grammatical or logical matter whether or not a universal applies to itself *in that sense*, he must establish that such is the case for the specific universals he utilizes in his argument.

4. Monius needs to provide more than an "initially plausible" account of what the candidates to be the fundamental and supreme Good are. One has to make sure that the reconnaissance operation on which his (alleged) argument by elimination is based has more than provisional credibility: that indeed no plausible candidates (initially or otherwise) have been forgotten.

5. Monius needs to provide less anthropomorphic reasons for why "[s]ome good things could be added to the world and some bad things could be taken away, in either case without compensating losses." A simple reference to the horror *we* (or any others) feel in certain cases is not enough to carry the point (perhaps we are importantly deluded in this respect—moral skepticism is no less of a philosophical problem than the epistemic variety).

6. Monius must offer some basis for why we should believe his crucial "innovation in method." The fundamental chasm Descartes's methodological doubt introduced, and Hume's critique of human understanding radicalized, in Western philosophy, is the one between our forms of reasoning and the forms of Being. Hume proved that any "naive" objective account of the world based on what we find necessary is prey to the essential indeterminacy caused by that chasm: however powerful our conviction, however knock-down our arguments, there is no reason to think that the world will care (induction has no basis, or it can only be justified by induction itself). Post-Humean philosophy has had to face this radical difficulty; that is precisely why Kant said that Hume awakened him from his dogmatic slumbers. Monius does not like Kant's subjectivist account, and wants to improve on Hegel (dialectical) identity theory; but it is not clear what his account (or improvement) is, and without some such clear statement his basic insight is at best suggestive—it is certainly not conclusive.

7. Monius needs to shore up his position vis-a-vis Leibniz's reduction of particulars to (highly complex, indeed, *infinitely* complex) universals. The "particular" Adam, according to Leibniz, is just the collection of all the infinitely many traits A such that it would be true to say that "Adam is A." Therefore it is extremely more detailed than the "universal" Human but it is nonetheless a thing of the same Kind as that universal (and, indeed, of the same Kind as the "universal" Being). Without some way of ruling out this important alternative, Monius's construction would be stalled at its very first step.

8. Monius cannot just state that contingent universals only exist if they have (existing) instances. It is possible to claim that universals always exist (that they do so necessarily) whether or not their instances do (contingently or otherwise). It is even possible to claim that to believe otherwise amounts to simply confusing the *general* existence of a

universal (which amounts to the existence of some instances of it—in set-theoretical terms, to the non-emptiness of the corresponding set) with its *singular* existence (that is, with the existence of the universal itself—in set- theoretical terms, to the existence of the corresponding set, which exists even if it is empty).

9. Monius must have some argument for why certain specifications of Being (the ones he utilizes in his argument) are *necessary* specifications of it. A simple reference to the fact that they are *aspects* of Being won't do, in light of the fact that he himself considers some aspects of Being necessary and some contingent. To be sure, most of the tradition would agree that most of his Categories are necessary Kinds; but the agreement of the tradition is no argument for a theoretical work such as this one.

10. Monius needs to investigate in more detail the sense in which a universal can provide the "matter" for another, and ask himself whether "matter" in this sense is indeed individuating in the way in which he takes it to be. Maybe the "matter" of universals is compatible with different matter belonging to the very same "subjects."

11. Monius also needs to provide some argument for the priority relations he wants to establish among different determinations of Being, especially because these relations turn out to be crucial when he generalizes the four Aristotelian causes to the Categories. One is left with the impression that the various determinations could be taken as combinatorial elements (in analogy with the cards of a deck): all on the same level, but able to combine with one another in the formation of more complex structures. And this is definitely not what Monius wants; so he must tell us why it would not work.

12. Monius needs to argue for the plausibility of his Axiom of Dichotomy—not necessarily by arguing for dichotomy in a general way; but at least by establishing that dichotomy is the correct organizing principle for the specific definitional tree he is interested in. Maybe there is indeed an essence associated with the complement of each of his Categories (whereas there isn't one, Aristotle would say and most of us would agree, associated with the complement of Mammal); but we need to know on what basis that is to be believed—what the rational ground for believing it is.

Finally, I wish Monius did not just dismiss out of hand the "poetical" reading of metaphysics. The way he characterizes it at the beginning is implicitly quite negative: "the great works of metaphysics were taken to represent a kind of abstract poetry, which happened to have appealed to certain quirky sensibilities." But this is unfair to poetry, which appeals to more than just quirky sensibilities and in some cases, with the poetry of Shakespeare, say, or of Plato, perhaps *must* appeal to *all* sensibilities. (The passage from Plato's *Phaedrus* with which Monius closes his treatise is definitely metaphysical, and yet one cannot deny a strong character of beautiful, universal poetry. If he cites it at the very end, he must believe that more than just quirky sensibilities will be attracted by it.) And, when we come away from this work, despite the ingenuity displayed in providing its outcome with an appearance of inevitability, and the many gaps that ingenuity still left in the fabric of the relevant arguments, what we are left with (or, should I say, what *this* reader is left with) is first and foremost a powerful image, whose poetry would be hard to deny: "The central theme of the whole drama of reality is the disclosure of the form of Being Itself." Not a novel image, certainly, and yet one which is worth bringing up again, and for which Monius has found some good words. I wish, as I said, he did not discount the power of that archetypal *making* which poetry is, and recognized the poetical inspiration of his own work.

I noted at the beginning that *Coming to Understanding* is no scholarly work. To me, that is no criticism; if anything, it is refreshing to see someone for whom philosophical issues and problems matter, and who is willing to take them on personally, using his readings to provide himself with major ideas but basing himself primarily on his own reason (not on the authority of the latest published journal articles) to convince himself and others of the truth of his tenets. If philosophy is to come out of the academic stranglehold in which it finds itself today, where it is lacerated without any profit or progress by the empty skirmishes between "schools" (Analytic and Continental, to mention just two of them), it will be because of the courageous work of people like this. Clearly, who shows courage should not demand any preferential treatment (not doing so is what *courage* is, after all); if need be, he must be chastised for his mistakes. But, as long as one can learn from one's mistakes, that is all for the better: as Monius himself puts it, "[t]hat one's errors may be the pre-condition of a breakthrough—this is the best hope." Earlier I indicated a number of specific mistakes (fallacies, non sequiturs) I believe Monius has made; in closing, I would like to point out two quite general lessons I think we can all learn from his effort.

First, though scholarship for its own sake is empty, and will never extend our understanding or relieve the wonder from which philosophy originates (indeed, will never even take that wonder seriously), this is not to say that extensive, deep knowledge of historical figures is useless. On the contrary, a lot of the good points

Monius makes derive (as I said earlier) from his familiarity with various such figures, and virtually all the mistakes he makes are the consequence of not having considered what some other figures (or sometimes the same ones) had said. The problem is: one should not study a historical figure *just because he is a historical figure*, one should study him as one becomes familiar with an intelligent friend from whom one can receive help in addressing a thorny personal problem—the thorniness of the problem and the intelligence of the friend, in other words, should always be the focus of attention. Empty scholarship amounts to being concerned with people who are "famous for being famous"; once that kind is appropriately set aside, the field is clear for the better kind, the necessary kind, theone that concerns itself with those who are famous for how much guidance they have provided and still provide.

The second lesson is: there is a point to the self-standing reflections of times past (those which, I said, *Coming to Understanding* models itself after) being as *long* and extensive as they are. (To go back to my own examples, the *Critique of Pure Reason* and *The World as Will and Representation* are certainly quite long; the *Meditations* don't seem to be, until you consider that Descartes did not deem his work complete until he had added the *Objections and Replies*.) Here the problem is: when something presents itself as self-standing, it needs support at *every* step. A footnote or a reference will not do: everything has to be worked out independently, and that takes a lot of time and a lot of thinking.

I can articulate this point better by a historical reference. Ludwig Wittgenstein's examples are typically much more complicated than those of other philosophers. Indeed, the latter's examples often reduce to brief, repetitive lines; every time the syllogism comes up, someone will say, "All men are mortal, Socrates is a man, hence Socrates is mortal," and every time concrete, spatio-temporal objects come up, someone will inarticulately mention tables and chairs. But sometimes, *often*times, you don't know that you have a problem just because you did not say enough—or you try to hide your problems *by* not saying enough. That is why your examples should be more elaborate, should bring out more structure, should expose all the corners where a problem might be found. Wittgenstein even gives an example (!) of this strategy when (in the *Philosophical Investigations*) he asks himself whether there is any contradiction in the concept of a speaking pot. Certainly no contradiction will be forthcoming if we say nothing more, if our "story" about a speaking pot just says: "A pot spoke. End." But, he continues, do we have a clear notions of the conditions at which a pot would speak? That is, can we add *detail* to our story? Or is it the case that, when we do, what looked like a harmless combination of words will explode, and we will find ourselves in the face or problems we had not surmised?

What Wittgenstein teaches us by this example, and by his examples, is that a

terse, concise formulation of a position may be, and often is, only deceptively clear and coherent. (And it is so instructive that *he*, of all people, should teach us that, and do so in his "later" phase, after providing in his earlier one the epitome of a terse and concise formulation—the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*.) If we are really ambitious about our work being self-standing we should also have the courage of *very* detailed work: of looking everywhere, of challenging every assumption, of developing every suggestion to its ultimate consequences. This is what I urge Monius to do: he has a powerful, inspiring image (and, yes, one with a lot of poetical value) to guide him, and he also has the overweening pride of resurrecting classical metaphysics out of the forgetfulness in which it finds itself today. But for that image to be done full justice to, and for that overweening goal to be achieved, sixty pages are not enough: the treatise of which this is the core should be developed in full, by addressing all the many issues I raised above as well as the many others that an addressing of those will bring in its wake.

Review 2: Jan A. Cover

Supposing – as the honest among us do – that grand skeptical arguments fail to win the day, one may yet wonder what there is to be known about reality beyond the deliverances of common sense or the empirical sciences or (winnowing fatalities among the former dealt by the latter) both. The question is an old one. Nowadays, it variously suffers and enjoys a predictable range of reactions: respectful caution from those still nursing post-Positivist hangovers, a back-of-the-hand from Post-Modernist philosophers, a full embrace from analytic thinkers working in traditional metaphysics. In *Coming to Understanding* (hereinafter CU), A. M. Monius embraces this perennial question, and in a refreshing burst of chuptza sets out to offer the one true story about the nature of reality – "the whole of reality," as Monius puts it, Being with a capital 'B'.

For some, the vexations of empiricism will naturally obscure such details of Monius's effort as go beyond the truth-claims of an empirically adequate scientific theory. In what is effectively the Introduction to CU, Monius reminds us that whatever else scientific theory may explain, it does not – cannot – tell us why the natural world has the particular nomological character it has rather than some other, nor indeed why there are any contingent objects or events at all. More grandly still: What is the structure of Being? Why is Being intelligible? Why – for what purpose, even – is Being exemplified in individual contingent beings? Those, we can agree with Monius, are the questions traditional metaphysics. Still, there may yet be little or nothing for the traditional metaphysician to do. If it is unseemly to carp at the very outset of a project so welcome in scope and courage as this one, it is worth at least noting an evidently unquestioned presumption of Monius's execution of it – that all why-questions, or even just these deepest ones – have answers. One needn't be an empiricist to suppose that there are brute facts. (We shall return to this.)

It is one thing to admit either the possibility or need of brute facts, and quite another to announce having encountered one. In the honorable spirit of Plato, Aristotle, Kant and Hegel, let us engage the project head on.

1. Why is Being Exemplified?

If 'Being' is indeed "the name for the whole of reality" (p. 2), then presumably it is a collective proper name with plural reference: one cannot easily pretend that *all* of the many things there are add up to *another* thing there is. There is no such thing as everything if there is more than one thing. And evidently there is more than one

thing: asks Monius, "Why is Being exemplified or instantiated? Equivalently, why are there individual beings?" (p. 4) But if the second question sets Spinozistic monism well aside,its equivalence with the first should dissuade us from reckoning 'Being' a name for the whole of reality after all. For unless individual things are universals (properties), reality – all these individual things – will not be "exemplified or instantiated" but rather will exemplify, instantiate. 'Being' in Monius's hands is evidently predicable of many, and hence names (if name it does) a universal, not its many instances. ('Reality' or 'the world' remain available for service as collective nouns referring to all the things there are, particular or otherwise.)

Among the things there are, we believe, are contingent particulars. Taking an early clue from Monius's preference for universals and their instances, we may say that Particular is a kind, as are Contingent and Contingent Particular. Let us register our belief for future reference:

> (C1) There are contingent particulars: Contingent Particular has instances.

Here is a grand question: why is (C1) true? Monius doubts that Theism, Spinozism, or the Many Worlds Hypothesis can successfully tell us why there are contingent things, and after judging the second and third of these to have dispensed with the question by dissolving contingency altogether, devotes the bulk of this early part of CU (4-10) to arguing against the theistic account and in favor of Monius's alternative.

Theism tells us that contingent beings were created *ex nihilo* by a perfect, all-knowing, all-powerful particular, God. What about that?

> The inevitable question is why the perfect particular existent exists and why it creates the world – the totality of contingent being – as it actually is. If we are told that the perfect particular exists necessarily and necessarily creates the world as it actually is, then there is indeed nothing left to explain. . . . Contrary to the original intention of Theism, necessarily created contingent being is not contingent at all. (4)

The "inevitable question" is in fact two why-questions, of which the second is crucial: if we are told that a necessary being necessarily creates everything distinct from it, then there is no contingency to explain, and Theism collapses into Spinozism. Here, Monius counsels against despair: to give up the hope of explaining contingency is to embrace the misguided Leibnizian idea that "all

explanation must ultimately provide sufficient reasons for what is being explained, i.e. reasons such that it is absolutely impossible for the thing being explained to not exist given those reasons" (5). The argument here is fuzzier, but safer, than the one just considered – safer, that is, in employing not the unreasonably strong supposition that a necessary being necessarily creates (which few theists would accept), but something *prima facie* weaker that still yields the unhappy conclusion of no contingency. The argumentative strategy is worth setting out more clearly. Here is a plausible gloss: Suppose there are contingent beings. There must be some explanation forthe existence of contingent beings. Explanations are sufficient reasons (and *x* is sufficient for *y* only if *y* is the case whenever *x* is the case). Thus, there must be a sufficient reason R for the existence of contingent beings. R is either contingent or necessary. But R cannot be contingent, for that is among the things needing explanation, and nothing contingent contains its own sufficient reason. Thus R is necessary. But then, since R obtains at every possible world, those beings for which it is a sufficient reason exist at every possible world. Thus, our original supposition that there are contingent beings is false: there is nothing left to explain.

The argument is worth reconstructing because it represents a crucial moment in Monius's project. What Spinoza saw and Leibniz didn't is that the *prima facie* weaker premise – that contingent explanations are sufficient reasons – is not weaker after all. Monius's counsel is that all is not lost: to resist the necessitarian conclusion, one must resist the offending premise and see that "teleological or purposive explanation renders an outcome intelligible without absolutely guaranteeing it. . . . [T]his is the very kind of explanation required to explain contingent existence" (5).

But it is of course not true that in order to resist the necessitarian conclusion, one must resist the premise about explanation to go the way of teleology instead**.** The traditional metaphysician may accept that weaker premise about explanations as sufficient but resist the stronger implicit premise to the effect that everything has one, or the explicit claim that there must be some explanation for the existence of contingent beings. One needn't be an empiricist to suppose that there are brute facts. Shy of an argument – more charitably, shy of *some good reasons* or other – for giving up the sufficient-reasons model for explanation over giving up the demand that everything has an explanation, readers will be excused for doubting that Monius has adequately motivated the project.

Some good reasons might be found in Monius's effort to defend the purely teleological approach over its more traditional theistic competitor. Here is the approach in large brush-strokes:

There is something – Being itself – that exists necessarily. It has the

> contingent capacity to issue in particularity, the capacity to be instantiated in particularity. This capacity happens to be realized for the sake of a distinguished end, namely that Being itself should be comprehended. To understand this end is to understand the point of all contingent coming into being and passing away. Because this explanation is purposive it accounts for contingent existence without covertly treating it as necessary. For a purpose explains without necessitating what it explains. (6)

How does this look, alongside its theistic competitor?

As Monius notes, the two approaches do share an appeal to purposes. In claiming that it is because contingent existence (let us include creaturely intellect and free volition) is good that God wills it, Theism respects the intuition that something happens because it should, because it is good. Never mind, for the moment, that the theist needn't agree to reading 'because' here as "only because". Monius's first objection to Theism is that (A) once it is granted that the existence of contingent beings obtains because it should, we have granted enough – without any need to invoke the mediation of divine intentions. "A good, such as coming to understanding, can account for the existence of a process directed at that good. . . . Theism's mistake was to personify this explanation in a creative intention" (7). A second objection may be seen as arising from another shared intuition – that the ultimate explanation for the existence of contingent beings arises from something unique of its kind. Monius claims that (B) the theist's ultimate appeal to a necessarily existing particular (rather than a necessary universal such as Being itself) in such a role is "inconsistent with our fundamental intuition of the contingency of finite particulars. It is inconsistent with supposing that there is any contingency anywhere" (7). Let us consider these objections in order.

(A) As noted already, theists can agree that our world of contingent things exists because it is good, without agreeing that this exhausts the explanatory story. One might fairly doubt Monius's claim that it does exhaust the story, or that it can – either of these without pressing the fact that Monius offers no argument for why it must. (Without an argument to that effect, Theism remains epistemically possible at very least.)

Does it complete the story? In the normal run of contexts, we are ready enough to acknowledge that teleological explanations are plentiful but not exhaustive – in particular cases, that a teleological scenario may be an explanation without being the explanation. An object is rapidly approaching my face, and my arm is raised in time to deflect it. If it is true that the raising occurs because of a good to be accomplished by the deflecting, it is not yet false or uninformative that the raising occurs because (why not? also because) of neural activity in my right

infra-spinatis, *supra-spinatis*, and *deltoid* sufficient for arm-raising. In the case Monius poses for us, without reasons for believing either that no intelligible why-question remains after giving a teleological story, or that no answer to such a question is forthcoming, the theist is free to urge that God's volition to bring contingent beings into existence plays a legitimate role in explaining why there are contingent beings. This, after all, is the position in which teleological explanation typically finds itself as we normally employ it. On even the weakest (least presumptive) accounting, we suppose that a thing possesses some *functional property* – say, FGH – expressed roughly in the form "*x* is so-constituted that if it is the case that G*x*, it will be the case that H*x*." Generalizing, teleological explanation is needed and available if *x* does/becomes H and for any property *P* it is true that whenever *x* is F*P*H it will be *P*. Why, in this particular case, did *a* do/become H as *a* did? To explain that *a* manifested H- directed behavior is to answer as follows: "Because in this particular case *a* was FGH – i.e. was so-constituted that if *a* was G it would do/become H – and *a* believed, or anyway*somehow* represented to itself, that if it is FGH it will be/do G and thence become H." First, then: even if Monius is right that volitions can be scrapped, it is far less clear that representational states altogether can be. Moreover, at the close of such teleological explanations as we normally deploy them, we persist in supposing that intelligible why- questions remain, to which non-teleological explanations are presumably available. Why was *a* FGH? Why was it the case that G*a*? One suspects that we pursue teleological explanations because we think that *teleological questions remain even after settling questions finitely terminating in non-teleological answers* – not because we think that *there are no non-teleological explanations whatever needed*.

In our present case, it is plausible to say that why-questions do remain, and might be answered. For unless we suppose it is a necessary truth that *if P is a good, then P obtains*, we have not yet fully answered the question why P obtains by citing the good its obtaining will accomplish. Let it be a good that contingent beings exist; and let this be true everywhere and everywhen. Shall we suppose it a necessary truth that contingent beings exist everywhere and everywhen? If not, then the teleological fact does not complete the explanatory story because it *cannot* complete it. Monius has it (above) that Being itself has the contingent capacity to issue in particularity, and that this capacity happens to be realized for the sake of a good (that Being itself should be comprehended). Why does Being have this functional property, this capacity C? Granting its possession of C, either C is necessarily realized for the sake of that end, or it is contingently realized for the sake of that end. If necessarily, then it is scarcely a capacity (tendency, disposition) at all, and we are threatened again with Spinozistic necessitarianism. If C is contingently realized for the sake of that end, why so, rather than not?

Readers will find it odd that Monius does not pause to ask these questions. It may yet be that no answer to one oranother of them is forthcoming. Fair enough: theist and atheist alike can agree that (i)explanatory demands come to such an end in brute facts by denying the presumption that (ii) teleological explanation finally leaves every question answered. What we need from Monius, but do not have, are reasons for embracing (ii) over (i).

As a transition to the second objection (B), it is worth noting one line of traditional Theism which recommends (i) above all else. On this account, God is a necessary particular enjoying libertarian agent-causal freedom. Why is there a world of contingent beings? Because God willed to bring such a world into existence, and His willing is a causally necessary and sufficient reason for the existence of any particulars distinct from Him. And what is the explanation for His willing this world into existence rather than (some other or) none at all? On the agent-theoretic account, God is the cause of the volition, and the pre-volitional state of the divine mind is consistent with His willing as He did and with His refraining from so-willing, creating otherwise instead or not at all. That is not to say that no reasons-explanation for the act of divine will is available; but it is to agree that such an explanation does not necessitate. Here is a brute contingent fact,at which explanatory demands come to an end. All this, consistently with traditional Theism.

(B) How, exactly, is the theist's appeal to a necessarily existing particular inconsistent with contingency?

The argument for that claim is worth stating. . . .

> According to Theism, God is a necessary and perfect particular who has a capacity to form and act out of a creative intention. Since the world – the object of creative intention – is, on pain of Spinozism, contingent, this creative capacity could have remained unrealized. But if an instance of the kind Necessary and Perfect Particular could come with a certain capacity realized and also without that capacity realized, then two instances of the kind Necessary and Perfect Particular seem conceivable, hence possible, hence actual by the nature of the kind in question. For to be a necessary being is to be such that your possibility implies your actual existence. So we have a *reductio ad absurdum* of Theism… (7)

Thus-stated, it is less than obvious how this lives up to its billing as a demonstration that Theism collapses into Spinozism. Let us re-consider. The two-Gods scenario is consistent with contingency, but inconsistent with the one-God of Theism; so the question is whether the theist can resist the two-Gods conclusion

without embracing a necessitarian premise. Let *g* be a necessarily existing particular that is essentially F, G, H,… and that contingently manifests creative capacity C. From these facts alone we can infer that there is a possible world at which *g itself* exists and does not manifest C; but from them we cannot infer that there is a world at which there exists some distinct being *g** ? *g* that is F, G, H… which does not manifest C. The missing but needed premise is this: necessarily, for any necessary particular *x* and any properties F, G, H, … it possesses essentially, if *x* has some contingent property C, then possibly there exists some necessary particular *y* ? *x* that is essentially F, G, H… and which is not-C. And of course, if it is possible that there exists some such necessary *y* ? *x*, then there actually does. Thus any world at which God exists and contingently manifests some property is a world at which God* also exists; shy of denying the contingency requirement, Monotheism is necessarily false.

This is a powerful argument.

It's no use ignoring the fundamental idea that, in general, two things might differ only in respect of contingent properties, sharing all essential properties. Respecting, as it seems, the intuition that if *x* is numerically distinct from *y*, there must be some property the one has that the other lacks, the fundamental idea might be ignored on the grounds that it is inconsistent with the respectable intuition: "if *x* and *y* are distinct only in respect of contingent properties, then *x* and *y* could be/become exactly alike, i.e. complete duplicates." But that counter-argument looks invalid: the move from 'F*g* and possibly F*g**', to 'Possibly F*g* and F*g**' is an instance of the embarrassing modal fallacy of inferring Possibly (P & Q) from (P and possibly Q).

Still, there are a range of replies available to the theist – more and less traditional, more and less orthodox. (1) Adopt a theory of God and of properties as intrinsic perfections, all of which He necessarily possesses to highest degree (and nothing else), and to which no contingent truth about Him corresponds. For any *x* and any *y*, if *x* ? *y*, then there must be something by virtue of which they are numerically distinct, thus some property the one possesses which the other lacks. Thus God*, lacking as it must some perfection, cannot exist. (2) Adopt a Scotistic formal distinction and locate in all particulars an *entitas singularis* H*x* (for haecceity). God necessarily possesses HG, and anything distinct from God necessarily lacks HG; thus anything numerically distinct from God lacks something God necessarily has; hence God* does not exist. (3) Adopt a theory of divine simplicity, according to which all of God's essential attributes are identical. If *g* = God and g is simple, then by simplicity, being *g* = Divinity; hence nothing can be divine unless it is g; thus there cannot be a God* that is not *g* (God). (4)

Reckon among the essential divine attributes F, G, H… the property of omnipotence, the possession by *x* of which entails having power to a degree nothing distinct from *x* could equal. Necessarily lacking omnipotence, God* cannot exist.

Against the letter or spirit of these, Monius may have convincing objections. Suppose so: in particular, suppose that the intelligibility of (1) – (4) could be shown to require giving up the premise that God *contingently* manifests creative capacity C. The theist is then forced to concede, on pain of a two-Gods scenario, that our ultimate explanatory appeal to God is an appeal not to a free God, but to a God that creates necessarily. *But from this, Spinozistic necessitarianism does not follow*. God might necessarily create contingent particulars enjoying libertarian agent-causal freedom, or God might necessarily create a world shot through with quantum indeterminacy. Let a thousand contingent flowers bloom.

Monius ends this first part of CU by urging, on behalf of Being (the universal) over God (the particular), that "Theism has never really come to grips with the ontological status of the Categories." That is a surprising claim, given the utter dearth of ancient texts available to the early and middle (pre-Twelfth Century) Schoolmen aside from *The Categories*: it was very nearly their sole text for commentary. Perhaps Categories are words. Perhaps they are concepts. Perhaps they are universals. Perhaps they are tropes. Each of these was in the offing for some historical Theist or other. For the bulk of the Schoolmen, the utter uniqueness of God as the only fully perfect, hence only independent, being recommended – against the necessary Platonic abstracta – divine ideas in their stead. The categories were indeed universal, but nevertheless dependent beings enjoying no universality apart from the intellect, and variously "necessary" or "contingent" only in the dependent sense that their bearers enjoyed those respective modes of existence. And, crucially, Being is not among the categories, is not a universal. For the bulk of Aristotelians in the theistic tradition – the bulk of philosophers preceding Descartes – the following argument gets no purchase whatever:

> One familiar Theistic thought is that the Categories are no more than fundamental ideas in the mind of God. But the candidates that are plausibly taken to be the Categories involve aspects of Being – like Particularity and Universality – which seem more fundamental than any particular instance of Being could be. Nowhere is this more obvious than with Being itself. If the Categories are Kinds of Being then the *Summum Genus* of the Categories will be Being itself. God as a being will, like all other beings, merely exemplify Being. Being cannot then be an idea in the mind of God. God has to be a being, has

to exemplify Being, to have a mind at all. (8)

Independently of who might say as much, the crucial premise is arguably false. For arguably, Being is not – cannot be – the highest genus, or genus at all. Were it, we should be unable to account for species under it. Species are gotten by adding differentia to genus, as by adding Material to Substance in the case of Body, Animate to Body in the case of Organism, and so on. Crucially, specific difference must come from outside the nature of the genus: were Material found in the very nature of Substance, there could be no possibility of Immaterial Substance. But if Being itself is a genus, from where shall we draw the differentia?

Monius is of course free to resist the porphyrian exercise. A defense of Platonic motivations is perhaps too much to demand. So in the spirit of Plato at least, let us agree again to forge ahead – permitting ourselves nevertheless a fair suspicion that God might answer all but one of Monius's five calls, the last of which remains in doubt:

1. The explanation [for the existence of content beings] must appeal to a capacity of some entity that has two features: the capacity might not have been realized, and its contingent realization is the existence of contingent things.

2. The entity with this capacity must be intrinsically unique, i.e. incapable of having duplicates.

3. The entity so appealed to in the explanation of contingent existence must exist necessarily.

4. The entity appealed to in the explanation of contingent existence must be intelligibly related to the necessary universals, which are the Categories.

5. The explanation must be a purposive explanation, where the purpose is not mediated by the intention of some pre-existing mind.

2. The Fundamental and Supreme Good

If Monius is correct, the question 'Why do contingent beings exist?' must be answered by appeal to some good for the sake of which they exist. What is the Good in question, and what is its nature?

Monius leans as heavily here as anywhere on the intuition that there must be no brute facts, no unanswered why-questions. The Good must be not only "fundamental" (an intrinsic, not extrinsic or instrumental good) but also "supreme" – that is, not possibly "outweighed or counterbalanced" by any other good or combination of them. For, were the Good in question not supreme, we should be left without an answer to why contingent beings exist for the sake of the Good proposed rather than for the sake of an equal or outweighing one. The supremacy of the Good also entails that it is unimprovable and that it is not simply the bundle of all actually realized goods. Were the former true, the possibility of adding further goods to the proposed Good raises the embarrassing question of why contingent beings do not exist for the sake of this other, higher good; were the latter true, the bundle of actual goods would be improvable by the addition of other goods not actually realized, giving rise to another question of the same kind.

These arguments can be too readily ignored if we persisted in doubting that every why-question must have an answer. Granting that operative premise, one may yet wonder if there is such a thing as the Good – alternatively, whether the Good answering our big why-question must possess the properties Monius argues that it does. Certainly we have been offered no argument for why granting the operative premise is *inconsistent* with claiming that the Good for the sake of which contingent beings exist is not the greatest good: that pair of propositions, for all our ignorance of how to answer difficult why-questions, might be logically consistent. Nor have we been given an argument for why 'greatest good' itself is any more intelligible than 'longest line' or 'largest number'. Moreover, supposing we grant its intelligibility, Leibnizian optimists may fairly request non-question-begging reasons for presuming that the bundle of actual goods must increase in value or goodness by the addition of other non-actualized goods. Shy of an argument for why Moore's organic-wholism cannot cut in both directions, we have only intuitions telling us that the value of a composite good is necessarily the sum of its component goods, or anyway is necessarily increased by the addition of a good.

But suppose that we grant, in addition to (1) – (5) above, (6):

> 6. The purposive explanation in question must appeal to a Good which is fundamental, supreme, and hence unimprovable. The world must exist for the sake of this Good.

Monius claims that "if we could satisfy these six conditions we would then have an explanation of contingent existence" (11). That is too quick: allowing that (1) – (6) are necessary for an explanation of the existence of contingent things is not yet agreeing that they are sufficient. Here too, perhaps, we are forced – as eventually one will always at some stage be forced – to rely on our intuitions.

Monius aims to argue that the necessary, non-duplicable (unique) universal with a contingent capacity to be instantiated is Being itself, to which our ultimate explanation for the existence of contingent beings will refer. So what Good is it, for the sake of which Being is contingently exemplified? Perhaps the Good is Being itself (B), or contingent being (CB). Implicitly granting that the value of teleologically-construed mental faculties is intrinsic, Monius adds four other possibilities, corresponding to the proper responses to Being by the will and the intellect respectively: the loving affirmation of Being (LB), the loving affirmation of contingent being (LCB), the understanding of Being (UB), and the understanding of contingent being (UCB).

(B) is false: the Good is not Being itself. A purposive explanation must appeal to some good realized by the thing to be explained; thus, an explanation of the existence of contingent beings cannot be found in a good that exists necessarily. Since Being is a necessary universal, it cannot be the Good.

(CB) is false, according to Monius, because it entails the "absurd, Panglossian view that everything in the world is just as it should be, so that a better totality of contingent beings could not exist." Optimists (after reminding us that Voltaire was a poor-enough student of Leibniz to render his satire more indebted to Pope's *Essay on Man* than Leibniz's *Theodicy*) would respond again with their request for an argument: what is absurd, by their lights, is to suppose that we can judge the value of a painting having seen only the smallest corner of it, or of a symphony having heard only three bars. But is any of this relevant? The state of affairs or fact *that contingent beings exist is one thing; that contingent beings a, b, c, … exist* is quite another. Surely that good for the sake of which these or any other particular contingent beings exist might be unimprovable even if the good accruing to these or other particular beings is improvable. Mightn't the obtaining of the state of affairs *there exist contingent beings* (alternatively, *Contingent Being is instantiated*) be that Good for the sake of which these or any other beings exist? So it remains to be shown why the state of affairs *Contingent Being is instantiated* cannot be the Good realized by, and so the explanation of, the existence of these or any other contingent beings.

Suppose we treat 'the contingent exemplification of Being' as a plural-referring definite description picking out our contingent world. And suppose that we ignore our wish for an argument showing that a composite good is not organic but summative: adding good to some good always yields a greater good. This latter supposition is implicit in Monius's claim that the Good we seek is not embeddable in any greater good. Given the no-embedding premise, (LB) is also false: loving affirmation of Being cannot be the Good, because loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being embeds it. Couldloving affirmation of the exemplification of Being then be the Good we seek? Monius's reason for denying

(LCB) appeals to the fact that our contingent world contains (let us call them) intrinsic bads. Pain is bad. Terror is bad. That it is bad to lovingly affirm what is bad, and good to lovingly affirm what is good, are axioms. Hence, "loving affirmation of the totality of contingent being would be partly good and partly bad. As such, it could not be the Good" (14). So-stated the argument is invalid. In an day when most are willing to suppose that a lesser evil may sometimes yield a greater good, readers are left to wonder how Monius would defend the missing premises:

(i) Necessarily, to lovingly affirm *x* is to lovingly affirm all parts of *x*.

(ii) Necessarily, the composite value (degree of goodness) of loving affirmation(s) of some good(s) and loving affirmation(s) of some bad(s) is less than the value of loving affirmation of any good(s) alone.

If it is bad to love the bad, it is not bad to understand it. (UB) and (UCB) are still in the game. Here, Monius anticipates our earlier disambiguation-efforts in connection with (CB) above: there are, *prima face*, four possible objects of understanding.

1. Contingent being.

2. The exemplification of Being Itself by contingent beings.

3. Being Itself.

4. The form of Being Itself, i.e. that aspect of Being Itself which is grasped by the intellect when Being Itself is understood.

In the spirit of earlier summative and no-embedding principles, one might expect that we chose the Good from among these as follows: understanding more is better than understanding less, and since 2 – the exemplification of Being itself by contingent beings – embeds all the others, the Good is 2. But "this simple application of our principle of comprehensiveness is mistaken. It is not in general true that objects of understanding add together in simple ways" (15). By Monius's reckoning, to understand Being Itself is to understand why it has issued in contingent being (and more). Whatever left the existence of contingent things unexplained would not, if understood, yield complete understanding of Being Itself.

Why is that? Readers of CU will at this stage be spoiled enough by Monius's

characteristic thoroughness to find the question inadequately addressed. Without a richer guide to how 'understanding' is being deployed, we are left pretty much on our own. Platonic sentiments might urge that we understand what is common to things of a kind by an intellectual grip on the Form which is the kind – contingent facts about instances fallingwell to the side. More charitably, the plausible hunch that access (however imperfect) to Being comes via cognition of beings recommends at most that the ultimate object of understanding must explain the *possibility* of contingent relational facts about what is understood, not the contingent facts themselves. The same is true even if (in a more Aristotelian moment) we should reckon universals as immanent forms or tropes or the like. On Monius's project, we seek an object of understanding highest in the order of being – Being Itself. Why should a complete understanding of Being Itself yield an explanation of something distinct that as a matter of contingent fact might never have obtained or existed at all? To understand is to have an intellectual grip on a form.

Which leaves us with two new questions before moving ahead: First, what distinguishes 3 from 4? Are we to suppose that Being is a composite of form and something else? The scenario is not an inviting one: whatever there is, distinct from Being with which the form of Being must combine in order to exist, must itself instantiate Being. Here one begins to see the attraction of the traditional doctrine of divine simplicity. If, aiming to avoid the unhappy idea that Being Itself is a composite and thus in some sense dependent, that "aspect" of Being which is its form cannot be said to be really distinct (in the refined scholastic sense) from Being, then we should say that *Being is the form of Being* – 'Being' and 'form of Being' having distinct senses but one referent, or in the scholastic terminology, Being and Form of Being emgerging as conceptually distinct but not really distinct. (And then, to recall an earlier point: if we can render intelligible the idea that 'form of Being' takes us to Being no less that 'Being' itself, we can render intelligible the idea that God is a necessary particular that is not duplicable. (God is His power, and God* is impossible.)

And second: mightn't there exist contingent beings in the absence of any understanding whatever of the form of Being? The question "Why are there contingent beings?" arises even in a world of just sticks and stones devoid of mental faculties with teleological ends, where the proposed Good would seem altogether unrealized. Either (i) that good for the sake of which Being is contingently exemplified is not the understanding of the form of Being, or (ii) the understanding of the form of Being is the Good in some worlds but not others, leaving our grand why-question with a treatment insufficiently general to avoid unanswered why-questions, or (iii) necessarily all contingent beings are mental beings, or, (iv) Monius means by "understanding" a good that can be realized in

the absence of all mental faculties at all. Again, readers will find this stretch of CU uncharacteristically under-developed: the implausibility of (ii) – (iv) threaten render (i) the victor and Monius's project the loser.

3. The Structure of Being

If 4 is our target, what would it be to have a comprehensive understanding of the form of Being Itself?

Here, Monius engages the dominating methodological insight of CU. Distinguish *speculative cosmology*, in which we have been engaged thus far, from *analytic ontology* – that enterprise most famously illustrated in Aristotle's *Categories* wherein one aims to lay out the most fundamental Kinds of Being or Categories. On the grammatical interpretation of Aristotle's own contribution, the Categories provide a classification of significant words. On the ontological construal, the Categories provide a classification of beings. As expected, Monius aims to pursue the latter route, arguing that a conceptualist *via media* will (on one or another model of grasping a concept) revert to the grammatical or ontological approach. But Aristotle's own *Categories*, even on the ontological approach, is severely limited in scope: as very like a list, it is hushed about the relations among the Categories, and altogether silent about whether such relations themselves might also be Categories. Moreover it says nothing about how the Categories relate to efficient and final causes, or to the structure of Forms described by Plato. Porphyry's trees favored us with structure – ramifying downward beneath each of the Kinds to yield new categorical relations at each genus/differentia node; but this formal account was offered in the service of real definitions in logic – which Kant would only extend as the logical forms of judgment of a synthesizing mind. Hegel saw clearly that we must return to the idea that the Categories belong to a mind-independent reality. Synthesis was understood in terms of relations among universals, and thus arose a generative structure, the Dialectic of ever completing (with an opposite) what is at respective loci in the realm of necessary universals incomplete. But the Dialectical, opposite-completing (thesis/antithesis) structure of Hegel's system offers no explicit analog to Porphyrian differentia for our downward descent, nor any trans-categorial structuring relations at common levels.

Monius traverses all of this in an impressive synoptic discussion (17-23). As a short critical history alone it is worth the price of admission, particularly for those of us analytic philosophers who suffer varying degrees of historical myopia.

As a transition to the Categorical theory CU itself, the short synoptic history leaves us to commence with an obvious fact: *whatever is, is a being*.

So?

Well, pick any things you like: there is something they share. (A) In the spirit

of simplicity, thorough-going nominalists will say that '*a* is a being, and *b* is a being' – if you prefer, '*a* and *b* are beings' – is readily true in a world of just particulars, and such predicational agreement is an irreducibly primitive fact about the world. No serious challenge from so-called abstract singular terms is forthcoming: 'Being is exemplified by a' is eliminable by translation to 'a is a being', full stop. (B) Meta-linguistic nominalists, still favoring simplicity but doubtful that such translation projects can offer more than a piece-meal semantics for abstract reference, will say that putative reference to Being twice over is little more than divided reference to tokens of a common linguistic type. (C)Trope theorists, doubting that types themselves are linguistic and happy enough to enlarge our ontology, will urge a different story of predicational agreement: if '*a* and *b* are beings' entails that *a* and *b* alike have being, this is consistent with saying that *a*'s being and *b*'s being are numerically distinct but resembling abstract particulars.

(A) – (C) get no mention from Monius. Fair enough, perhaps, at this late stage: let us grant the existence of universals. Monius claims that if it is true that *a* and *b* and… – for everything there is – are all alike beings, it follows that Being is shared by all things that are. Being, thus common to all, is a universal which each being instantiates. "So, as already noted, at the heart of reality there lies this distinction, the distinction between particulars on the one hand and universals on the other" (24). If 'so' is meant to indicate that we are in the presence of an argument, the lover of universals might fairly resist it, in two ways. (1) To grant universals is one thing; to speak of particulars on the one hand and universals on the other is a different matter again. Mightn't the ultra-lover of universals reckon them immanent, as fully present in space and time where their "bearers" are? If *a* and *b* are beings, then the single universal Being is multiply-exemplified – in *a* and in *b*. The latter-day bundle theorist thus invites us not only to respect universals, but to reckon them the sole fundamental constituents of reality: so-called particulars are not distinct in ontological kind from universals, since the compresence relation that bundles universals is itself a universal. (2) Setting aside the ultra-lover of universals, there is this: why suppose that the heart of reality has two chambers, not four? Being is indeed universal, and some things aren't universal but are particular instead: there are universals and particulars. But Being is necessary, and some things aren't necessary but are contingent instead: there is necessity and there is contingency. If the heart of reality must have two-chambers, why not Necessity and Contingency? All of us agree that, for anything there is, it is either necessary or contingent. If all beings thus divide into these kinds, Being enjoys that division as fundamental Categories. Let us record this claim for future reference:

(C2) Beings divide into two kinds: Necessary and Contingent. Thus does Being as well.

We have admitted already that a defense of Platonism is too much to demand. Let us suppose, with Monius, that particulars are in space and time, and that universals are not at places and times, but are instantiated at places and times by the particulars exemplifying them. Among the universals is Being. Like everything else that there is, Being is a being. Thus Being is predicated of itself.

Plato might have believed as much. Replacing (grant me license) 'Beauty' with 'Being' in *Phaedo* 100c4-7,

> …if anything has Being other than Being itself, it has Being for no other reason than because it participates in Being; and I mean this for everything.

But Monius's route to self-predication for Being is clearly not Plato's. As the quoted passage indicates, Plato seems to think that, for any F, it is more obvious that F itself is F than that *x* is F (for particular *x*), and arguably that is because of his commitment to the peculiar theory of predication according to which any strictly true predication of the form '*a* is F' amounts to the claim that '*a* is what it is to be F.' Monius, more plausibly, grants that some universals do not apply to themselves. But if they do, they necessarily do (and if not, necessarily not). It is the very nature of Being that Being is predicable of it: Being is a *necessary* universal. So the answer to the old question "Why is there something rather than nothing?" is that there must be something. What remains to be answered is why Being is instantiated by something other than itself. And that is perhaps the central question of metaphysics.

The central question of metaphysics is not our grand question of why there are contingent things. The world of contingent particulars might have been empty; and likewise, says Monius, "all those contingent universals, whose existence depends upon their instantiation by particulars, might not have existed" (24). One might have thought that if there are Platonic universals, they're all Platonic – all necessary beings; and one might have thought that if there are (let us call them) Peripatetic Universals, they're all Peripatetic – all dependent beings, their mode of existence (contingent or necessary, as the case may be) derivative upon the contingency or necessity of their bearers. Pausing briefly to record this item,

(C3) The mode of existence of universals is part of the nature universality: if some universals are necessary, all are; if some are dependent, all are.

It is important to see that even if there *were* no contingent beings, Being may yet be instantiated by something other than itself. Many philosophers think that there are necessary beings which, since particular, instantiate but are not themselves instantiated – God, perhaps, or numbers, or propositions, or abstract particulars (tropes). Of these save one (God has been set aside), Monius is silent, choosing instead to consider other universals themselves. The choice is not unmotivated: the central question concerns the necessary universal structure of Being, and Being may be of such a nature as to entail the existence of other necessary universals which are distinct from and instantiate it.

Here then is the first step in what proves to be a spectacular – even dizzying – theory of the Categories. Being isn't alone. Indeed, necessarily Being isn't alone:

> [W]e have already discerned two kinds of, or aspects of, Being – what we might call Universal Being and Particular Being. These represent the two fundamental ways in which beings can be. A being can be Universal. . . . [o]r a being can be Particular….
>
> Clearly Universal Being applies to itself. Universal Being is an aspect of Being, therefore it is something that exists. Therefore it is a being. (It is not a *mere* being, something that merely happens to be. For it is an aspect of Being, and so exists necessarily.) Yet as an aspect of Being, which is a universal, it also is a universal. So Universal Being is both a being and a universal. It applies to itself.
>
> Not so with Particular Being….(24)

The first step yields us this much about the structure of Being: if the proper answer to 'What is it to be *a*' gives us the form of *a*, then Universal Being is that aspect of Being which is its form.

In passing, one wonders: What exactly are "aspects" of Being? More generally, what is an "aspect" of a universal? The block quotation above has it that '*x* is an aspect of F' is equivalent to '*x* is a kind of F'. Our intuitions tell us that this is not true: *weight* is an aspect of automobiles, but is not a kind of automobile. Perhaps the intuition is not damaging, because it was made for particulars. So suppose we stick with universals. Well, for any universal F, *universality* is an aspect of F, but is not a kind of F; *abstractness* is an aspect of the universal Particular Being, but abstractness is not a kind of Particular Being. In general, one should have thought that if *x* is an aspect or feature of *y*, then *y* possesses, has, instantiates, exemplifies, *x*; but if *x* is a kind of *y*, then *x* possesses, has, instantiates, exemplifies, *y*. In the present case, again: what are aspects of Being? Are they universals that Being exemplifies, or universals that exemplify Being?

Drawing our data from this first step, we get (i) sometimes both, (ii) always at

least the latter, but (iii) never only the former. That is, (i) Being is a being, and is universal: it exemplifies Universal Being. Universal Being is a being: it exemplifies Being. (ii) But while Particular Being exemplifies Being, Being does not exemplify Particular Being. (iii) And since everything exemplifies Being, there is no universal that Being exemplifies but which does not exemplify Being. Distilling a univocal sense of 'aspect', it emerges that aspects of Being are universals that exemplify Being. Less helpfully than one might have expected, all universals are aspects of Being. And what should we make of those special aspects of Being which not only exemplify Being but which Being also exemplifies? Plausible Hypothesis: for any universal *x* and any universal *y*, if *x* exemplifies *y* iff *y* exemplifies *x*, then *x*=*y*. Recall again our question toward the end of ß2 above: what distinguishes 3 from 4?

3. Being Itself.

4. The form of Being Itself.

Without an argument against the Plausible Hypothesis ready to hand, one is inclined to go Platonic as Monius did not: it is precisely because they *are* the universals of which they are the form that forms are self-predicable. Arguments against the Plausible Hypothesis – like arguments against the simplicity of the Divine Being – will meet a respectful challengefrom the scholastic theory of distinctions: if, in the course of thinking about F and the from of F, one thinks one sees reasons for distinguishing them, acknowledge that a *distinctio rationis* is not a *distinctio realis*. Being is simple, self-predicable, intrinsically self-individuated.

Is Being simple, according to Monius? To distinguish Being from its form, Universal Being, is not to answer this question. Universal Being is a special aspect which exemplifies, and is exemplified by, Being. The latter feature is what's special: but few would say that the universals exemplified by a thing are its constituents ("parts" in some sense or other). For their own part, Aristotelians are of course happy enough to reckon the form of a particular substance a constituent of it, in the attenuated sense they had in mind when speaking (as the schoolmen from Aquinas onward spoke) of a soul or body as incomplete beings, and the complete substance – the hylomorphic compound – as a "composite being." But insofar as we are not now operating under the category of Particular or of Substance, but under Being and Universal, with what confidence can we apply that approach here? The intuitions recommending (C3) urge a corollary:

(C4) If universals are Platonic necessary beings, their nature is not indicated by the structure of Aristotelian particulars: the nature

of particulars is no guide to the nature of universals.

Despite the difficulty of giving it a clear sense, Monius is clearly committed to the view that "Being divides into two aspects: Universal Being and Particular Being" (27). While lacking any guidance about the sense of 'divide' here in play, this claim does at least broach the topic of our latest speculative foray – into the distinction between Being and its form. Monius confronts this challenge from a different angle than we have above, and in so doing guides us through the second step of building a theory of Categories:

> [I]f we ask 'What is it to be Being?' we ask after the form of Being. The most general account of what it is to be Being is this: to be a thing that is universal. So Universal Being can be thought of as the most general form of Being.
>
> This presents a difficulty, the solution to which provides a deep hint as the structure of Being. Like Being, this aspect of Being – Universal Being – is universal. So both Being and Universal Being have the same most general specification of their form. What then distinguishes Being from Universal Being? (27)

Let us set aside the hunch that (C2) above would recommend a different but no less plausible proposal – in the direction of Necessary as a most general aspect of Being. And let us ignore the suspicions of (C3) and (C4) that the Aristotelian apparatus, designed as it is for particulars, provides an unsuitable or at least implausible method for discerning the nature of universals. What indeed distinguishes Being from Universal Being? Monius reminds us that two things sharing the same form are individuated by their matter. Happily, Being enjoys not only the aspect of Universal Being, but also of Particular Being. Particular Being is the matter of Being, not shared by Universal Being: Being is distinct from its form, Universal Being.

And what then is the matter of Universal Being? If the two steps taken thus far do not answer the compositional question, they do suggest a remarkably powerful recipe: locate the most general form of Universal Being, which will be some aspect of it that applies to itself; then locate something that is an aspect of Universal Being, but not of the form of Universal being, which does not apply to itself: this is the matter, and distinguishes Universal Being from its form. As Monius applies the recipe, Universal being has two fundamental aspects – the Necessary (Necessary Universal Being) and the Contingent (Contingent Universal Being). The former applies to itself and to Universal Being, and so is the form of Universal Being: the latter, Contingent Universal being, is the material aspect

Universal Being by virtue of which it is distinguished from Necessary Universal Being.

In applying the recipe to Necessary Universality, Monius urges us to see that as the form of Being, its most general characterization is to be form: and since Formal Necessary Universal Being is also formal, we have the self-predicative evidence for reckoning it the form of Necessary Universality. To distinguish it from Necessary Universal Being itself, we find the obvious candidate in Material Necessary Universality – "the aspect of Being which combines with Formal Necessary Universal Being to exhaust the nature of Necessary Universal Being. Here again the material sub-category plays the two distinctive roles of matter: it is a component of a whole, and it individuates that whole from the others with the same formal characterization" (28).

Thus does one slowly generate the Categories, spreading downward as a grand tree or (as Monius's representation prefers it) outward as a grand circle, away from Being to each of the lower Sub-Categorical nodes, each such node being either the form or the matter of its higher Category and each having its own formal and material Categories below it. A fully-completed tree or circle would display every aspect of Being – the full structure of Being Itself. And as the most recent application of the recipe (quoted just above) indicates, each node is indeed a whole, containing its formal and material elements as components. Being is thus composite, self-predicable, and extrinsically other- individuated.

A blow-by-blow evaluation of Monius's own effort at filling in the many Sub-Categories that are recommended in CU (thirty in all, below Being) would take us beyond the tenor and scope of this critical review. Better, perhaps, to proceed with the most important and difficult elements of those principal fillings-out yet to be engaged – the sub-Categories under Contingent Universal Being, and the sub-Categories under Particular Being. Following this, we can attend to Monius's final task, of addressing trans- Categorical ("cross-connective") relations.

4. Methodology: The Contingent and the Particular

Beneath the category of Necessary Universal Being, recall, fall the sub-categories of the Formal and the Material. What categories should be subsumed, at the same level of generality, under the category Contingent Universal Being?

Left entirely to themselves, honest readers will admit to having little by way of *a priori* guidance here. What we earlier called the "recipe" is, at second glance, no algorithm of metaphysical cookery: it does not recommend the ingredients themselves, but describes how to look for them. Its application here would recommend the following familiar procedure. First, look for that most general aspect of Contingent Universal Being which also applies to itself: this is its form.

Then, locate some distinct fundamental aspect of Contingent Universal Being which can serve as the matter, to distinguish Contingent Universal Being from its form.

The task is not an inviting one. That Monius does not engage it is some evidence of methodological promiscuity: the recipe, evidently of little service in the present case, is laid aside in favor of something else. Past philosophers engaging the grand tradition of categorical metaphysics expressly sought the advice of their forerunners' successes and failures. Monius turns again to Aristotle – not to his *Categories* themselves, but rather to the Aristotelian idea that complete understanding of a thing will answer four sorts of questions:

> What is it to be that particular?
>
> What composes or makes up that particular and so individuates it from particulars of the very same kind?
>
> What are the various causal transactions in which the particular is involved?
>
> What purpose accounts for this particular's existence?

On the Aristotelian picture, the formal, material, efficient, and final principles or causes of a thing will provide four fundamental modes of understanding that thing. Monius's bold proposal is that these "apply to and are reflected among the Categories themselves" (31).

Perhaps that is true. It is not obviously, self-evidently true. More's the pity, then, that Monius's defense of the bold proposal goes no further than the claim that since Aristotle's questions apply to and have real answers in the case of each particular, they must reflect necessary features of the nature of Being itself. Again: maybe so. But by what sort of reasoning should we judge the categorical division of Being under *Universality* to be structured by these Aristotelian modes of understanding *particulars*? The disregard of (C4) above in formulating the recipe is here compounded more curiously still in locating its ingredients: for even granting (but without argument) their application at some deep level to the nature of Being, one should have reckoned the Aristotelian modes of understanding particulars as at best suitable for Categories under *Particular Being*, yet to be filled out.

Thus might one be forgiven their sense of methodological vertigo when following through the details. The recipe is demoted to silence from its original role as a guide. Necessary truths about particulars are deployed beneath Universal Being, not Particular Being. Half of Aristotle's four causes recommend a

dichotomous structure to every Category, and thence also serve as two Categories themselves. The remaining two are invited to sit alongside them in the same dichotomous structure: "[i]t is clear that the Category of the Teleological is the Category that stands as form" while "it is natural to think of efficient causal relations as constituting teleological connections, as matter does form" (33). But *are* these really so clear and natural as all that? Moving on: "The teleological function of particulars" is that operation by which it achieves its end: in this role, "the disposition of a particular" is especially suited. Such "dispositions of a hylomorphic particular" make up a pattern of functioning directed at an end, which end "sets a norm or standard" for things of its kind. Thus we have two aspects of the Teleological – the Dispositional and the Normative, which "stand to each other as matter and form" (34). But *can* such details about particulars earn us all of this, or even part of it? And if a demotion of the recipe to silence is no grounds for reckoning it false, it is fair to wonder: who among us, with even the clearest vision into neo-Platonic heaven, would judge the Normative a self-predicative form of the Telic? (Not that any of us would judge it otherwise, either.)

One wishes, then, that the general strategy were clearer.

Now it may be objected that our sentiments on the side of (C4), against the fillings-out recently sketched, are misguided. After all, those recent efforts were in the service of divining species of Being under the category Contingent. And since Aristotelian particulars are, surely, contingent beings, their necessary structure would recommend a structuring of their universals under the category of Contingent Being.

Here, perhaps, arises a feature of Monius's account that will give most readers serious pause at this stage of CU. Let us approach it in the context of a more overarching review of what remains of the structure of Being other than Universality and its Sub-categories – it's other half, Particular Being. Grounds for pause would look to arise immediately:

> In articulating the Sub-categories of Particular Being, we are guided by the general picture for which we initially argued. Particular beings exist for the sake of the understanding or comprehension of Being Itself. From this point of view, thetotality of [P]articular [B]eing is to be thought of as exhibiting a material aspect – the vast spatio-temporal realm of both kinetic and stable phenomena – and a formal aspect based in and developing out of this material aspect – the very coming to understanding or comprehension of Being itself. . . . This suggests a Categorical division of Particular Being into the

> Comprehensible and the Spatio-temporal. Clearly by our criterion of taking the formal aspect to be self- specifying, Comprehensible Particular Being is the formal aspect here, for it is Comprehensible, in the sense of subsuming a point or purpose which mere Spatio-temporal Particular Being does not. (37)

Not so. We were not guided by the general picture that "[p]articular beings exist for the sake of the understanding or comprehension of Being Itself." Rather, we were guided by the general picture that *contingent beings* exist for the sake of the understanding or comprehension of Being itself. That was the grand why-question and its proposed answer.

Echoing an early portion of the objection voiced above, it will of course be insisted that "particulars *are* contingent beings," and all is well. That does of course seem obviously right: recalling again (C1) from ß1 above,

> (C1) There are contingent particulars: Contingent Particular has instances.

But on Monius's scheme there *is* no Category of Contingent Particular. The category of Contingent itself falls under Universal; thus any being exemplifying the category Contingent falls under the category Universal; all contingent things are universal. So, there are no contingent particulars.

But that is surely false: there are contingent particulars. You are one. (C1) is unnegotiable.

The objection voiced above, recall, had it that since Aristotelian particulars are contingent beings with a necessary structure, such structuring of their universals should appear under the category of Contingent Being. If the early portion of that objection is, as it would seem, no longer available, neither is the latter portion: "their universals" – the universals instantiated by particulars – cannot appear under the category of Contingent Being at all: since the category Contingent falls under Universal Being, whatever instantiates it must be universal, not particular. It is the universals of universals, not of particulars, that should guide our filling in *that* side of Being. And so it cannot be suggested (as a salvage), either, that 'contingent' and 'universal' as Category-predicates might still apply, if only derivatively, to particulars, by virtue of those predicates applying primarily to the categorical-universals they instantiate. No *particular* instantiates *any* category under Universal Being, since no particular is a universal being; and since Contingent is a category of Universal, no particular is even derivatively contingent.

If we should like the modal categories to apply across the board – if we

should like to respect (C1) by respecting the strong modal-categorical intuition that allows particulars to be contingent no less than universals necessary – then we should at very least respect the earlier intuition (C2) from ß3 above:

> (C2) Beings divide into two fundamental kinds: necessary and contingent. Thus does Being as well, into the fundamental categories Necessary Being and Contingent Being.

Now if one felt constrained by the general categorical approach thus far engaged, (C2) would evidently begin a tree or circle departing from Monius's own, whose first step looks nevertheless sober and familiar: re-writing those formative paragraphs quoted early on,

> …we have discerned two kinds of, or aspects of, Being – what we might call Necessary Being and Contingent Being. These represent the two fundamental ways in which beings can be. A being can be Necessary. . . . [o]r a being can be Contingent….
>
> Clearly Necessary Being applies to itself. Necessary Being is an aspect of Being, therefore it is something that exists. Therefore it is a being. Yet as an aspect of Being, which is necessary, it also is necessary. So Necessary Being is both a being and necessary. It applies to itself.
>
> Not so with Contingent Being….

Thus might one fairly begin, abiding the general constraints on categorical structuring set in place. How to abide them further, alongside our unnegotiable modal-categorical intuitions, is less clear. Crucially, the branches are constrained to divide by twos, the circles to split in halves. Beneath which half of Being – the formal Necessary, or the material Contingent – shall we place the Sub-categories of Universal and Particular? To place them under Necessary Being is to prohibit contingent particulars; to place them under Contingent Being is to prohibit necessary universals. We cannot win.

The guilty party, of course (on the presumption of Being as *summum genus*), is the constraint of dividing by two, of splitting in half. To repeat an earlier query: why suppose that the heart of reality has two chambers, not four? Being is indeed universal, and some things aren't universal but are particular instead: there are universals and particulars. But Being is also necessary, and some things aren't necessary but are contingent instead: there is necessity and there is contingency. The answer is now clear: four chambers would prohibit the peaceful co-existence of contingent beings and necessary universals as much as two. Shy of turning our

backs on the unnegotiable modal-categorical intuitions, Neo-Hegelian neo-Platonists, enamored by an equally unnegotiable vision of a dichotomous heaven, have the following option: give up the idea of contingent universals, give up the idea of necessary particulars, and identify the Necessary with the Universal and the Contingent with the Particular. If there is any hope for a wedding of Plato and Aristotle to be made in heaven, this may be it. Better, all told, to deny what Monius calls Axiom 2:

> Axiom 2: (Axiom of Dichotomy) Every Category or necessary universal has an immediate Sub-Category, which stands to it as its form, and another immediate Sub-Category, which stands to it as its matter.

Division by four fails as readily as division by two. One can hardly ignore the suspicion that the proper diagnosis extends more deeply than we have taken it, to the very beginning: *there is no beginning, no top, no summum genus at all*. There are beginnings, tops, *genera*. Stunningly Aristotelian in flavor, that verdict nevertheless respects something upon which Plato and Aristotle would have in their own ways agreed. The individual, which cannot be repeated, is not in any sense common to many; so, that which is – i.e. that which is in some sense common to many – cannot *be* in the same sense in which the particular is. In heaven and earth, being is said in many ways.

If your average contemporary analytic metaphysician would be unhappy giving up necessary particulars, Monius – who more than anyone of recent vintage seeks to wed Plato with Aristotle – would evidently be unhappy giving up on the idea of contingent universals. The idea is a curious one. On the one hand, there is the class of universals that are the Categories: they needn't be instantiated in order to exist; on the other hand there is the class of universals that aren't the Categories: they must be instantiated in order to exist. Curious above all, then, is the remarkable mixture of duties performed by Universals as a kind. (i) Some are necessary, carving up logical space twice over – the actuality space of what is common to everything there is, and the possibility space of what is common to some things there can be. Others are contingent, carving up the actuality space of what is common to some things there are. (ii) Some are of such a nature as to exist only if they are instantiated, others not. (iii) Some necessarily exist no-where, some contingently exist no-where, and some contingently exist where their instances are. This unseemly gerrymandering of logical tasks is an inevitable consequence of rejecting intuition (C3):

> (C3) The mode of existence of universals is part of the nature

> universality: if some universals are necessary, all are; if some are contingent, all are.

Indeed it would seem that to reject (C3) by reckoning certain universals Platonic, and others Aristotelian, is to deny that universals have any common nature whatever beyond (Universal) Being itself. If readers who find this mix to be more than just a curiosity were to engage the task of diagnosing its provenance, they will encounter new doubts about thedichotomy constraint itself, and thence the *summum genus* doctrine at bottom. Combined with earlier worries (above), a strong *prima facie* case is in hand for doubting what Monius calls Axiom 1:

> Axiom 1: (Axiom of Unity) Being itself is the *Summum Genus*, the most inclusive of all the necessary universals that are the Categories.

Returning now to particulars, recall again that Particular Being is said to exhibit a material aspect – the spatio-temporal realm of Being – and a formal aspect – the comprehension of Being itself. Quoting the relevant item again:

> …This suggests a Categorical division of Particular Being into the Comprehensible and the Spatio-temporal. Clearly by our criterion of taking the formal aspect to be self-specifying, Comprehensible Particular Being is the formal aspect here, for it is Comprehensible, in the sense of subsuming a point or purpose which mere Spatio-temporal Particular Being does not.

Here, the recipe is newly-promoted to full voice. To be self-specifying is to be self-predicable (28). Yet the recipe would seem to be either curiously misapplied or curiously wounded: the Category of Comprehensible, which is the form of Particular Being, may well be comprehensible and a being, but is surely not particular. Monius does not draw attention to this, but notes the difficulty later in a related context. In offering a Categorical subdivision of the Spatio-temporal, Monius recommends the Stable and the Kinetic as its most fundamental aspects. Which is form, and which is matter?

> The Stable is…the obvious candidate to be the formal aspect of the Spatio-temporal. For it applies to itself since it is an unchanging universal and so a paradigm of stability. (Notice that we do not require as part of the doctrine of the self-predication of Stable of the Category Stable Spatio-temporal Particular Being that the other attributes of the Category also apply to the Category. This would be

absurd….) (37)

Are we then to pick-and-choose, to mix-and-match – to say that, so long as some aspect of the candidate Category applies to itself, that candidate is a form? This wounded criterion is of no use as a general recipe. Consider, for example, the subdivision of Comprehensible Particular Being into the Cognizable and the Sensible. Of the former, formal aspect, Monius reminds us that what is grasped by cognition will be either *a posteriori* or *a priori*. "Of these two, it is the latter which is the formal Sub-category, for it is itself graspable *a priori*." But of course some aspect of the candidate *a posteriori* applies to *it*self, too: it is comprehensible.

The recipe must be this: if the lowest categorical aspect of the sub-categorical division applies to itself, then it is the formal aspect of its higher category. Which makes the recipe again difficult to apply, as we saw earlier when wondering if the Normative is a self-predicative aspect of the Telic. One's heavenly vision might improve with practice, but many will wonder if the picking-and-choosing isn't still at play beneath the surface. The Stable is said to divide Spatio-temporal particulars into two sorts – those which are fully present at each time at which they exist, and those which have only then-present parts existing at those times. The Continuing and the Aggregative (respectively) are thus the fundamental aspects of the Stable. The former is said to be the form, since "as a Universal it is wholly present at each time at which it exists." But surely the relation of a necessary universal to time is much different from that of a contingent particular to time: "continuing stable" is at best equivocally true of both. Likewise under the Spatio-temporal Category of the Kinetic: to the extent one can grasp it, the sense in which Patterned Kinetic is Patterned (and Random Kinetic not Random) isn't the sense in which that Category marks off regular from irregular change in the world of particulars. Indeed, *one may fairly doubt that any form of a hylomorphic particular is instantiated by any universal.* For beginners, the stuff-matter of a particular which it informs is nothing like the universal-matter of a universal. Why suppose that a single universal could perform the same formal job on such ontologically disparate things as that? Or returning now to a higher neighboring Category (and moving from the material to the formal mode of speech): if it is true that some particular *a* is comprehensible, and also true that some universal *u* – say, Comprehensible – is comprehensible, have we any good reason here for calling this a case of univocal predication, on both particular *a* and universal *u*? Once again, the wedding of Aristotelian and Platonic sentiments can only feel very strained indeed. As a matter of practical advice, at any rate, it is quite unclear how useful Monius's Axiom 3 proves to be:

Axiom 3: (Axiom of Self Application): Self-application is the

hallmark of the formal Sub-Category of a given Category.

5. "Causation" among Necessary Universals: Some Difficulties Resolved

The remarkable Categorical project generated by Monius's system, and exhibited as a huge tree or circle of Being, deploys the structuring relations of sub-Categorical form and matter relative to the higher Category. Might there be, in addition to these vertical or downward-reaching relations, other important "horizontal" trans-Categorical relations among these universals making up the necessary structure of Being? The question is a fine one. The Hegelian system of Categories (recall from ß2 above) suffered from ignoring this question altogether. In a bold move reminiscent of the earlier application of Aristotle's four causes, Monius suggests that not only the formal and material, but the efficient and final, aspects of Aristotelian explanation serve to structure the Categories. Like Formal and Material, which are both Categories and structuring relations, Efficient and Final might, in addition to being Categories themselves, be structuring relations.

> Axiom 4: (Axiom of Connective Relations) The connective relations among the Categories are none other than analogs of the four causal relations – being the matter of, being the form of, being the efficient cause of, and being the purpose of.

If the proposal itself is not an immediately compelling one, the question it seeks to answer surely is compelling: Monius goes beyond Aristotle, Kant and Hegel in not merely raising the question, but addressing it head on. When added to historical alertness and sheer scope of Monius's project, this final effort serves to render CU the most thorough treatment of the Categories of its length that one can find anywhere.

In the present case, the virtues extend beyond thoroughness. Little of deep metaphysics is *immediately* compelling. Monius's extended account of the "cross-connective" relations is cleverly – even brilliantly -- done, and accomplishes more than answering an important question typically ignored. It addresses two crucial issues attracting our attention earlier on. One such issue we posed as an objection, back in ß1:

> [A]rguably, Being is not – cannot be – the highest genus, or genus at all. Were it, we should be unable to account for species under it. Species are gotten by adding differentia to genus, as by adding Material to Substance in the case of Body, Animate to Body in the case of Organism, and so on. Crucially, specific difference must

> come from outside the nature of the genus: were Material found in the very nature of Substance, there could be no possibility of Immaterial Substance. But if Being itself is a genus, from where shall we draw the differentia?

In this homestretch of CU Monius acknowledges the objection, and identifies it as a problem "for any Category theory which begins with a single dominant Category and proceeds by appeal to differentia to divide it into sub-species…" (45). How might it be solved?

In steps. (A) Exploring the role of a suitable analogue to efficient causation for cross-connective structuring among the Categories, Monius first argues that efficient causation among particulars does not admit of conventional analysis into more basic notions. Causation among particulars is a primitive, basic notion of *bringing about*. (B) The analogue for categorical universals is near to hand. For even if each is necessary, and not of course literally brought about, we can intelligibly speak of dependence or priority relations among them: one universal can be a part of what it is to be another, and so enter into the nature of the second without the second entering into the nature of the first. (C) Crucially, while some species and its genus do not stand in this asymmetric dependence relation, that species and the differentia by which (together with genus) it is defined do so-stand. This ontological priority of differentia to species is the counterpart of causation for universals. (D) As objected, we cannot locate the differentia in the higher genus itself; nor can we – on pain of an infinite regress of ever-further differentia of differentia -- seek the differentia from within any sub-species of the genus, at the same level of specificity as the species it defines. Monius's insight is that we can locate the differentia of a species *within a material element that is at once lower than, and not a sub-species of, the specific Category in question.* (E) So the problem of finding the differentia is solved -- by looking outward and downward, not inward or upward.

That is an ingenious solution to a difficult problem for any single-highest-genus approach the Categories.

And it is more than that. Recall again a second complaint, from ß4 above:

> But on Monius's scheme there *is* no category of Contingent Particular. The category of Contingent itself falls under Universal; thus any being exemplifying the category Contingent falls under the category Universal; all contingent things are universal. So, there are no contingent particulars.

The trans-Categorical relation of differentia shows what is arguably wrong with this objection. True enough: the category of Contingent falls under Universal. But there are more universals than the Categories. That Contingent falls under Universal does not entail that any being exemplifying the former falls under the latter. Indeed, Contingent is the differentia which, together with the genus Being, defines the species Particular: particulars are contingent beings. Monius's system is rich enough to guarantee that, even if Contingent Being is no Category, it is a perfectly good universal with categorical definition in the traditional porphyrian way.

It can be fairly predicted that most readers will locate in CU as many questions as answers. This is a virtue: good philosophy generates questions. And if there is some debit on the side of lacunae arising in middle parts of CU, the effort of patient readers will be inevitably credited in this latter discussion of the 'cross-connective" relations. Repeating once more: little of deep metaphysics is *immediately* compelling.

That is not to say that all is smooth sailing. (1) Your average contemporary analytic metaphysician will remain unhappy being told that there is no room for necessary particulars. God aside, what of numbers? Propositions? (2) Those nursed at the knee of traditional Aristotelianism will have difficulty giving up the strong intuition that, on the standard schema for definition,

Genus + Differentia = Species

it is *genus* which plays the role of matter, and *differentia* which plays the role of form, not the other way 'round. To some non-signate matter one brings a determining form; analogously, to the indeterminate genus one brings a specific difference. That the less determinate genus should – even could – play the role of form deserves an argument. (3) And what independent reasons might there be for thinking that some categories, but notall, have definitions? Intuitively, if Material has a definition, so does Formal; if Contingent is the definable, so is Necessary. (4) But closer to home – that is, ignoring cases where intuitions are less secure and considering cases where they are firmly in place – the Categorical structure of CU, together with the latest proposal, will look implausible at various junctures. Those suffering under no empiricist hangovers, especially, will doubt that the definition of Spatio-temporal is *Sensible Particular*, as Monius's account requires. Ought our deep metaphysics entail *that*? It is one thing to be told (what seems in any case false) that entities enjoying spatio-temporal location are sensible; it is quite another to be told that this is not just a contingent fact about what there is, but a necessary fact about what there could be. Certainly no intensional analysis of 'spatial' or 'temporal' or their cognates recommends it.

The bold and productive move to invoke an analogue of efficient causation as a trans- Categorical structuring relation is half of the final story. Axiom 4 urges a final question: is there room among the Categories for a structuring relation on the model of final causation?

Unlike the previous case of locating plausible grounds for seeing the Categories as structured by a species of dependence-relation, Monius does not argue for an affirmative answer to this question. The answer has, in its own way, been urged already by the rejection of sufficient-reasons explanation: the overarching picture of CU, motivated from its earliest arguments in favor of broadly teleological approach, is that a comprehensive understanding of Being can found only in a purposive relation, terminating in Being, which structures the Categories themselves. In order to gain a picture of just what such a being-directed-at relation would amount to, Monius returns again to the nature of teleological directedness.

That, one supposes, is a good first start. In the present case, there are drawbacks – some familiar, others new. For in the present case, the analogue of a disposition is at once (i) a shade too obscure and (ii) much too foreign to the Categories themselves to be of much help in locating a structuring relation among them. More specifically, (i) unless we are told what broadly logico-formal features of this notion are to be extracted from the idea of a conditional power and located in the relevant trans-categorial relation we seek to apply here, one is left rather in the dark. Given some relation R that is minimally asymmetric, what is to be added to yield a direction? (Philosophers of time are familiar with the objection that the asymmetric character of temporal relations does not yet yield the formal character of directedness – of what they call the "sense" on their many relata.) And, (ii) the initial, motivating idea of a conditional power does not apply immediately to Categories per se. In applying the notion of efficient-causal explanation to the Categories (above), Monius sought explicitly to find a counterpart to the bringing-into-being relation that would apply between Categorical relata; here, in aiming to deploy the notion of final causation, we are offered no counterpart beyond the taxonomically suggestive "directed at" relation – which must be acknowledged as being of little help. Power itself is of no help: whatever promise it holds of yielding the notion of directedness, it holds no promise of delivering the idea of purpose – that original notion so crucial to motivating the main theme of CU. Perhaps one draws closer to that notion in formal idea of a norm or standard, in accordance with which some entity of a kind is judged fitting or good (of its kind) relative to what it is naturally disposed to produce: but surely Categories themselves are not the sort of thing to be judged better and worse in achieving natural ends. Moreover, until more is said about the nature of the target relation here sought, readers will be inclined to judge even the most rarified account of

ends as having a role that a Category could not play. If a thing's end or purpose is *to F*, then one of the relata at least would seem inevitably to be an event-type, which, however universal, no Category would seem to be. In sum, when Monius speaks of "an end as an outcome of a certain form" (51), one may fairly wonder what exactly this amounts to. For all that is said, "outcome" is perfectly obscure in the present context. Without a clearer accounting of this notion and of "directedness" as well, one may fairly doubt that reflecting on dispositional powers and Aristotelian forms of particulars can yield an intelligible story about relations among Categories.

This final aspect of Axiom 4 – that 'being the purpose of' is a structuring relation – would seem to be the least promising.

That said, it is worth noting an advantage in this second of Monius's quasi-Aristotelian structuring effort, compared to the first (earlier) efficient-causal effort. Intuitively, it is form alone from which finality derives. That renders plausible the claim that this structuring relation is from formal Categories alone – a feature we found less plausible in it's earlier counterpart-claim that material Categories alone are serviceable as "efficient-causal" differentia.

From reflection on the nature of purposive directedness itself, Monius extracts three general features: it arises from form, is directed at form, and runs from the more specific (less general) to the less specific (more general). "This implies," says Monius (54), that if Category A is directed at Category B as its end, then A will be a formal Sub-category of its genus, B will be a formal Sub-Category of its genus, and B will be more general than A. Supposing implication is weaker than entailment, we cannot object that (i) and (ii) above seriously cloud the legitimacy of this move. What justifies the move, if justification is to be found, will be given by the earlier overarching vision that finality must structure the Categories if we are to come to a full understanding of Being Itself.

And so, in addition to the trans-Categorical relation of 'is the differentia of' among material Categories, Monius's grand tree or circle enjoys connections of "is directed at" among formal Categories. Where Aristotle, Kant and Hegel left us in the dark, Monius has offered the light of a hypothesis.

How revealing is the light of Monius's final structuring hypothesis? Some questions are left open. Of a gnawing sort: if it is of the nature of form to be directed toward an end, why should some formal Categories have ends, and others not, as Monius's scheme must have it? And the general worry (ii) above inevitably casts its shadow: what the trans-Categorical relations now in place tell us is that the General is directed at the Telic, and the Telic at the Necessary; that the Componential aspect of Matter is directed at Form; that the Structural aspect of the Sensible exists for the sake of the Cognizable; and so on. In the mundane order of particulars, we tend to have our bearings on final causation. In the quasi-

Aristotelian Platonic heaven, it must be admitted that things are considerably less clear.

There is a special payoff, to be sure. On the rightmost branch of Monius's tree, or in the lower right quadrant of the grand circle, begins a long sequence of directed teleological relations, traversing the entire Particular aspect of Being and ending at its form: the Patterned, directed at the Stable, directed at the Comprehensible, directed at the Universal -- the form of Being. "This long teleological arc…is *Coming to Understanding*" (57). This series of Categories, connected by the analogue of final causation, expresses the overarching vision that contingent beings exist for the sake of the Coming to Understanding of the form of Being. Being is instantiated in the contingent for the sake of understanding.

Or so Monius has it. Presumably, Being is instantiated in the contingent for the sake of understanding, *if it is* instantiated in the contingent. It needn't be. What, exactly, is Coming to Understanding, such that it would exist even if there were no contingent beings? The teleological arc might be viewed as an infinite n-tuple of aspects of Being, ordered under the special asymmetric for-the-purpose-of relation. That is not especially helpful. Better, presumably, to view it as a necessary state of affairs – *a way Being is*. Perhaps this: Being is necessarily such that its form, Universal Being, is the end or purpose of contingent beings if there are any.

But that is not quite right. Let us ask: of what is Universal Being the end or purpose? Only one answer is entailed by the Categorical structure offered in CU: *Comprehensible Particular Being*, which stands in the teleological directed-at relation to Universal Being. That teleological relation has Categories as its relata, and is necessarily instantiated by them, independently of the existence of any contingent beings whatever. Coming to Understanding itself is thus a real fact about the world independently of any contingent things. So the Categorical structure of Being does not, by itself, tell us that contingent beings have either Universal Being or Coming to Understanding as their end or purpose. Shall we add a premise? Perhaps this, or some near cousin deploying the relevant ancestral relation: for any Categories C1 and C2 standing in the teleological relation RT, if some contingent particular *x* instantiates C1, then *x*RT C2. The premise would need defending. But suitably generalized, it would guarantee that any contingent being exists for the sake of Universal Being. Less clear is how Coming to Understanding itself can bean end or purpose of contingent beings – less clear because it is far from obvious how Coming to Understanding can emerge as a Categorical end or purpose to which some contingent being might itself be teleologically related. Recall again from early on in CU: "Why then do contingent beings exist? The speculative cosmological hypothesis to be defended here is that contingent beings exist so that Being itself can be grasped or understood" (4). In

the early going that had the ring of plausibility to it: the purpose of contingent beings is that they provide the only route to some good, namely understanding Being. Here, the contingent beings themselves look to serve little purpose: the good, Coming to Understanding, has no need of them.

And there is a residual concern from early on. If the Category of the Patterned aspect of the Kinetic aspect of Spatio-temporal Particular Being is instantiated, then Being is instantiated in contingent individuals. Good: this is the real content of the claim that contingent beings exist for the sake of understanding the form of Being, i.e. Universal Being. Supposing that contingent beings themselves can be worked into the teleological relations themselves, one might have thought we needed contingent beings of the right sort. "[U]nderstanding is the presence of an object of understanding to a mind adequate to grasp what it is to be that object" (14). So the Good to be realized by the existence of contingent beings would indeed look to require the existence of minds. Shall we say that Monius has argued for Idealism?

The details, one suspects, could be developed. Whether they can assuage the serious worry that relations among Categories are not themselves purposive in any way Aristotle originally had in mind, and the worry that a plausible counterpart to the original relation may prohibit both Categories and particular contingent beings alike as relata, remains to be seen.

Monius launches CU with the intuition that there must be (and so, is) some explanation for the existence of contingent beings. The argument from there directs us to a purposive explanation: contingent beings exist for the sake of some good or end, which is the comprehensive understanding of Being Itself. Supposing the details can be laid into place for working contingent particulars themselves into this purposive scheme of explanation, it is worth noting that there are infinitely many teleological connections ascending upward from below toward the form of Being. That is, there is no bottom to the Categorical tree(s), no *infimae species*; hence *there is no starting-point for the explanatory teleological arc which is Coming to Understanding*. The virtue of terminating the grand purposive scheme in the form of Being would seem curiously offset by its having no point of origin, no place to stand from which to commence the explanatory run.

6. Addenda: Editorial Comments

A. M. Monius has written a remarkable book. Having sought at once to fairly represent its major contributions and to critically engage them, let us think in the direction of advancing its aim to engage anew an old project of traditional metaphysics in the grand style.

I shall assume in what follows the voice of the first person, and begin with

two general comments before moving to particular recommendations.

A. *Prose and Style* The text is largely well-written. Chief among its virtues on this score is organization. Readers like, and deserve, thematic hunks and a sensible arrangement of them: CU does a splendid job structuring the flow of discussion. It's headings are helpful (though what is effectively the Introduction might benefit from a heading that indicates as much). My own view is that the Sections or Chapters deserve numbers as well. This helps the author and the reader alike, facilitating easier reference in the text to previous and future discussion, and easier maneuvering to and fro amidst the text by readers. Indeed, I would encourage the author to seek out opportunities to more frequently refer to earlier results: too much of this is can be distracting, but readers can gain a sense of unity and orientation within the text by such markers as these.

At this stage, I do not think sub-sections are necessary; but should the text be expanded considerably, a deeper layer of division may serve the author and readers well.

The author might give some thought to sketching a prefatory outline of the book early on, to help the reader anticipate the general approach being undertaken.

B. *Clarity of Explanation* The author is overall careful to slow down at the spots most needing extended discussion. There are exceptions, to be noted explicitly below. I believe that the book would be considerably improved by adding as many more concrete examples as the material permits. Removed as the Categories are from the ground-floor level of contingent particulars, discussion of the nature of and relations among universals is inevitably conducted at an abstract level. But Categories themselves have instances, and relations among them are mirrored in truths about individuals falling under them. Quite apart from whether the order of being marches lockstep with the order of knowing, it is arguable that epistemic access to at least some of our intuitions about the Categories derives from the particulars themselves. From approximately the middle of the book – beginning with "The Structure of Being" onward – the reader would I think profit considerably from an effort to clarify and illustrate in terms of particular instances of various of the Categories. I shall give such indications in this direction as I can below.

One important and remarkable feature of this book is that it is accessible to all philosophers. An effort of the sort undertaken in CU deserves the widest readership possible: philosophers of different traditions and sentiments stand to profit greatly from it, if they can be drawn in. I think attention to its accessibility cannot be over-emphasized. The less jargon, the better. CU is largely free of jargon, which is refreshing. Exceptions and recommendations will be noted below.

C. *Editorial recommendations for improvement* The most important improvements will come in meeting – answering – philosophical objections. The soundest advice for improvement would thus be to encourage the author to meet them head on: this is the standard of book and journal editorial procedures in taking advice from outside reviewers, and in re-writing for final publication or re-submission. I have sought at some length to locate the most significant misgivings about various parts of CU into the critical review itself. But there is more to add, of varying sorts. Let me proceed by Section and page. *I will attempt to avoid duplicating critical items offered in the critical review*, except in those cases where it is unavoidable or (in my view) inadvisable in urging adjustments.

Section 1: Introduction (1-3)

p. 1

-- In claiming that "much of the best work in philosophy over the past century has consisted of one or another attempt to escape from" the broadly positivist tradition, the author seems to ignore the fact that empiricist critiques of metaphysical claims suffered already in the 50s and thereafter under the self-defeating weight of verifiability criteria of meaning. I would urge putting the case a bit less strongly than that, if the first paragraph retains its largely positivist emphasis. Empiricism more generally, I think, is rather the better target – capturing as it does both the positivist and latter-day constructive empiricist / anti-realist proposals of Quine, the later Putnam, van Fraassen, Fine and others. The author's point of the second paragraph (stretching to the second page) would remain on board but with a wider and more plausible target.

p. 1-2

-- How strong that point of the second paragraph turns out to be is a deep question. The natural sciences themselves engage no (or anyway, qua science, very little) meta-theoretic reflection in the direction of metaphysics itself. Looking then to the philosophers of science – in particular, to those seeking to understand the nature of causation and laws and scientific explanation – it is to be remembered that if empiricism and anti-realism are alive and well, the calling-card of empirical adequacy will be happily wed to skepticism or agnosticism about deep metaphysics.

Early on in CU, indeed already in this paragraph, the unstated but operative supposition that contingency needs explaining is doing a lion's share of motivational work. In the old days this could be taken for granted: 'contingent' for the most part meant 'dependent', and so was implicitly relational enough to invite – even demand – some story about that in virtue of which it exists/obtains.

The author can't be expected to justify doing metaphysics. If there is a target audience for CU, it is the metaphysicians and metaphysically-sensitive historians of philosophy: so why not bite the bullet and explicitly invoke this construal of 'contingent' (replacing 'meant' with 'entails' in my old-day formulation just above) as one enjoying both a long tradition and independent plausibility in its own right? As a bit of practical fact and advice: the fewer unstated but operative suppositions, the better. One won't slip the sequel under the table of empiricists for long anyway. Be up front about this broadly explanatory basis of the book.

Alas, going for it means "no brute contingent facts." This too, I believe, is so much a controlling theme as to deserve explicit statement by the author. Empiricists won't buy it: but we don't care about them anyway. The metaphysicians are another story: they'll see it a mile away, worry about why it is so hard at work without being ever stated explicitly, and will want reasons for taking it seriously.

The latter is a tall task – too tall to hope for success, of course, but important enough in the minds of readers to deserve mention and treatment. Or so it seems to me. What might the author say about this?

Tack one: to do metaphysics is in part to suppose that the nature of things is intelligible, in principle accessible to reason. The hallmark of intelligibility is explanation, and as the operative standard one can only fairly aim to meet it. This makes "no brute contingent facts" a methodological presupposition, which is betrayed in all of our serious science and metaphysics. Tack two: the basis on which some metaphysicians are inclined to deny the presupposition it is that they have high sufficient-reasons standards of explanation One thing the author might do, in the context of arguing against that strong standard later on (p. 5), is to make precisely this point: shy of any other justification for doubting the it, the presupposition remains on board. Indeed I would urge the author to make this point. It puts the burden back where it belongs – in the hands of those who suppose that, failing to meet the one and very strong standard of explanation, brute facts are to be admitted.

-- "The traditional metaphysical name for reality as a whole is Being. Being is exemplified…." The author is advised to avoid putting those back-to-back, since no-one thinks that reality is exemplified. Part of it is, of course. (The same point applies on page 4, first sentence of the first paragraph.)

p. 3

-- "…why Being is exemplified, i.e. why things which are contingent exist" isn't anything the author *strictly speakin*g wants to say. In this early going, the implied equivalence is perhaps a useful fiction, and can be slipped by the reader. But

(according to CU) Being is necessarily exemplified by the necessary universals, and needn't be exemplified by contingent particulars. The implied equivalence ("i.e.") is in fact too strong.

-- Final large paragraph, second sentence: I encourage avoiding the "…how it hangs together" clause. It is rather a hackneyed distraction, and is best dropped.

-- I found myself wishing that the distinction between speculative cosmology and analytic ontology were clearer. As intellectual enterprises, one can see vaguely that the tenors ofeach diverge. But when the author states that "…the structure of Being or of reality as a whole *is* the structure of necessary universality..." (my emphasis), the contrast between numerically distinct tasks tends to get lost. And readers will wonder if they haven't missed something when, after reading this identity claim, they go on to read that one "gains insight into" the latter by learning about the former. If the targets or results of these distinct endeavors is the same, more clarity needs to be afforded their diverging methodologies; and insofar as many readers will fail to recognize the taxonomic labels as familiar ones, they will be helped a good deal by attending to this.

Section 2: Why is Being Exemplified? (4-9)

p. 4

-- "Among individual beings there are contingent universals and all the particular things that inhabit our world." Here is a reader-stopper. I don't mean (at the moment, anyway) that the author shouldn't believe it, or that it cannot be intelligibly made out: I mean that many readers will pause to reflect on the curious idea of contingent universals in a world also enjoying infinitely many necessary universals (that view is a quite non-standard one, at least among contemporary analytic metaphysicians), and to reflect on the curious idea that 'universal' might univocally apply to individuals and to non-individuals, as the claim implies Are these potential distractions needed *here*? Wouldn't reference to contingent particulars be enough, postponing the controversial until it's forced upon us?

Controversy does of course seem inevitable: neither Platonists nor Aristotelians will find the mixed bag a happy one. *Are* contingent universals needed? Do they force their way into the picture? Theoretical posits earn their keep by playing roles that need playing, and it is unclear what role in the system of CU needs playing by contingent universals. The author might urge that in no other way can we distinguish the Categories from the non-Categorical universals. But why is that so pressing? By virtue of instantiating the universal Universal, all alike necessarily have this property in common: there is no avoiding that, shy of

dropping the univocality of 'universal'. Nevertheless, some universals are Categories, by virtue of being necessarily instantiated (given their role in an infinite hierarchy of universals: others are not, because they are not necessarilyinstantiated (they play no such role). There seems to be no need to grant some universals a modal or ontological status distinct from others. If so, then as just suggested, doing what isn't needed looks for all the world to invite an uncomfortable equivocality theme, which many will want to seriously resist.

-- Second paragraph: "The Theist says that contingent being was created from nothing…." Here, a point about terminology. Why say it this way? Philosophers in the continental tradition will not pause; philosophers in the analytic tradition will complain that 'contingent being' sounds too much like a mass noun: 'Contingent being was created from nothing' will ring oddly in their ear as rather too much like 'White snow was created from nothing'. Everyone agrees that theists say that contingent beings were created from nothing. If that is the point, why express it in any other way?

Engaging the point somewhat more philosophically for a moment, the author might set out to answer clearly this question: What is *contingent being*? Being is a universal. If *contingent being* is a universal, then evidently the author would reckon it a contingent universal, whose existence depends upon contingent beings. Touching then upon the point made earlier: theists of course can, but surely needn't, say that God did two things – create contingent beings, and create contingent being. But suppose they did say this: what would they mean? If 'contingent being' names a contingent universal, it cannot name an abstract particular – a trope: there are as many of those as there are contingent beings. [On page 13, the author says that 'the contingent instantiation of being' is equivalent to 'the existence of contingent being'. The first expression is as ambiguous as the second is unclear. Is the first a distributive/plural-referring definite description, or a singular name for the state of affairs of there being contingent particulars, or something else again?])

I urge the author to seek ways of minimizing – eliminating, if possible – talk of "F being." Too many potential readers will be distracted by it. 'F beings' will do the trick, won't it? But if it won't, I recommend a degree of taxonomical clarification sufficient to keep at arm's length complaints of the sort I've been predicting here.

p. 5

-- I am not persuaded by the objection to the Many Worlds Hypothesis. Let the many worlds be equally real, and let them exhaust possibility space. "Actual" is an indexical: in my mouth, it picks out that corner of reality in which I reside. The

way our world is is one way a world can be. But there are other worlds. Other worlds are other – i.e. unactualized but perfectly real – possibilities: they do not contain me and my surroundings. Might one speak as the author does of a "super-ensemble which exhausts reality"? If one tried, there would seem to be no threat of that ensemble and all its parts being necessary, as Spinoza had it: the necessity of the ensemble would imply the actuality of the ensemble, which is trivially false. The ensemble is not actual: that honorgoes only to a part of it – my and your part. Nor of course can we say that the ensemble exists at all possible worlds. Supposing the ensemble is a mereological sum of all the worlds, it will exist at no world, and thus is impossible, hence not actual, and hence is not necessary. If, alternatively, one supposed that a part of the ensemble's existing at some world suffices for it existing at that world, then on this scenario the ensemble is necessary but no proper part of it is necessary, since no (proper) part of the ensemble is such that its parts exist at all worlds. Us and ours – the contents of our world, like all others – are not necessary.

-- It seems to me that the author might spell out the point of the final paragraph more fully and carefully and forcefully: it is philosophically important, pivotal for the general course CU will pursue (away from sufficient reasons explanation and toward the teleological), and interesting in its own right. I have made a concrete proposal in the direction of an explicit reconstruction, in the critical review above, but there may be different approaches that the author finds more congenial or forceful or both.

More generally: stopping at various junctures to pursue explicit arguments will help immensely to make this book more inviting and engaging for philosophers in the analytic tradition. They like to see the details, to see the arguments. A witting effort in this direction will enrich one dimension of the book that may well help to attract certain philosophers to engage the project of CU who, without such argumentative detail, might not otherwise take the time to engage it. That would be a shame.

-- Here, a general point about the transition from sufficient-reasons-explanation, which the author argues is unavailable (in explaining the existence of contingent beings), to purposive or teleological explanation in its place: *Going in* (pre-theoretically, as it were), the intuitive judgments of most readers there will be that there is a stronger *prima facie* likelihood that everything has a sufficient reason than that everything has a purposive explanation. [The historical explanation of why this is so is probably irrelevant: no doubt the successes of various scientific models of explanation have contributed to it.] A cloud above me has a certain shape – rather strikingly like that of a dog. Few if any would reckon this fact about

the world to have a purposive or teleological explanation. If, in general, our commitment to "everything has a purposive explanation" is far weaker than our commitment to "everything has a sufficient reason", the disappointment of learning that there is no sufficient reason for the existence of contingent beings will not very likely be lessened by the suggestion that it still has a good purposive explanation. General *prima facie* likelihoods being as they are, it then becomes important to give reasons for why *in this particular case* we should expect a purposive explanation to be waiting in the wings.

I urge the author to think about this point. The job is perhaps this: first, insist (as is indeed true) that our hunch that there is some kind of explanation for the existence of contingent beings is very strong; then propose that our willingness to admit brute facts isfar weaker; and then conclude that purposive explanation is the appropriate route to take for such a pressing case as this one. I apologize for being unable to come up with something better, now.

p.6

-- Here arises (top paragraph running from p.5) the first appearance of that good for the sake of which Being is instantiated in contingent particulars, i.e., "that Being itself should be comprehended." The discussion that follows attempts what it must, namely, to hold at bay the complaint that purpose must be intentional. But it must be noted that there are really *two* points, not just one, at which this teleological scenario would seem to involve the notion of agency or some mental being. The intelligibility of purposes generally, apart from persons, addresses one of them; the intelligibility of comprehension in particular, apart from persons, remains un-addressed here and throughout CU. I think it can be safely predicted that most readers will find it just as natural to believe that (i) the particular stated end itself – comprehending Being or the form of Being – requires an intellect as to believe that (ii) purposive explanation generally require an person, an intention. In light of this, the absence of any mention or discussion of (i) [the first of those] will find many readers either construing it in just this way (they've heard nothing to the contrary), or reading on with a vague sense of uneasiness about whether they've properly understood the end or good in question. The former readers would seem to be in for a surprise toward the end of CU, where Coming to Understanding is a structured system of universals, and where nothing is offered to indicated that understanding must be realized in a mind (I shall return to this briefly: it arises in the critical review itself); the latter readers may well on reflection say "oh, I suspected as much" toward the end of CU, and feel cheated by the silence. So I strongly urge the author to address (i). It might be done right here, while in the business of addressing (ii); but it is not clear to me that this wouldn't be a distraction. Better, perhaps, to address it in the Section/Chapter on The

Fundamental and Supreme Good. I confess that at the moment I have no suggestions about how to argue for the conclusion that understanding/comprehending Being does not in any way a notion involving an intellect. (Perhaps the author needs no such argument, because the author denies the conclusion. That's just fine: what isn't just fine is that readers will be unclear about this – particularly because it understanding/comprehending plays such a crucial role in CU.)

-- On the issue of impersonal purpose itself: why not remind the reader here (already: it emerges somewhat later on) that on the Aristotelian picture, ends seem intelligibly applied to natural objects enjoying no intellect or will whatever? Spiders don't have a will or intellect. But then it is perhaps worth noting that this example (here on p.6, and repeated again on p.14) of the spider building a web in order to catch a fly plays into the hands of those who believe that purposive explanation requires, if not a person, at least a thing that can *represent to itself* certain ends (the point is made briefly in the criticalreview) – which invites plenty that the author may wish to resist. The better example, perhaps, is the one involving plants.

More philosophically, now: it is arguably true that, while all intentional action is teleological, not all teleological explanation is of intentional action. This is squarely on the author's side. But the traditional conception of teleology so deeply rooted in our minds is still a thoroughly temporal notion. It is for this reason that Spinoza was right to resist teleology as getting nature turned upside down – as if the catching-and-eating could have caused the pursuing. What is generally believed to be needed, in giving a theory of teleological explanation, is a story showing how an explanation can refer in a genuinely explanatory way to some state of affairs later than the event to be explained. Sommerhoff and Nagel got started on such a thing, and Charles Taylor extended it. The job can be done. In the present context, however, we are confronted with obstacles to this deeply-rooted conception of teleological explanation, since temporality and events (a package, to be sure) are no-where in the picture. I haven't a concrete fix to offer here, and apologize for that: I can only encourage the author to extract what core element of *any* suitable teleological explanation is operative in the present context, and argue that it suffices for the job at hand. Otherwise, readers will carry with them through CU a serious uneasiness about whether they really grasp the application of teleological explanation being deployed here.

p.7

-- The paragraph ending page 6 and continuing onto page 7 is nicely and forcefully

done. And it sets up the middle paragraph of page 7 splendidly. Theists, nevertheless, can concede the force of the early part of this paragraph without conceding its conclusion that intentional action drops out of the picture, and the author might wish to attend to this more fully. That some things happen because they should is consistent with the impossibility of their happening without an intentional act or volition. Traditional theism at this stage remains a consistent picture. So the force of the latter part of the paragraph at this stage emerges rather like a recommendation. Indeed it takes on the *feel* of a recommendation when the author puts the point in the form of a question: "Why then suppose that such end-invoking explanation must be mediated by an intention?" To make the case stronger, I would urge the author to avoid the rhetorical maneuver of posing a request to the Theist (who can, after all, say that happenings are events needing efficient- causal sources, which role an intentional act naturally fills), and strive to give an argument. It should be noted that the earlier "no-sufficient-reasons-explanations" objection cannot serve the purpose fully here, since many theists are prepared to accept teleological truths about the divine alongside brute contingency. (Some, but markedly fewer, theists are prepared to accept teleological truths about the divine alongside internal necessitation in God, consistently with (i) retaining a notion of divine responsibility as an agent-theoretic- causal concept and with (ii) contingency in the created order.) The dialectic looks to play out to a fairly rock-bottom one: the argument against Theism might at best be a meta-philosophical one about parsimony (intentions aren't needed, so razor them off), and the defense of Theism might at best be a silent appeal to consistency or to brute facts. My point of the present comment is that this middle paragraph of page 7 could well be a pivotal one for some readers, which recommends strengthening it as much as possible.

p.8

-- I urge the author to resist over-stating the case in claiming (top page) that Theism is inconsistent with the contingency of finite particulars. The claim is arguably false, and in any case difficult to establish: details are given in the critical review above. I urge this because we are here in the vicinity of one of the strongest parts of the entire book: it will send theists scrambling, and it will direct readers who needn't be disabused of Theism heading more confidently still in the author's own direction in the sequel. There is just no need to over-state the case.

-- I suspect that Spinoza's argument against the consistency of uniqueness and contingency is considerably different from the author's argument. The linchpin for Spinoza early in the *Ethics* is a crucial no-shared-attribute thesis (E1p5), the argument for which continues to draw the attack of scholars to guarantee

uniqueness alongside necessity; the author appeals to a shared-attribute thesis to deny uniqueness alongside contingency. And I should think it somewhat hasty to say, without further argument, that Spinoza "drew the wrong conclusion." There are options: say there is one unique necessary individual, or say that there is one unique necessary universal. Spinoza was happy enough to go the route of denying teleology altogether and embrace sufficient reasons explanation, along with the collapse of modal distinctions that the latter seems to bring with it.

p.9

-- The uppermost paragraph, begun on the previous page, makes a point that Thomas saw in his own way in criticizing a passage of Avicenna's: "However many universal forms you pile up, you can never make them add up to anything singular" (De Veritate 2.5). But it is consistent with this that some universal be such that only one thing could have it. That may be inconsistent with certain theories of universals: one might have a theory denying that every open sentences expresses a property (universal), in which case they could deny that 'greatest' (we have Theism still on our minds) expresses a property. And as suggested in the critical review above, standard arguments against the Identity of Indiscernibles will likely fail if our ontology of individuals is a Humean bundle-theoretic one. Unless that theory is shown to be unworkable, it remains consistent to say that there are contingent individuals and that no two of them could share every property. I shouldn't recommend too strongly a long pause to handle this particular difficulty: acknowledging it would I think suffice.

-- That Being is a universal has been mentioned – presumed, in a way – before now, if not pursued. It gets a bit more press in the middle of the final large paragraph of this page, and some (analytic) philosophers will by now begin resisting the idea. I think that CU will prosper best if it gets serious attention from analytic metaphysicians among others; and it is most likely to be paid serious attention by that crowd if it address the worry that Being isn't a (first-order, anyway) universal.

To be is to exist. Being is existence. Existence isn't a property, according to the old objection against ontological arguments of Anselmian lineage. We needn't rehearse that objection, since it is so familiar: but it is precisely its familiarity that renders failure to address a flagrant oversight in the minds of many philosophers. They will be thinking what (say) Frege and Quine taught them: there's a good reason why the quantificational structure of the predicate calculus is so powerful and successful; the existential quantifier does full service in capturing the notion of existence, and it tells us (roughly) that a concept has instances; existence is at best a second-order concept; so Being isn't something that individuals exemplify. That

is what many analytic metaphysicians will be thinking, and given the main theme of CU, its prospects look brightest if this sentiment is addressed rather than ignored.

(Here is one way to resist the Fregean/Quinean sentiment. "Well, look closely at your first-order predicate-calculus renderings of claims such as 'Something exists' and 'Jones exists' and you'll see that there are no first-order concepts deployed at all. So the concept of being or existence isn't the concept of *some concept having instances* at all. But clearly it isn't nothing, either. So the intelligible proposal of CU – that Being is a universal, a *summum genus* – remains on board, and you must object elsewhere.")

Section 3: The Fundamental and Supreme Good (10-16)

p.10

-- The author is encouraged to be clearer about which of two distinctions is operative in this first paragraph. One distinction is between intrinsic vs. extrinsic goods; a separate distinction is between instrumental vs. final goods. The first, but not the second, concerns the location or source of the good: intrinsic goods are non-relational and good in themselves, while extrinsic goods have the value they do from some other source. The second distinction, but not the first, concerns the way in which we reckon something to be of value: instrumental goods are valued for the sake of something else, while final goods are valued for their own sake. It is not obvious to me that the author hasn't conflated intrinsic and final good.

p.11

-- This discussion of the nature of the Good is overall plausible, perhaps convincing. I do very strongly urge the author to consider broadly Moorean objections (as laid out above in the critical review above). The objections are hardly so good as to be insurmountable, and as noted earlier, this kind of pause will help to render CU more thorough, which is a virtue. Metaphysicians are rather fond of the old Greek proposal that theories must run the gamut of objections.

p.12

-- First full paragraph: Being "…is an intrinsically unique explanatory source of contingent being." Talk of an "explanatory source" of the existence of contingent beings sounds for all the world like talk of an efficient cause of their existence. One can I think safely predict that many readers, upon encountering this, will first (i) doubt that a necessary universal can cause anything to exist, and then (ii) recall that we're supposed to be thinking more on the order of teleological explanation than efficient causal explanation – leaving them confused about what the author

intends to communicate by 'source'. That some universal is of a kind that is contingently exemplified by individuals hardly recommends that this universal is their *source* on any standard usage of that term. If that end or good for the sake of which contingent beings exist is (or essentially involves) a universal U, in what sense is it the case that U is the source of contingent beings?

p.13-16

-- This is nicely done, overall: it has the feel of care and argument to it, and I congratulate the author on it. I repeat here three items, to begin: (i) Readers will almost certainly at this stage construe "comprehensive understanding" (p.13 and beyond) as something like a mental state, type if not token; that needs to be headed off at some point. (ii) The taxonomy of 'contingent being' becomes prevalent, and the unease arising earlier (see the p.4 comment above) may be predicted to swell larger here. (iii) The Moorean issue of goods as organic vs summative wholes arises again on pp. 14-16, so dealing with it earlier is, I think, all the more important.

-- Being itself cannot be the Good, since the Good for the sake of which contingent beings exist can't be something that would exist quite apart from whether there are contingent beings. The same point applies to any "necessary aspect of Being Itself – such as its form …" (p. 14). We don't think of the matter of a thing as necessary to it (some matter is, perhaps [angels and God aside]); but presumably Being couldn't exist without its material Sub-Category Particular Being. Readers haven't yet gotten far enough for this question to arise in their minds: I mention the point here in the context of the first mention in CU of "necessary aspects of Being".

-- "…[T]he exemplification of Being, which is to say, the very existence of contingent being…" (p.13) implies something strictly speaking false, and so is itself strictly speaking false. Being is exemplified necessarily by the Sub-Categories; so the implied equivalence is too strong.

-- Reverting to an earlier comment above (to p.6, about comprehending or understanding) and to an item arising twice in the critical review: I very strongly encourage the author to be clearer about the role of mind in that end which is the Good, i.e. the understanding of the form of Being. On page 13 we read that "understanding is the presence of the object of understanding to a mind adequate to grasp what it is to be that object." This entails that understanding is a state of a mind, which entails that the Good, the end for the sake of which contingent beings exist, is a distinctive mental virtue. But unless all contingent beings are minds, it would seem possible that Being be instantiated in contingent beings without such a

good as this. The silence of CU about this issue is perhaps shy of deafening, but it does (I here report) stand out as a notable lacuna – the most notable.

I personally like the following gloss on CU: it is a sustained argument for Idealism. Why not? That's a courageous proposal – as courageous as the Categorical project in its own right. The weakness here being noted (*viz.*, that the reader is left rather in the dark about how understanding itself plays out in the grand scheme of things) needn't be remedied in that direction, but could be. But some remediation is needed, I think, on this score. As it stands, I think readers will not come away with a clear grasp of just what understanding the form of Being amounts to: it would be a real shame for that to happen.

-- The transition (p.15-16) to the next section is welcome and very helpful. Well done.

Section 4: Being as the Summum Genus (17-22)

p.17

-- In the Aristotelian tradition, at least, those fussing with the Categories were doing rather less a priori theorizing than the author implies in the second paragraph of this Section/Chapter. Or anyway, as my memory has it, the Aristotelians were willing to say that the order of knowing began with observation of the empirical world, and generalized upward to the order of being. (I'm hard-pressed to add details here. It's just a sense I have, thinking of Aristotle and also Aquinas. When Aquinas said that the category of quantity comes from matter, and quality from form, he had both a priori principles and empirical observation as input. Certainly the old notion that Categories are a kind of *functional* concept recommends that the second of these played an important role.)

p.18

-- "We take Aristotle's theory of Categories to be a theory of the fundamental kinds of Being." That's misleading, isn't it? It has the following sense: "We read Aristotle's effort in The Categories to be an effort at laying out the fundamental kinds of Being." But no-one can read Aristotle as claiming that. One can of course take him to have been accomplishing this unwittingly, unknowingly. But the "predicaments", the Categories themselves, are first and foremost ways in which things are said to be; there is no univocal way of being. No Being. Being is said in many ways. As such, the system of Categories is designed to classify how the properties of a thing belong to it. Of Plato we can say that he is a man, that he is white, that he is over five feet tall, that he is in Greece, and so on. And so we get Categories. I can't help but think that the author didn't quite say what was

intended, here. Better: "We shall construe the Aristotelian effort of developing a theory of Categories as an effort to give a theory of the fundamental kinds of Being." Something like that, maybe.

p.17-22
-- As noted in the critical review, this Section/Chapter is one of the most helpful of the book, in orienting the reader and setting a context for the Categorical project that follows. It is perfectly balanced in detail and generalization, and accomplishes the important task of highlighting prima facie difficulties to be solved. I'd honestly like to congratulate the author both for including this Section/Chapter, and for working to balance its content so carefully.

Section 5: The Structure of Being (23-36)

p.23
-- Some readers will be fully on board; others won't be on board but will get the picture and play the game; and then others will be characteristically cautious enough to demand arguments at nearly every turn. "Each thing that is, is a being. But then all things that are have Being in common." There will, as anticipated earlier, be naysayers. Shared truths (so to speak) don't entail shared properties, if the logical form of the kindred truths don't permit it. To say that *x* is a being to say no more than that x exists; to say that *x* exists is to attribute no property of existing to *x* whatever; so the fact that *x* and *y* are beings entails nothing about a property in common. Universals express ways things could be; Being isn't a way a thing is, like *living and breathing* only quieter. So will the naysayer have it.

-- I do urge the author to include a tip of hat in the direction of recognizing that nominalists can accommodate shared-property-talk without commitment to universals. The philosophical point itself is made in the critical review, but my emphasis here is simply in the direction of noting, if not meeting, the competitors. One can't argue for everything, but one can acknowledge the main players. Analytic types will stay on board longer, for one thing – and CU is too important to risk loosing them on the charge of ignoring alternatives.

-- Third longer paragraph of the Section/Chapter, first sentence: There are distinctions, and there are distinctions. The idea that some distinctions are more fundamental or basic than others plays a crucial role in CU – particularly in this early stretch of motivating the early parts of the Categorical theory. In cases where two distinctions seem *prima facie* equally basic, but cut orthogonally to one another, what is one to do? Some readers will wonder if there is an operative,

principled way of approaching such cases when their intuitions don't carry the day. (As one decends downward, the chore becomes more and more difficult, I think.) In particular, those readers who grant that the universal/particular distinction is very fundamental may wonder how to keep at bay their intuition that the modal distinction necessary/contingent is equally fundamental. Or that unity/plurality is equally fundamental. We aren't yet to the Sub-Categories of Being, so I'm anticipating a bit: but some readers will already be alert to the force of "at the heart of reality there lies this distinction…between particulars on the one hand and universals on the other." In the critical review, this issue was broached as a misgiving about the Axiom of Dichotomy. Here, I encourage the author to consider the general question about an operative, principled way of arguing that one distinction is more fundamental than another. (This ties in to the Axiom of Dichotomy, of course, and in particular to its ability to serve as a guide in divining subcategories themselves. I'll return to this.)

-- Is space a particular? Time? The number seven? The proposition that two plus two is four? Not all of them make equally good claims on being a particular, but some readers will insist that they all make equally bad claims on being a universal. "…located in space and time" is arguably false for each of them. (Cartesian egos are a mixed case, being temporal but not spatial.)

p.23-24

-- The introduction and appropriation of self-predication here is I think quite well done. It is a pity that the test it recommends, for being a form, becomes difficult to apply as we descend to the Sub-Categories (of which more presently). And there are debits accruing to it to be noted shortly.

p.25

-- Returning a last time to the point above about fundamental distinctions: it will strike some readers that one cannot lay out the present discussion (on this page and the next, especially) without appealing to the distinction between necessity and contingency. That such a distinction should figure so centrally and so early on recommends it as very fundamental indeed – and, perhaps, recommends that it is primitive. If the modal notions are primitive, one cannot of course aim to place them in the midst of any hierarchy, which runs against the grain of the author's own Categorical scheme. So one can't expect the author to take that line, but it does raise the general issue of primitives generally and their place (if any) in Categorical theory, which the author might consider addressing.

p. 26

-- On the traditional view, matter and form are – to the extent the tradition lets us

abstract and speak of them as possessing some reality of their own -- radically different in kind, ontologically and functionally. The historically-minded contemporary reader can be excused for wondering, at the introduction here of *the matter of a universal*, how fitting it is to view some universals as by their nature material and others as by their nature formal. The Hegelian dialectic has gone the way of an Aristotelian metaphysics applied now to Platonic universals -- without independent motivation and without a clear story about how exactly this can be done. It is a beautiful proposal in its own way, but troublesome for at least the reason just noted. There is another reason, to be addressed presently. But on the point at hand, it would seem at first blush that there is little to say. To say much at all is presumably to say of any one universal what there is about its nature that fits it to play some functional role; this will presumably appeal to the two-fold Sub-Categorical character below it – which (i) presupposes that the picture is already in place, and which (ii) fails to have any proper starting-point, bottomless as the hierarchy is. I haven't a concrete proposal to offer by way of addressing this. But insofar as a good bit of the weight of CU is borne by this broadly Aristotelian division and by the Axiom of Dichotomy itself, I very strongly believe that the author would improve the book by at least speaking to this very basic worry, which I think will loom large for many readers.

I should say that the author does seem right in claiming, on the next page (p.26), that granting or invoking the self-predication criterion for forms of universals requires *some* individuating maneuver of this sort. To those who see needs but dislike details, they might be reminded that full-blown theories are ways of measuring the costs: there is always a bubble under the flypaper somewhere.

p.28

-- Here is as good a place as any to echo (but now stress, without expanding) a point made in the critical review, which is a second reason for concern with the dichotomous form/matter schema of the Categorical hierarchy. Speaking of the material aspect of Necessary Universal Being, the author grants – as one must in any form/matter scenario -- that Material (the category) "is a component of a whole…" (30). The idea that universals, as an ontological kind, are composite entities will strike many readers as deserving special attention. The author gives it little attention as an issue in its own right; the operative senses of 'part', 'composite', and 'divides' (all are used by the author at various places) remain unclear; the traditional form/matter scenario, fitted as it was for the so-called "composite beings" of the Aristotelians, offers little help here so far as I can see. My point only indirectly targets the Axiom of Dichotomy. My immediate point concerns the author's relative silence about composition among universals. (Shifting briefly to the mundane: bundle theorists don't need it, going the route of

compresence instead. They have no story about structural composition per se, constrained by the nature of the component universals.) I predict that composite universals – whose components are also composite, and on down – will give many readers pause.

p.31

-- I'd like here to report two bits of autobiography, suspecting that it will be representative of a certain class of readers. (A) To my eye, the move beginning on this page and continuing through the Section/Chapter comes rather from left field. I don't mean that it is not interesting: it is fascinating, even, and not implausible, which are virtues. I mean this: having traversed a fine series of applications of a general strategy in discerning the Sub-Categorical structure of universals filling out over one-quarter of the Big Circle, why drop the strategy now? The author asks: "How then are we to proceed in filling out the Sub-categories of Contingent Universal Being?" Many readers, I suspect, will be startled at the question, with the general strategy so recently and successfully applied. And many readers will, I think, be startled at the answer. The answer – of looking now to efficient and final causal analogues – has the feel of being seriously under- motivated, perhaps even ad hoc. Form and matter, as functional kinds of entities, are on board; why move to relations, away from the home-territory where Axiom 2 and Axiom 3 were getting their grip? The reader with more foresight than I may well ask at this stage: "oughtn't we save fundamental relations for trans-Categorical structuring?" It is true, of course, that there is a relation of a hylomorphic particular to its form, and to its matter: call them informing and enmattering. These intra-substantial relation and its analogue in universals is one thing; intra-substantial relations of efficient and final causation and some analogue in universals are quite another.

I urge the author to smooth this over: I believe that it will help immensely in the flow of things.

Some of the smoothing shouldn't be too difficult: in some respect it is an issue of presentation, not substance. Part of the difficulty is that the material on pp.31-33 gets in the way of seeing the main point, namely, that just as the Formal and the Material have their provenance in Aristotle's fundamental modes of explanation, there are two others – familiar ones – of the same source and same force and might well figure at the same level of structuring the Categories. When I say that it "gets in the way" I don't mean that it should be dropped. It's important (and, I might add, helpful and nicely done). I mean that something should precede it, to make the move seem more natural. Perhaps like this:

a) Give the "hints" at the top of page 33, but don't call them "hints" at all. They're on board already, after all: they're familiar. That's good enough.

b) Immediately remind the reader where these came from: they correspond to basic (Aristotelian) modes of explanation that must be given in any full characterization of a thing, if we are to understand the thing.

c) Next, do pretty much as the author does: remind the reader that those are just two of four.

d) And then emphasize right here what isn't emphasized until page 35 – namely, that we are seeking structural clues to the nature of Being that figure at the same level of generality as the Material and the Formal under Necessary Being.

e) Make the "striking claim" on the bottom of page 33 alongside a reminder that we've *already* done, for Material and Formal, what is being proposed here for all four of them.

That gets us part of the way there, I think: d) is most important to my mind. The next step, i.e.

f) Motivate the idea that we can fairly locate in the Efficient and the Final (Telic) a plausible pair to serve as matter and form of Contingent Being. …is rather more difficult, it seems to me. I confess that I don't see how to do this. Perhaps the whole case rests on the very ability to in fact show that the Efficient and Telic do indeed fill the needed roles. I wish I could see more clearly how to accomplish f)

– i.e. how motivate in a natural way turning our eyes toward these other two Categories, in advance of seeing how they fare.

p.32

-- The quantity of bronze does not individuate the *form*: matter individuates *the individual substance* of which it is the matter, not the form itself informing the matter. Matter can't individuate form, because you and I share form but have different individuating matter; our matter individuates *us*.

p. 33

-- (B) Here is the second bit of autobiography: I find the explanation of how Efficient and Telic fare, as material and formal Categories of Contingent Universal Being, obscure and unconvincing. This is the first place in reading CU where

things go noticeably obscure. Part of this owes, no doubt, to the promisory note in the final full paragraph. But the claim that "It is clear that the Category of the Teleological is the Category that stands as form to the Category of Contingent Universal Being" isn't clear. It simply isn't. Nor is it "*natural* to think of efficient causal relations as constituting teleological connections, as matter foes form" [my emphasis]. The reader deserves more help here, if it can be given.

-- In passing (it is relevant to several items on previous and subsequent pages): might the author say more clearly what the constitution relation amounts to? It figures on the matter side of things, clearly, but it is not a standard (or anyway, standard-enough) term of art to do duty without clarification at some stage. This partly owes to the fact that the term is a notorious weasle-word in the hands of less capable philosophers: they can't say what they mean, and couldn't fill in the schema *x* constitutes *y* iff _____, but it sounds good. And even those who use it are not always clear: is it a one-one relation, or one-many, for example? They don't say. I take it that for the author, it's a one-one relation; but we should like to be even clearer than that. What exactly (some readers will predictably ask themselves) is meant by claiming that the Dispositional constitutes the Normative? The claim is hard to assess without being clear about its meaning; and if it's hard to assess, it's hard to agree with it.

(The point is relevant to the comment just below, about the relation of singular causal episodes and causal laws.)

p.34-35

-- The discussion of how to divide up the Category of Efficient is very nicely done. Small note: I'm not sure that I fully understand the claim that "a law-like generality…represents a formal constraint on what singular causal transactions *can* take place" – particularly if singular causal episodes are the truth-makers for causal laws themselves, as was recommended earlier. On the latter recommendation, the laws remain modally-robust conditionals (say), which express truths about causal transactions; but the formal constraints are in the natures/powers of the causal relata themselves. So the earlier claim that "we can think of law-like generalities as shaping or determining which singular causal transactions take place" seems wrong – unless we view that laws themselves as written into forms of particulars themselves. Laws of nature would, very nearly, be forms themselves – the causally efficacious principles of lawful change. I wish the relation were made out a bit clearer, in any case. Clarifying the constitution relation would presumably help to explain the sense in which singular causal episodes constitute the laws.

Section 6: Particular Being (37-40)

-- This Section/Chapter is a good one. The general comment I have is that it goes rather quickly, and is very difficult ("obscure" is too strong) in several spots. Readers might be forced to guess about plausibility, at such junctures. I would encourage an effort to slow the discussion down, particularly on pp. 40-41.

p.37

-- If various bits of concrete reality (individual or collective contingent beings) are not in themselves comprehensible, what does this show? The author recommends that "By contrast, the comprehensible aspect of Particular Being is the form of this spatio- temporal realm…," which switches us not from some bit of the spatio-temporal world which isn't, to some bit which is, comprehensible, but from the world of particulars to some formal universal it exemplifies. That's fine. But the world of particulars also exemplifies a material universal, so the operative proposal hereabouts would recommend that the material universal for Particular – the Spatio-temporal -- is not comprehensible. But why so, exactly? I found this part of the discussion unclear.

p.38

-- Identity over time is not a special problem: it is a case of the unproblematic relation that all things bear to themselves. (There may be special problems with time itself, of course). What exactly is meant by the claim that, in the case of particulars which are merely partly present at each time they exist, in the sense of having varying parts over time, "their identity over time is best thought of sequentially, i.e. as consisting in different things at different moments of time? On its face, this is simple four-dimensionalism or perdurantism: to exist at a time is for a temporal part of it to exist at a time, just as my arm's being on the table is my elbow's being on the table. But that is not a story about "animal bodies or repairable artifacts" as opposed to (say) partless simple atoms; that is a general theory applying to all concrete particulars. I believe there is some confusion in this paragraph – a conflation of *spatial part* with *part of a temporal career*. I think some readers will find the thread of the paragraph unclear.

Insofar as the Patterned and the Random serve to divide kinds of *changes*, the Kinetic would seem to be a Category of events, happenings, occurrences. Is this correct? That is, is the Stable/Kinetic distinction the substance/event distinction? And yet, the Aggregative can define either things with spatial (but not temporal) parts which change over time, or it can define long-lasting events themselves having different temporal parts at different times. The point of the previous paragraph is thus relevant here. And this is an example of the more general comment above that some of this material goes too quickly. I urge the author to slow down hereabouts, and spell out with more clarity and precision the nature of

these Categories and the evidence deployed in arriving at them.

p.39
-- Is Structural structured in the same sense that sensible objects exemplifying it are structured? I confess here to feeling a faint sense of cheating (last paragraph). Sensible objects have qualitative and quantitative or structural aspects, thanks to (say) literalgeometrical facts about borders and regions and so on; the Structural Aspect is part of an abstract Platonic hierarchy, and any geometric taxonomy is metaphorical. Intuitively, then, what Structural expresses about its particular instances is not truly expressed of itself. As a general recommendation, I urge the author to either explain the extent of leeway being granted in applying the Axiom of Self-Predication (Axiom 3) and defend the permissibility of taking advantage of it in some places but not others, or else explain clearly why univocality of self- and other- (particular) predication is not being flouted as it looks to be.

Section 7: The Principles Behind the Articulation of the Categorical Structure of Being (41-42)

There is no harm to expressing these structuring principles as "Axioms." The propriety of doing so comes in the fact do not defend axioms per se, or argue for them, and this captures the tenor of the principles used in CU. As formalists remind us, the value of axioms is in what they can generate.

But of course they are either true or false. Misgivings about the axioms, which might arise from various quarters, are developed in the critical review and in several comments above. I'll just very briefly touch on them here outside the contexts in which they more helpfully arose, as a means of making a quite general point not yet touched upon. Traditionally, we want our axioms to be *self-evident and logically independent*. It is thus perhaps worth noting that some readers will not find the axioms self-evident, and will note that Axiom 3 looks to depends for its truth on the truth of Axiom 2. The second of these is more interesting, posing as it does the general epistemic question of whether the plausibility of some axiom is a function of the plausibility of some other(s). Strictly speaking one might reckon the letter of Axiom 3 plausible while denying Axiom 2, if one ignored its spirit and believed on independent grounds that the form of a universal is the universal itself, as Plato arguably did (cf. ß3 of the critical review): on this scenario, self-application seems innocuous. Those unhappy with the notion that universals are in any sense composite may grant the letter of Axiom 3 (not its spirit) and deny Axiom 2. But resisting moves of this sort and respecting the spirit of Axiom 3 which it inherits from Axiom 2, we have argued (ß4 of the critical review, and echoed somewhat differently in a comments to pp. 25-25 and p.35

above) that (i) Axiom 3 proves difficult to apply as a practical guide in the Categorical construction of lower Sub-Categories, and that (ii) Axiom 3 cannot survive either the univocality constraint for predication (on universals and particulars) or the deep metaphysical intuition that no single entity can be of such a nature as to play the role of form for ontological items so disparate as another universal and a bit of material stuff. If judged implausible for these reasons, the debits of Axiom 3 construed in its intended spirit immediately infect the plausibility of Axiom 2. Independently of this, Axiom 2 will (as mentioned in the critical review and comments) seem implausible to those who dislike the idea of composite universals, or who anyway doubt that every necessary universal is ontologically dependent upon other universals, or who doubt that Categories under Universal Being can be structured from advice learnt from an Aristotelian metaphysic of hylomorphic particulars, or who insist that the material aspect of any thing must be contingent. But pursuing our general point about how the axioms are related, whatever plausibility Axiom 2 can earn is also beholden to the success of resisting doubts about Axiom 1. Set aside the concern that Being is existence and existence is a second-order concept. This first axiom is plausible only if we can indeed reckon Being as admitting of a single, most basic division into Sub-Categories, which there are at least prima facie reasons four doubting (ß4 and comments on p.22 above): tugging at our sleeves are also necessity and contingency, unity and plurality, and so on. Running the other direction, Axiom 1 looks plausible only if (I shan't say if) we can solve the chief problem of differentia, which solution depends wholly upon Axiom 2. The solution is a very clever one, but not without difficulties: that only half of the Categories have a definition is counterintuitive; the uneasy sense one might feel about having no infimae species from which to begin the material-carving of Sub-Categories (via differentia) is only heightened by the related worry that explanations must begin somewhere but cannot if we must explain from below.

None of these are overwhelming reasons for judging Axiom 1, Axiom 2, and Axiom 3 false. Their collective force I leave for the author to judge. But "collective" is in a way the operative point – not so much about the objections themselves, but about the axioms. They really do emerge as very much a *package*. If they are not individually self-evident and are not exactly epistemically independent, any resulting hesitancy in applying the nomenclature of "axiom" is outweighed by their collective virtue – of representing a big picture, a story, an arguably richer and more powerful account than Categorical theorists have managed prior to CU. One can only reckon it a success by standards suitable for assessing Big Projects.

p.41-42

-- Prefatory to Axiom 4: The author might consider offering any general reasons available for thinking (for motivating the suspicion) that the four Aristotelian relations divide, as they do, into two which structure vertically, and two which structure horizontally. (Let 'informing' and 'constituting' name the relations already deployed. Intuitively, these don't take us "outside" a thing, while efficient and teleological relations in some clear sense do. That is at least a start.)

-- Axiom 4 should be appealing to the reader at this stage. Having urged that previous Categorical accounts leave the horizontal story untold, it would perhaps be helpful to give some motivation for thinking that such a story needs telling. The author says that "in diagramming our Categorical division of Being in the way we do, we imply that there are significant relations among the Categories which do not stand to each other as sub-Categories or super-Categories…," which comes off rather too much like a suggestion that looking for horizontal relations is motivated by style of representation (the diagramming).That's not the sort of motivation one should like. I'm not a historian enough to substantiate this, but my memory has it that none of the medieval Category commentators explicitly address this – aside from the obvious cases (the accidental categories *inhere in* the substantial, the non-substantial categories are *analogical on* the substantial, and so on). Explanatory completeness is presumably one route to pursue – as of course Aristotle himself saw.

Section 8: "Causation" Among Necessary Universals (43-49)

p.43
-- Readers familiar with the minor Thomistic distinction between '*x* is contingent' and '*x* is dependent' (permitting a necessary thing to be nevertheless a dependent thing) will have in mind already the idea that efficient causation among the universals might be *a* sort of necessitating, if not logical (as a consequent is necessary for an antecedent in a true conditional) then at least of a kind some theists believe holds between God and necessary Platonic-Augustinian ideas in the mind of God. This is precisely what the author deploys later on (p.45 bottom), but as a bit of autobiography, I report stopping to resist the narrow construal of necessity hereabouts.

p.44
-- I am very taken by the author's overall effort to sketch an efficient-causal analogue as a horizontal structuring relation: I find it a clever and compelling idea. It's a strength of the book, in my opinion, and is to my mind the strongest part of this Section/Chapter. I want it to work! Departing here from my desire in these

comments to avoid repeating critical points of the review: might I urge the author to consider, and address, the long footnote 18 appearing in ß5 of the critical review? The material on this page 45 is sketchy enough to invite criticism, and I really do think it would be a shame to leave it as it is: this material is too fun and too rich to deserve criticism that could be avoided.

There is a sense in which the author needn't *fully succeed* in doing this. The project of this Section/Chapter doesn't fail if the author cannot show what is asserted at the top of page 45 (that the relation of causation among particulars isn't sufficiency or necessity [or some Mackie-style INUS combination of them]). But the assertion is *there*, and it oughtn't be too quickly defended – as I believe it now is. Repeating an earlier point: CU will most prosper in the hands of a certain significant class of metaphysicians if it pauses to do things like this.

p.45

-- The sense in which species is definable in terms of genus and thereby dependent upon it isn't the sense in which genus is definable in terms of species and thereby dependent upon it. Or: the sense of dependence in the first case isn't the sense of dependence in the second, and so there is no univocal sense of dependence in which species and genus are interdependent. Disjunctive definitions aren't definitions that exhibit any genuine dependence: the fact that something is a substance (genus) if and only if it is material (body) or immaterial (mind) does not show that substance is in any way dependent upon body or upon mind. The operative notion is a kind of ontological priority, as the author goes on to acknowledge. Just so: differentia is prior to species, and species not prior to differentia. But then surely genus is ontologically prior to species, and species not prior to genus. The asymmetry is there in both cases; the *deep* sense in which (lower down, to the final full paragraph) "differentia is…ontologically prior to the species" is surely that sense in which genus is ontologically prior to species. I urge the author to consider this misgiving.

p.48-49

-- Brilliantly done! This is the most clever – perhaps the most insightful – part of CU.

Suggestion: bring to the readers' attention the importance of remembering that there are plenty of universals besides the Categories, and that we shouldn't think that any individual falling under Category C must then necessarily fall under the super-Categories of C. (Were this so, there could not be any contingent particulars, for example.) The brilliance of locating differentia outside a vertical lineage isn't *simply* in answering the large problem of how to pull off a single-top / summum-genus tree or circle, but in showing how to generate an entire new array

of quasi-categories via this new structuring relation. We get a whole new layering of carving up Being.

Indeed, the author might give some thought to making this point briefly, in a forward- looking, promissory fashion, much earlier on in the Section/Chapter "The Structure of Being." It will hold at arm's length the complaint voiced conditionally in the critical review (ß3, and then resolved as a victory for CU in ß5) – that (say) "surely there could be contingent particulars".

p.49

-- I confess to finding the final paragraph (continuing on to the next page) unpersuasive. In particular, the case for reckoning the end or purpose a form seems unconvincing. Determinable, or able to be realized thus or so or in this way or that way, seems no less a fact about matter: the clay may be a pot or a statue or…. I would encourage the author to strive to render this part more plausible. Perhaps remind the reader that even in typical Aristotelian case, the end or purpose of the acorn is to take on the form of branches for shade and new acorns and so on – this not an issue of matter per say but shape (form). I'm sorry to have little concrete recommendation here; but I predict that some readers will find this paragraph difficult and less clear than those preceding it.

Section 9: Purpose As A Relation Among Universals (50-56)

p.51-54

-- On might argue that there are types, and then there are types: in the main full paragraph, the different forms that are conceived as having the same end might be said only loosely to have a common end-type, but strictly to have distinct end-tokens. Seeing is loose: seeing-like-a-bee is strict, the proper end of the form of a bee's eye. (It would be a poor bee that had human sight, that saw like a human.) Is someone who thinks like this making a mistake?

The arguments of the next page (55) seem to me persuasive.

p.55

-- At the outset of these comments I urged the author to look for ways of incorporating concrete details into the discussion. Here, in the final stages, this seems to me especially important. Readers – or anyway some readers, who have patiently followed the discussion through philosophical turns of a sort they find less congenial to their philosophical temperament or less than fully-convincing – will be itching for the payoffs, for the proof's pudding. In a way, they deserve it at this point, don't they? I believe it would improve CU tremendously to pause longer on these first three quadrants of the Big Circle, and seek to put more

familiar flesh on the abstract bones. The allusion to Reductive Materialism, and (later) empirical psychology, are swell examples of what readers will love to see – if only in more detail. At a minimum, *flesh these out*! And there is nothing wrong, I think, with speculative flourishes hereabouts. This is deep stuff, and no-one can complain about speculative proposals. They would enliven and enrich the book to pursue them. I'm sorry if this comes off as all sounding rather as a tall order. I don't mean that these paragraphs should balloon into pages. It really wouldn't take that.

p.56

-- I suspect that I will not be alone in wishing, alas, that this page were clearer. Much of the opacity is inherited from a lack of clarity about exactly what the author has in mind by 'understanding.' I've broached this in a better and fuller context in the critical review (final four or five or so paragraphs of ß5), and hope – perhaps above all else – that the author can render the middle main paragraph of this page clearer. Here is the payoff; so it's no time for timidity, no time for sketchiness.

-- The quotation from the *Phaedrus* is beautiful! This is a great way to end.

D. Typographical items

Throughout/*passim*:

-- Strive for consistency. Sometimes we get 'sub-category', sometimes 'sub-Categories', sometimes 'Sub-categories', sometimes 'Sub-Categories', Likewise 'sub-Kind' and 'sub-kind'.

-- 'Theism' is a proper name for a theory, and deserves to be capitalized; 'theist' is a description, and oughtn't be capitalized. (The exception will be descriptions based on personal proper names, like 'Cartesian'.)

-- Use more commas.

Particular items:

-- p.9, main full paragaph, 9 lines down: "…which seem more fundamental that any particular instance." 'That' should be 'than'.

-- p.13, full paragraph, first sentence: "Obviously, the same argument would obviously disqualify…." Drop the first 'obviously'.

-- p.13, item 3: 'Being itself' should presumably be 'Being Itself'.

-- p.15, "…the understanding of Being Itself a more comprehensive object…" needs a little word added ('is' between 'Itself' and 'a').

-- p.19, top line, ending of sentence carried from previous page: the period should be replaced by a question-mark ("What follows if Being is to be?").

-- p.20, following Hegel quotation, five lines down: "…how could the structure of Being itself be subordinate to the structure of our thoughts." Perhaps 'Being itself' should be 'Being Itself', and the period should be a question-mark.

-- p.23, full paragraph, three lines down from top-paragraph: "No, whether universal applies to itself…" reads much better thus: "No; whether…."

-- p.23, final long paragraph extending to the next page, two lines down from top-paragraph: "…everything else that lies outside its nature" might well have 'of' inserted between 'outside' and 'its'.

-- p.34, third line down from top: "…disposition is conditional power…" needs the little word 'a' added ("…disposition is a conditional power…").

-- p.35, penultimate full paragraph: "Likewise, a law-like generality is not a mere conjunction of its instances, it too represents…" doesn't read well. That second comma should be a period or a semi-colon, I should think.

-- p.37, fourth line down from top: '…totality of particular being…' should be '…totality of Particular Being…."

-- p.37, eight lines down from top: "…kinetic and stable phenomena is a certain way a surd…" needs 'in' inserted between 'is' and 'a'.

-- p.39, middle full paragraph, three lines up: "Of these two, it is the latter which is the formal Sub-category…" needs adjusting, I think, to "…it is the former which is the formal Sub-category…."

-- p.49, main large paragraph, sentence following the middle italicized item: "Take for example Universal Being, the 'material' element of the Categorical pair which

make up Being." That's not right: change 'Universal' to 'Particular'.

-- p.50, end of block-indented item b: this needs a comma at the end.

-- p.54, final italicized bit of the main big paragraph: "…is less specific than, i.e. more general than, the form…" might be better rendered "…is less specific, i.e. more general, than the form…."

Review 3: Jonathan Dancy

Introduction

Coming to Understanding is a serious essay in analytic metaphysics. The general standard of argumentation seems to me to be high, sometimes very high, and the whole is imaginative, amazingly inventive, challenging, well-focused, clearly and attractively written and engaging. The author is no respecter of academic orthodoxy, but in the majority of cases where he (as I will assume Monius to be) runs consciously against standard views it seemed to me that he has justice, if not right, on his side. *Coming to Understanding* is also extraordinarily ambitious—far more ambitious that most academic philosophy. The aim of these 60 pages is no less than to give an account of the basic structure of 'reality as a whole', to argue that reality exists for a purpose, and to identify that purpose. The purpose identified is that reality should be understood—hence the title.

The work comes effectively in two halves. In the first half there is a broad-brush argument whose conclusion I have already mentioned. In the second there is an extraordinarily detailed attempt to lay out the structure, or 'form', of reality as a whole (more on all this below, of course), a central aspect of which is described as a vindication (53) of the earlier conclusion. In this review I start by raising some questions about the first half, then consider some questions about the relation between the two halves, and then plunge into the details of the second half.

Purposive explanation and the Fundamental Good

Monius's leading question is 'why are there contingent beings?'. For some people, this would be the same as the question 'Why is there anything at all?'. For Monius, however, we need to distinguish necessary from contingent beings. This does not mean that we are distinguishing necessary from contingent particulars. Monius does not seem to be much in favour of necessary particulars such as God has sometimes been supposed to be—and numbers, too. Monius's necessary beings are all universals, and he is a realist about universals; universals, for him, make up part of reality. And the part they make up is the part for which no explanation is necessary. If an entity exists necessarily, as universals do (some of them, at least), 'the issue of why it happens to exist does not arise' (10)—and I think this means that the issue of why it exists can only be understood as a question about what its purpose is, as we will see.

Monius distinguishes necessary universals from contingent ones. The latter only exist if they are instantiated. These include the natural kinds. The necessary

ones exist whether instantiated or not. Necessary existence is a necessary universal, and it is instantiated by itself, if by nothing else. Contingent existence is another necessary universal; it is instantiated, but it need not be. So the question why a necessary universal exists can only be understood as a question about the purpose of its existence. However we do eventually find that the question why contingent existence happens to be instantiated is answered by appeal to a purpose.

I do not think it is interesting in the present context to challenge these basic metaphysical views, though they are all challengeable, and have all been challenged. More fruitful is to consider Monius' view that the only possible explanation of the existence of contingent beings is one that appeals to a purpose, and thereby to a good. The argument here is driven by considerations about explanation, with which I broadly agree. We want to explain the existence of contingent beings without rendering that existence necessary. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that 'all explanation must ultimately provide absolutely sufficient reasons for what is being explained' (5). If we do make this mistake, our attempts to explain contingent existence will destroy the very contingency we are trying to explain. What we need, therefore, is a form of explanation that 'renders an outcome intelligible without absolutely guaranteeing it' (ibid.). Teleological explanation is the only explanation that is of this type (supposedly: one could also mention statistical explanation, though that is hardly a candidate in the present context). If we could identify a purpose that is served by but does not itself require the existence of contingent things, we would have found the only possible form of explanation of contingency. Our explanation will be teleological. Teleological explanations have the advantage of explaining their *explanandum* by appeal to an *explanans* which need not be the case—a purpose that need not be realised.

Monius takes the familiar line that purposive explanations do not need to appeal to anyone's intended plan. His view (with which I agree) is that even the instances where there is an intended plan make implicit appeal to a supposed value; where there is no such value to appeal to, the explanation fails. So appeal to teleological explanation is implicit appeal to a comprehensible good. What then is the good to which we are appealing when we give a teleological explanation of the existence of contingent beings? Here things begin to hot up.

What sort of fundamental and supreme good could underwrite a general explanation of the instantiation of Contingent Being? Monius considers 'the only initially plausible candidates' for the status. These are:

1. Reality as a whole (that is, Being as a whole and all individual beings).

2. Loving affirmation of the real, that is, the adequate response of the will to reality.

3. Comprehensive understanding of the real, the adequate response of the intellect to reality.

The second option here is, as one might put it, practical, and the third theoretical. Is this a plausible list of options? It seems to me that an obvious omission is an aesthetic option. Understanding may be good, but once it is in place there seems to be something beyond it which can itself be called an adequate response, namely the aesthetic one. This can be conceived as requiring an adequate understanding of that to which we are responding aesthetically; there are nested adequacies here. Further, one could suggest that an understanding of reality as a whole which is not succeeded by an adequate appreciation is less good than one that is. This would have the consequence that understanding itself is not the supreme good that Monius wants it to be. But it is not clear to me that admitting this possibility is at all disastrous to his programme. One could retain the explanatory value of the appeal to the good of understanding, and one could also, I think, retain the complex structures that only emerge in the second half of *Coming to Understanding*. They would merely have to be set in a larger context.

There is one argument that Monius uses to rule out the second option above, which would also serve to rule out the aesthetic option, but which I take to be misconceived. This is that much of the real is not very lovable at all, being mean and bad. This is true (as is the claim that much is ugly) but irrelevant. Two difficulties suggest themselves. First, perhaps if much of reality is bad, an adequate response to it will not be entirely loving; it is better if we hate the bad part and love only the good part. If so, Monius has prejudiced our choice in his characterisation of the second option. The same prejudice would be imported if we took the supposed aesthetic option to be:

4. Total admiration of the real, an adequate aesthetic response to reality as adequately understood.

If parts of reality are ugly, our aesthetic option should rather be:

4* An adequate aesthetic response to reality as adequately understood.

This adequate response would involve admiring what is worth admiration, and taking a different but equally appropriate attitude to the rest.

There is a rather more complex and more general issue that arises in this connection. We have to be careful not to confuse two questions:

1. What is the purpose of Contingent Being (if any)?

2. What is the purpose of contingent beings (if any)?

Monius is apt to move rather too easily for my liking between talk of being and talk of beings. He writes 'Being is contingently exemplified or instantiated for the sake of this Good. Equivalently, contingent being exists for the sake of this good' (13). Also: 'According to the second, the Good is the contingent instantiation of Being itself, equivalently the existence of contingent being. ... But doesn't this entail the absurd, Panglossian view that everything in the world is just as it should be, so that a better totality of contingent beings could not exist?' (13-14). But Being and beings are, as Monius knows, quite different; the former is a universal and the latter are particulars. That there is Contingent Being might be a good when the contingent beings that happen to exist are not any sort of good. The reply to this will presumably be that reality as a whole includes not only universals but also particulars. But Monius's eventual view seems to be that the purpose of contingent existence (or of contingent existents as such) is the adequate understanding of Universal Being—the sort of Being that particular existents cannot have. (That Monius thinks of Universal Being as the form of Being does not seem to help, since it is not the form of the sort of Being that particular beings have.) So it seems that on his own account particular beings are not included in that the understanding of which is a good. This might be right in itself—perhaps understanding is necessarily aimed at universals rather than at particulars. But in that case comprehensive understanding of 'reality as a whole' cannot be the ultimate and supreme good by appeal to which the existence of contingent beings is to be explained, if reality includes particulars.

In a similar way there are two understandings of what Monius calls Being. The first of these takes Being to be everything that there is—universals and particulars. (These are all, in a sense, particulars.) In this sense, Being itself is a collection; if collections exist in addition to their members, it is an additional existent. It either is or is not a member of itself (the latter, probably); but on either count it is not a universal, since it is not something that all its members have in common. The second takes Being to be that which is common to everything that there is; in this sense, Being is a universal. It itself will be one of the things that there is; so it is a self-exemplifier.

Now Monius definitely takes the latter view. But he often says such things as 'By reality as a whole we mean Being itself and all individual beings thought of as instantiating or exemplifying Being' (13). There is danger of confusion here. If the individual beings instantiate or exemplify Being, Being is a universal, not a collection. If so, is there a difference between thinking of reality as including Being and all exemplifiers of Being, and thinking of it just as all exemplifiers of Being? There should not be, since Being is a self- exemplifier.

Note that these two ways of thinking about Being go with two distinct ways of showing that Being is non-duplicable. One way says that Being includes everything, so that necessarily there cannot be two such things. The other says that Being is a universal, and universals are necessarily non-duplicable.

Be this as it may, by p. 18 Monius takes himself to have established that if there is to be any explanation of Contingent Being, or of the existence of contingent beings, it must be a purposive explanation that appeals to some good, and the good that it appeals to is the understanding of reality as a whole. That understanding is the purpose of Contingent Being. The remainder of the work is what he at one point calls a 'vindication' of the views advanced earlier. This seems to mean that there are two independent routes to the same conclusion. I doubt that this is quite what is intended, however, since at one crucial point in the second half Monius makes use if his earlier results, which he says act as a guide (39). Perhaps then the idea is that the earlier results stand as a sort of working hypothesis, one that would be corroborated (that is, strengthened) if we were to find that we can tell a detailed metaphysical story about the form or structure of reality as a whole that has as a consequence the very view suggested earlier, namely that the purpose of Contingent Being is to come to understanding of (the form of) reality as a whole.

But what if we were to come to reject, or at least find significant problems with, the detailed story which Monius now goes on to tell? Would that itself cast doubt on the earlier result? Why should that result be supposed to be dependent on our ability to provide anything like the extraordinarily detailed and ambitious metaphysical picture that Monius goes on to offer us? I can see no reason why. The argumentation of the first part (pp. 1-18) looks as if it ought to be able to stand or fall on its own. My main criticism of that argumentation has been that there is an aesthetic option that Monius fails to consider. If that aesthetic option fails to emerge in the detailed story that we are now to be offered, is either of them any the worse for that? I cannot see why one should say so.

This is just as well, for I intend to go on to argue that there are significant difficulties with the detailed metaphysic laid out in pp. 25-60. But I don't see those difficulties as themselves capable of undermining the earlier result, if that result is immune to more direct attack.

The Structure of Being

'But now if everything has Being in common then Being must be a universal. It must therefore exist and have being' (24). That Being is instantiated needs no explanation, as Monius sees it, because it is necessarily instantiated by itself, even if not by anything else. Is this a good reason? The worry here is that we might too

easily be handing ourselves the result that there is something, and that *this* fact needs no explanation.

There are two potential routes to the result that Being exists, or is an instantiation of itself. The first is that all necessary universals exist necessarily, and Being is a necessary universal. On this account there is nothing special about Being here; we could say the same about the timeless. The second is that Being necessarily instantiates itself, not because it is a necessary universal, but because of the particular universal that it is. There are strong signs that Monius is tempted by the second route. He writes that 'it lies in the very nature of a universal that fails to hold of itself that it fails to hold of itself... It lies in the very nature of a universal that holds of itself that it does hold of itself' (25). I take this to mean that it cannot be a contingent question whether a universal does or does not hold of itself. But that claim is surely too strong. There are many universals of which it is a contingent matter whether they hold of themselves or not. Take the universal 'being presently thought about by someone or other'. This universal may on occasion hold of itself; since I am now thinking about it, it does at the moment hold of itself, but when my attention wanders it will probably cease to be thought about by anyone. Monius might say that, unlike Being, the universal 'being presently thought about by someone or other' is not a necessary universal. But this may amount to begging the question. To make a certain point, I am maintaining that it could be a contingent question whether Being is instantiated or not. That is, I am maintaining that Being could be a contingent universal. If it could not, we need to see a reason why not. It is inadequate just to say that either it is a necessary truth that there is nothing, or necessarily Being is instantiated.

The crucial question is whether, if Being does necessarily instantiate itself, it does so for a particular reason that is derived from its own nature, or whether it does so because all universals of a certain sort exist necessarily, and Being is of that sort. I suspect that Monius is intending to offer something rather like an Ontological Argument for the necessary existence of Being—one that applies to Being and not to other necessary universals—and I cannot see what it might be.

It may be, though, that Monius is thinking of Being not just as the universal 'existence', but as everything that is, as we might put it, comprehended in that universal. The complex structure that he eventually uncovers, consisting of 31 categories, is sometimes referred to as the form or structure of Being. All those categories are necessary universals, in the sense that they exist whether they are instantiated or not. To say that Being exists necessarily would not then be to say something about Being itself distinct from what one would say about the complex structure conceived as a whole. If this were the right way to look at things, that would undermine my contrast here between what is specially true of Being and what is true of all necessary universals.

So let us allow that Being necessarily exists. Monius proposes to investigate its structure. How do we know that Being has a structure? What is it for a universal to have a structure? Being, we are going to be told, has several 'aspects'. It also has a form. What is the relation between these three concepts of structure, form and aspect? The form of Being turns out to be only one of the aspects of Being. It is that aspect of Being which is grasped by the intellect when Being itself is understood (17), though we are there told that to understand the form we have also to understand its relation to any other aspect, which slightly spoils the usefulness of this definition of form. Form will turn out to be contrasted with the matter of Being—something on which I will have a lot to say below—and I think the eventual result is that form and matter are the only aspects of Being. We understand Being, then, when we know both its form and its matter, and we know the relation between these (and how they are related to Being, presumably). Is this what it is to know the structure of Being? I think that knowing the structure requires more: it requires knowing the aspects of anything which is an aspect of ... Being.[1] And this is indeed what Monius offers us.

The approach is as follows. We are examining the structure of Being. Being is a universal, and its structure will be a structure of universals; indeed, it is a necessary universal whose structure is a web of necessary universals. Our first step is to determine the aspects of Being. There are two aspects only, form and matter. Each of these aspects has its own form and matter, and so on indefinitely. Our enquiry will then consist in a series of bipartite subdivisions, ramifying indefinitely.

The obvious questions here are:

1. What is the distinction between form and matter?

2. How do we know that each universal has only two aspects? That is, what guarantees that the subdivisions will always be bipartite?

I take the first of these first. Monius writes (26):

> Let us say that the form of a thing ... is that aspect of a thing that is properly cited in response to the question: What is it to be this thing? So if we ask 'What is it to be Being?', we ask after the form of Being. The most general account of what it is to be Being is this: to be a thing

[1] The dots here represent the idea that we replace by them by any number of repetitions of 'an aspect of'; we are dealing here with an ancestral relation.

> that is a universal. So Universal Being can be thought of as the most general form of Being.

Universal Being is opposed to Particular Being here. Universal Being is the sort of Being that universals have. Particular Being is the sort of Being that particulars have. Both Universal Being and Particular Being are necessary universals, ones that exist whether they are instantiated or not. We are not here asking about the aspects of particular beings. For all we know so far, they might not exist at all. Our question 'What is it to be this thing?' is not the question what it is to be an instance or exemplification of this thing. It is a question asked about a universal, and it asks what it is to be that universal. This will be important for what follows.

In the passage quoted above Monius tells us that we cite the form of a thing when we give the most general answer to the question 'What is it to be this thing?'. But we also learn, as we go on, that the form of the thing is a universal that is true both of itself and of that of which it is the form. In the case before us, the first subdivision that Monius deals with, both Being and Universal Being are universals; to be a universal is itself a universal, since there are many universals which have 'being a universal' in common. (Particular Being is also a universal, of course.) Monius calls each necessary universal a Category, and eventually we end up with the following characterisation of the relations between a Category C1 and its aspects C2a, C2b ... :

1. C1 has only two aspects, C2a and C2b.

2. C2a is the form, C2b the matter of C1.

3. C2a and C2b are jointly exclusive and exhaustive.

4. C2a is true of itself and true of C1.

5. C2b is not true of C2a, nor of C1.

6. C2b is not true of itself.

7. C2a is the most general answer to the question 'What is it to be C1?'. It has nothing to do with the question 'What is it to be an instance of C1?'.

There is here a complex web of conditions. The third condition is never, I think, cited explicitly by Monius, but it is clearly operating nonetheless. The next three conditions concern truth in one way or another, and the last concerns subject-

matter, broadly speaking. The combination as a whole gives us quite a lot to go on with. I may as well say now, however, that the last condition seems to fade from the scene, and is not much appealed to after a while—which is just as well, since it seems not actually to apply to many of Monius's suggestions as to form, as I will be suggesting later.

Indeed, Monius does eventually offer three Axioms that play the role that I am suggesting is played by the seven conditions above. These are:

> Axiom 1: (Axiom of Unity) Being itself is the *Summum Genus,* the most inclusive of all the necessary universals that are the Categories.
>
> Axiom 2 : (Axiom of Dichotomy) Every Category or necessary universal has an immediate Sub-Category, which stands to it as its form, and another immediate Sub-Category, which stands to it as its matter.
>
> Axiom 3: (Axiom of Self-application) Self-application is the hall-mark of the formal Sub-Category of a given Category.

What is the relation between these three Axioms and my suggested seven conditions? I think that in calling the second axiom the Axiom of Dichotomy, Monius presumes that there are only two immediate Sub-Categories for each Category; my list of conditions has the merit of making this explicit, in various ways that bring out more than Monius's list does what actually happens as the structure of Being is gradually laid out in detail. The crucial difference is that my list contains two distinct ways of determining which Sub-Category is form, the first in condition 7 and the second in conditions 3-5 together. Monius's list of Axioms does not explicitly say anything analogous to my condition 7; in fact, it implicitly suggests that condition 7 is redundant—as indeed I suggest myself.

So much for form, for the moment. We should note, however, that form is here a constructed notion, mainly built on the seventh condition above. The term 'form' is clearly intended to be redolent of Aristotle's distinction between form and matter, but nothing in the way it is introduced justifies the idea that Aristotle's distinction, or any even distant cousin of it, is in place. So let us look at the introduction of the term 'matter'. Monius writes (26-7):

> Like Being, this aspect of Being—Universal Being—is universal. So both Being and Universal Being have the same most general specification of their form. What then distinguishes Being from Universal Being? What distinguishes Being is this: as well as having

> Universal Being as an aspect, it also has Particular Being as an aspect. Particular Being is an aspect of Being, and not an aspect of Universal Being. Since Universal Being is the form of Being, Particular Being can be thought of as the matter of Being, the other aspect of Being which distinguishes it from its form. Particular Being is the matter of Being in the following quite literal sense: it is what distinguishes two universals—Being and Universal Being—with the same most general form.

There is a slight mistake in the second sentence here, which is repeated in the last. It cannot be that Being and Universal Being share a form, since the form of Universal Being is itself going to turn out to be the Necessary. But this does not matter. The point is that both the relevant Category (Being, in this case) and its form (Universal Being, in this case) are exemplifications of the universal that is the form. What then distinguishes them? Monius uses the term 'matter' to refer to that feature, whatever it is, that distinguishes the Category from its form. Now the resonances of Aristotle's use of these terms are obvious, but they may be a trap. First, for all that we have yet seen there may well be more than one feature that distinguishes Being from Universal Being. If there were more than one, would they all count as matter, as material aspect? Equally, Being may turn out to have more than two 'aspects'. (The notion of an aspect is never defined, I think.) Monius regularly assumes otherwise, but I can discern no justification for this in advance other than that suggested by his preferred vocabulary of form and matter. But a choice of vocabulary can be no justification for the second condition in the list above, or for the talk of dichotomy in Monius's Second Axiom. It looks as if Monius has moved from talking of Particular Being as an aspect, in the passage quoted above, *to the other* aspect, without argument.

This is important because it looks as if it will threaten the basic structure that he is aiming to produce. If it were possible for a Category to have more than two aspects, Monius's insistence that his subdivisions be bipartite would have to be abandoned. And I can see no other justification in advance for supposing that each Category will have two and only two aspects, whatever an aspect is to be.

We can confirm our suspicions here by considering further the proposed bipartite split of Being into Universal Being and Particular Being. Here we have, supposedly, 'the two fundamental ways in which beings can be' (26). Now Monius offers us two distinct criteria for the distinction between universals and particulars. He writes: 'A being can be Universal, i.e. repeatable at a time and non-duplicable. Or a being can be Particular, i.e. duplicable and non-repeatable (at a time)' (26). But with two distinct criteria there is a danger that there will be four possibilities, not two. Universals are repeatable and non-duplicable; particulars are non-

repeatable and duplicable. Could we have something that is repeatable and duplicable, or something that is non-repeatable and non-duplicable? As a possible example of the first, I suggest thoughts; for the second, perhaps numbers. Suppose that at least one of these suggestions survives scrutiny. (We can hardly be sure in advance that they will both fail.) Then there will, apparently, be not two but three or four 'fundamental ways in which beings can be'. If so, Being will have three or four aspects, not just two, and this will create grave problems for the basic structure of Monius's metaphysic of Being.

How might we manoeuvre in response to these difficulties? There are two points to be dealt with. First, there is the question how we can ensure that each Category has only two aspects. Second is the question which of its aspects is the form. On the latter point, we might hope to continue to rely on the truth-related considerations detailed in conditions 4-6 above, even if, as I have suggested, we eventually cease to appeal to the content-related seventh condition. Effectively, this is what Monius does in his Third Axiom. In determining the aspects of a Category, then, we are looking for a distinction of which one and only one element applies both to itself and to the Category, and we will call that element the form of the Category. The other elements will serve as *matter in the sense that* any of them will serve to distinguish the Category from its form. Each of them will be an aspect of the Category but not an aspect of its form, and any of them is therefore enough to ensure the distinctness of the Category from its form. It is not required for this purpose that there be only one aspect capable of doing this.

How then can we make sure that each Category has only two aspects? The answer, I think, is to start from an example of the sort of thing we are looking for, and to generalise from that. Our metaphysics will be successful to the extent that we can find what we are looking for, but there will be no guarantee in advance that this will be possible. In this sense, I think that Monius will have to draw in his horns a little, and allow that the whole enterprise is more risky than one might wish.

It is, after all, up to us what sort of elements we will allow as the 'aspects' of a Category. If we are to end up with a structure consisting entirely of bipartite distinctions, that is, a dichotomous structure, we are in a position to set ourselves to achieve exactly that. Monius offers, as aspects of Being, Universal Being and Particular Being. The two aspects of Universal Being are the necessary and the contingent. Now the distinction between necessary and contingent is exactly the sort of distinction we are looking for. It is exclusive and exhaustive, and one element in it applies both to itself and to the relevant Category, while the other applies to neither. In constructing our metaphysic, we can take this as our model and see how we get on. The answer, I think, will be that we get on pretty well. In each case, we look first for an exclusive and exhaustive dichotomy one and only

one of whose members applies to the parent Category. This is not too hard to find, since it is guaranteed by the mere fact that the dichotomy is exclusive and exhaustive. Then we try to ensure that that member also applies to itself. This is an extra step, since it is not guaranteed by success at the first stage.

Note that in making this suggestion I have entirely abandoned any appeal to the seventh, content-related condition that the form be the most general answer to the question 'What is it to be C?'. This is really because there seem to me to be plenty of instances on Monius's eventual fully detailed map of the structure of Being that do not satisfy this condition. This means that though Monius might wish to appeal to this condition, he is not really in a position to do so. Take the Category we have just reached: the division of the Universal into the Necessary and the Contingent. I cannot see any reason for saying that Necessary Universal Being is more 'general' than Contingent Universal Being. Indeed, neither seems to me to be much good as an answer to the question 'What is it to be Universal Being?' that is, 'What is it to be the sort of Being that universals have?'. Some universals exist necessarily and others exist contingently (we are not challenging this claim). It is not clear that the former are somehow closer to what it is to be Universal Being. We will see this sort of point fairly regularly below. In the present case, the reason for lighting on Necessary Universal Being as the form of Universal Being is that Universal Being is a necessary, not a contingent universal. The crucial consideration, then, is likely to be self-specification, by which we mean being actually true of oneself.

Monius's Carta Mundi

In the previous section I raised some general considerations about the rules whereby the details of the structure of Being are to be determined. I suggested a rather pared down approach, which would have the consequence that it is far from guaranteed that it will be possible to fill out the map as one would wish. I don't know that Monius should object to this. On his own showing there always seemed to be the danger that it would not be possible to find candidates for the roles of form and matter for some Category. What is more, he only (!) fills out his map to the fifth degree, or circle. Presumably, however, there is reason to suppose that the map *should* go on indefinitely—or at least this would be so if it were driven by a genuine distinction between form and matter, as I have argued that it is not. And if there were reason from within Monius's approach to suppose that the map should be capable of indefinite ramification, we would be pardoned a degree of scepticism about whether things are really likely to be so conveniently arranged. The empirical world has proved itself extraordinarily convenient for natural science, but there seems to be no reason to expect the non-empirical world, the one mapped

in Monius's Mappa Mundi, to be as obliging.

In the present section, therefore, I raise some specific worries about the way in which the map has actually been drawn, rather than about the rules for drawing it. I do not have space to consider every aspect and my treatment will therefore have to be rather selective. In general, my worries concern the penultimate ring of the top half of the map and some aspects of the SouthEast quadrant. The difficulties I will unearth do not show that the map has been wrongly filled in at various points; they mainly amount to saying that the reasons given for this or that particular suggestion are not adequate as they stand. Monius is clearly willing to recognise that his specific suggestions may be improved. He writes 'We now begin on [the] task of setting out the Categorical sub-division of Being. Perhaps in this task mistakes will be made, but at least it is the right task. (That one's errors may be the pre-condition of a break-through—this is the best hope.)' (24). I am going to suggest that there are indeed some mistakes, and some inadequate justifications; and I will make some specific suggestions for change.

I am most worried about the subdivision of the Necessary into the Formal and the Material. Much of the ground for these worries has already been laid out in my previous section. So far as I can understand it, the notion of form was introduced as that the specification of which constitutes the most general answer to the demarcational question 'What is it to be C?'. It is not obvious that this conception of form generates any sense for the predicate 'formal'. But consider what Monius says at this point (30):

> Consider Diagram 1 and imagine it completely filled out in all directions. This would be the specification of every necessary universal aspect of Being. By displaying the necessary universals it would display the form of Being—the full characterisation of what it is to be the privileged universal that is Being.
>
> Here we have a hint as to the most general nature of Necessary Universality: Necessary Universality is formal, it indicates the form of Being. This then is the most general account of what it is to be Necessary Universal Being—to be Necessary Universal Being is to be form. So the formal aspect of Necessary Universal Being is Formal Necessary Universality.

There is, I fear, a hint of sleight of hand about this. Let us allow the premise, given in the first paragraph, that the Mappa Mundi displays the form of Being. We will have to take this in a way that is consistent with the result already established, that Universal Being is the form of Being. We would do this, I suppose, by saying that

the Mappa Mundi displays the structure of Universal Being—though it also displays the structure of Particular Being. However this might be, my real worry here concerns the move from the first to the second paragraph quoted immediately above. What sense is given to the claim that Necessary Universality is formal? It indicates the form of Being, we are told. But the first paragraph tells us that the form of Being is the *full characterisation* of what it is to be Being—not the *most general* characterisation, which was the way in which the distinction between form and matter was introduced earlier. So to say that Necessary Universality is formal is to say that it *indicates* the full characterisation of what it is to be Being. What could this mean? The only thing that I can think of is that it means that the Mappa Mundi is a map which locates all the necessary universals relative to each other. But it does this for the ones that are material (in Monius's sense) as well as for those that are formal. Indeed, the *full* characterisation of what it is to be Being must presumably include reference to the 'matter' of Being as much as to its form, since, as we were told earlier, to understand the form of something one has to understand the relation between that form and any other aspect of that thing (17). None of this, it seems to me, does anything to show that 'to be Necessary Universal Being is to be form'; indeed, some instances of Necessary Universal Being are not form at all, on Monius's showing, but matter.

One might also ask whether Formal Necessary Universal Being is itself formal. Monius says that this is 'clearly' so (30). But again I doubt that this claim is sustained by the sense given to 'formal'. Why should it not be material? My grip on the distinction between formal and material is so slight, by this stage, that I can hardly say what a good answer to this question would consist in.

I leave this matter here, admitting that the dichotomy between formal and material could be the right one to place at this point in the map, but maintaining that we need better reason to agree that it is. I want to turn my attention now to the corresponding distinction between the efficient and the telic. But before moving on I will just make a couple of quick comments on the rest of the NorthEast quadrant of the Mappa Mundi. First, does the individuative apply to itself? Second, is the demarcational capable of being self-specifying? In both cases the answer seems to me to be yes, and it ought not to be, according to the rules for the construction of the map.

Now for the efficient and the telic, which are presented respectively as matter and form of Contingent Universal Being. How good is the argument that this is the right way to go? No doubt, once the corresponding boxes in the NorthEast quadrant have been marked Material and Formal, there is enormous incentive to appeal to Aristotle's four causes and write in Telic and Efficient here. But I have two worries about this. First, each dichotomy is supposed to be exhaustive and exclusive. We had, I think, understood the material/formal dichotomy in that sort

of way, in order to fill in the account of Necessary Universal Being. But if we also appeal to the two further Aristotelian 'causes', we are in danger of abandoning a dichotomy for a tetrachotomy—that is, a two-way distinction for a four-way one. Second, in order to justify writing Efficient and Telic in as our account of Contingent Universal Being, we need to do more than mention something that Aristotle had to say. We need to appeal to the rules for the construction of the map. Is this what Monius does? He writes:

> we can expect that the aspects which ground the four basic kinds of understanding will appear in the Categorical division of Being itself. The four causal template must fit at some point in the Categorical division of Being.
>
> For these reasons, we locate the Teleological and the Efficient as the sub-Kinds or sub-Categories of Contingent Universal Being. After all, any instances of teleological or efficient relations have to be instances of the necessarily existing Category that is Contingent Universal Being. ... the category of the Teleological ... is itself a teleological Category ... . Moreover, it is natural to think of efficient causal relations as constituting teleological relations, as matter does form.

Let us first remind ourselves how the argument should officially go. First, we should find an exhaustive and exclusive dichotomy, and it is far from clear that the Telic/Efficient dichotomy is either exhaustive or exclusive. Second, officially we should select as formal that one of the two aspects which gives the most general answer to the question 'what is it to be Contingent Universal Being?'. Here I have to say that neither available answer seems very convincing to me. But I have myself advised abandoning this criterion anyway; so I let that pass. Finally, we select as form that aspect that is true both of itself and of the parent Category, and select as matter that which is not true of the parent category nor of the other aspect. On this point we should allow *pro tem.* Monius's claim that the category of the teleological is itself a teleological category. My worry here concerns not the Telic aspect but the Efficient aspect. What does it mean to talk of Efficient Contingent Universal Being?

Remember that the Efficient and the Telic, just like the Contingent and the Necessary, are supposed to be features of universals rather than of particulars. The top half of the map deals with universals, and the bottom half deals with particulars (though it does so by laying out relations between universals none the less). On that understanding, what does it mean to say that the Efficient is an aspect of Contingent Universal Being? To put the point in context, Necessary is a quality of

some Universal Being; that is to say, it is a type of Universal Being; some universals have it and others don't. The universals that don't have it have Contingent Universal Being, which is another universal. Can we say that Efficient is a character or aspect of Contingent Universal Being? Things that have contingent universal being—that is to say, universals of a certain sort—may possibly be efficient, in the sense of being involved in efficient causal relations. I am not sure about this, but whether it is so or not is nothing to the point. My real worry is that the Being that they have seems not to be able to be thought of as efficient.

One might reply to this that there is no suggestion that the material aspect of a Category should be truly predicable of that Category. Rather the opposite, indeed, as we see at the very outset. Particular Being is not truly predicable of Being; and Contingent Universal Being is not truly predicable of Universal Being (which is a necessary universal). Further, Necessary Universal Being is formal *rather than* material—though it has a material aspect. So we should not expect Contingent Universal Being to be efficient. The Efficient is an aspect of it, but not truly predicable of it.

This response seems to me to fail. There is of course efficient contingent Particular Being, and this is the sort of being that particulars have got. But there is also supposedly such a thing as Efficient Contingent Universal Being, and this is what seems hard to understand. The eventual issue is: one can see that Contingent Universal Being is an aspect of Universal Being, but one cannot so easily see that Efficient Contingent Universal Being is an aspect of Contingent Universal Being.

If this worry is real, it occurs to me that we should consider replacing the Efficient/Telic distinction by the Natural/Non-natural distinction. This would mean abandoning the rather pleasing use of Aristotle's four causes that we find in the present map; but since that pleasure was never really sufficient justification in the present context, I think we should be willing to live without it. Natural Contingent Universal Being makes good sense to me, nothing can be both natural and non-natural, and Non-natural is both true of itself and of its parent Category. It is convenient that the Normative might well remain as the form of the Non-natural. It is not so obvious that the Singular and the General could remain as matter and form of the Natural, respectively. But that might be an advantage, since there are independent reasons for being unhappy with the Singular/General division as things stand. First, it is hard to make sense of General Efficient Contingent Universal Being. The category of the general is introduced by reference to law-like generalities. This reveals that generality is a feature of laws, or perhaps of the statements of laws. It does not seem to be an aspect of Being—not even of (Natural or Efficient) Contingent Universal Being. What is more, the Category of General is not itself general, despite Monius's claim to the contrary, since it has none of the

qualities of a law or generalisation; and this means that it fails the crucial self-predication test. However, I have to admit that if the Singular/General division is to be abandoned, I do not know what should replace it.

I now turn to the lower half of the Mappa Mundi.

The first point to make here is that the division into Comprehensible and Spatio-temporal is not much like the opposing division into Necessary and Contingent. In particular, while nothing can be both necessary and contingent (and so on, supposedly, for the other divisions in the upper half of the map), things *can* be both comprehensible and spatio-temporal—at least one would very much hope so. Monius tries to finesse this point by talking of how things are if 'thought of in isolation' (39). But this seems unsuccessful to me. It is true that when one thinks of the spatio-temporal only as such, one is not thinking of it as comprehensible. But to be able to think of something in abstraction from the conditions that make it comprehensible does not show that it is 'in itself' incomprehensible or 'surd'; it only shows that it is not 'in itself' comprehensible, that is, that it does not contain all the grounds for its comprehensibility. Presumably this would be because the conditions for its comprehensibility lie in its relation to something beyond it—to a purpose, say.

A possible change here would be to repeat the contingent/necessary distinction in the lower half of the map, so that it appears twice. After all, we might wish to suppose that there are—or at least could be—two forms of Particular Being, Necessary Particular Being and Contingent Particular Being. It may be that only God, or numbers, have Necessary Particular Being, so that this Category is not very well populated. But that is nothing to the point. We would have to say that the form of Particular Being is Contingent, since Particular Being is a contingent universal. This would mean that Contingent is the matter of Universal Being, and the form of Particular Being. I see nothing wrong in this, so far as that goes. Indeed, it is surely very attractive to see 'Contingent' as the most general answer to the question what it is to be Particular Being, just as 'Necessary' was the most general answer to the question what it is to be Universal Being. I can see, however, that Monius would be naturally reluctant to entertain such a change, because it would create havoc with what comes further out. In particular, it is very important for the overall project that Comprehensible stand as the form of Particular Being. So it is vital that the SouthWest quadrant should consist in a subdivisions of the Comprehensible. This quadrant seems to me the most stable of all, 'thought of in isolation'. And at some point we want to get the Spatio-temporal in.

If we were to retain Spatio-temporal and oppose it simply to Non-spatio-temporal, we would ruin the SouthWest quadrant, since the Sensible could hardly

be the matter of Non-Spatio-temporal. We could therefore consider opposing Comprehensible to Sensible, making Sensible stand as the matter of Particular Being. This has certain attractions. First, the remainder of the SouthEast quadrant could remain as before. Second, we avoid any problems arising from the fact that that Category of Sensible is itself Comprehensible, which seems to require further distinguishing matter at that point. (It is irrelevant, even if true, that sensible things are not comprehensible.) Third, we could put the APriori/APosteriori division on the place originally occupied by the Cognizable/Sensible division, and leave Structural/Qualitative as form and matter of APosteriori. But we would face the apparent difficulty that one and the same thing can be both comprehensible and sensible—the same difficulty that arose for the original division into Comprehensible and Spatio-Temporal.

Given the difficulties that are emerging, we might reconsider our response to the original objection, which was to admit its justice and to try to rewrite the relevant part of the map. Would we not perhaps do better to try to tough it out and maintain that the Comprehensible/Spatio-temporal division is indeed exclusive? We might say, for instance, that spatio-temporal things are objects or events, which have no propositional content; the comprehensible, by contrast, must have propositional content. As we go on down from Comprehensible, the path through Cognizable to APriori/APosteriori is very attractive, and it concerns only the propositional. So far, so good. The problem comes with the sensible. It is not at all obvious that the Sensible belongs on the propositional side of the Comprehensible/Spatio-temporal division. Indeed, it seems to belong exactly on the other side. That was part of the point of my earlier suggestion that the Comprehensible be contrasted with the Sensible.

Perhaps the best course, in the light of all this, is explicitly to give up the idea that the two aspects must be mutually exclusive. It is true that this would be a further diminution in the criteria available to us as we try to develop our Mappa Mundi. But it may be that this is the only way forward.

I am supposing, then, that the SouthWest quadrant should be retained as it stands. What about the SouthEast one? Is it right to think of Stable and Kinetic as form and matter respectively of Spatio-temporal? It is true, as Monius points out, that 'the Spatio- temporal divides into the Stable and the Kinetic, … relatively persistent spatio-temporal items as opposed to more or less instantaneous changes' (39). So there is a relevant distinction between the relatively stable and the relatively fluid, as it were. But this seems to be quite the wrong sort of distinction to appear on a Categorial map. An adjacent distinction that has a more categorial flavour would be between object and event. *This* distinction would fit rather well the division that Monius brings in next. He points out that there are 'two very different ways in which spatio-temporal particulars can be related to time. They

can be all there at each time at which they exist, in the sense of having all their parts there at each time, or they can be merely partly there at each time at which they exist, in the sense of having *varying* parts over time.' (40). It is surely *very* attractive to think of objects, whether relatively fluid, like rivers, or not, like atoms, as being of the first sort, and of events as being of the second; events are commonly thought of as worms no part of which is present throughout the time occupied by the worm as a whole.

The main reason for considering replacing Stable/Kinetic by Object/Event is that the idea that the spatio-temporal realm includes both objects that are relatively stable and objects that are relatively fluid does not seem to generate any sense in which Stable is the form of the Spatio-temporal. First, of course, Stable is hardly the most general answer to the question 'What is it to be Spatio-temporal Being?', even though it might be *part* of the complete answer—but then we have abandoned the criterion of greatest generality a long time ago, for just this sort of reason. Second, and more worrying, the sort of stability (the 'relative' sort) that we find in the empirical world is nothing like that found in the necessary world of universals.

I note further that the division of the Kinetic into Random and Patterned might apply just as well to Event as to Kinetic. However that division does appear rather weakly motivated. It is true that some more or less instantaneous changes are part of a pattern and others are not, but it is hard to think that this alone should persuade one to think of the division into the patterned and the unpatterned as Categorial. By the time we have got to this stage, however, there is more at stake than just filling in the Mappa Mundi. Monius has larger ends in view—ends which will only be achieved if the construction of the map lends itself to what he goes on to say. It may be that the supposed Category of the patterned is required for those further purposes. This is what we now go on to see.

Diagonal relations

To have achieved a detailed construction of a Mappa Mundi—one that is genuinely consistent with the axioms governing such an enterprise—would already be an enormous achievement. But Monius thinks that the elements we have considered so far, that is, the detailed filling in of the boxes, would by itself offer an unsatisfying metaphysics. He has in mind here a certain criticism of Hegel. Hegel's system consists of a series of layers, a tree, or a pyramid, with the Summum Genus at the top. Each layer is constructed from the one above it by bipartite subdivision—just as Monius's Mappa Mundi was constructed. But Monius objects to Hegel's picture that 'the branches at a given horizontal level in the tree are not themselves in any interesting Categorial relation' (23). Monius sets himself to avoid that defect by building some 'interesting Categorial relations' other than

those that go straight up and down into his own account of the structure of Being. This, if it could be achieved, would be an extraordinary *tour de force*, and there is no doubt that Monius displays here very considerable imagination and ingenuity. He has an end in view, of course, which we might have forgotten for a while. The map, once fully laid out, is supposed to be a vindication of the earlier claim that Contingent Being, or the existence of contingent beings (which may not be the same thing), is to be explained teleologically; the relevant purpose is that of coming to an understanding of the form of reality as a whole. Now we have seen no hint of this in the issues I have been raising so far. It is with the diagonal relations that we return to the main theme.

Monius's very imaginative suggestion is that we look to find in the structure of Being analogues of the Aristotle's four causal relations: being the form of, being the matter of, being the efficient cause of, and being the purpose of. We have already dealt with form and matter: these lie at the basis of the map as we have constructed it so far. But how can we find relations between universals that are analogues of the causal and the purposive relation? These relations seem to relate particulars rather than universals.

In a brief but excellent discussion of the causal relation, Monius suggests that it amounts to a certain form of ontological priority, and he therefore looks for a similar relation that can hold between universals. He notes that though a species can be defined disjunctively in terms of its differentia, the differentia cannot be defined in terms of the species. In this sense, the differentia are prior to the species, and the species is ontologically dependent on its defining differentia (46). He then considers the relation between species, sub- species and differentia. He works out that the differentia of a species must be distinct both from the species and from the sub-species that it defines. Also they must be material rather than formal. We cannot look upwards in our map for the differentia, evidently, nor can we look straight downwards. We must therefore look sideways and downwards. In the primary case, it looks as if Contingent is the differentia of Particular Being. Contingent is the material aspect of the sister Category of Particular Being, namely Universal Being. Monius therefore suggests that this formula gives us our specification of just which Category is the differentia of a given Category (50).

As I say, this is all amazingly inventive, but will it work? The proof of this pudding is definitely in the eating. Certain instances of the structure Monius is suggesting look pretty plausible:

Contingent differentiates Particular Being from Universal Being.

Sensible differentiates Spatio-temporal from Comprehensible.

APosteriori differentiates Sensible from Cognizable.

Demarcational differentiates Material from Formal.

But others look less promising:

Aggregative differentiates Kinetic from Stable.

Dispositional differentiates Efficient from Telic.

Material differentiates Contingent from Necessary.

I am not going to argue the toss on all these points. Whatever one thinks about the way in which Monius handles the relation of 'being the differentia of' will not make much difference to the success of failure of *Coming to Understanding* as a whole. That issue turns much more on the other diagonal relation, the analogue of 'being the purpose of'. Here it is not so hard for Monius to construct an analogue of the relevant Aristotelian relation, one that can hold between universals rather than between particulars. He suggests very plausibly that an end is never a particular action or outcome but one of a type—a universal. What we care about is that some universal be instantiated, not about this or that particular instantiation. For instance, I want to drive to London to see my son Hugh. The particular driving that I do is not specially *the* one that I wanted to do; any of a range of drivings would have been just fine. So what I wanted was that an instantiation of 'my driving to London on Monday' should obtain. In this sense, ends are universals. Monius seems to me to be quite right about this, and indeed it is an important, though disputed, point in the theory of action. What is more, as he goes on to point out, ends are also assignable to whole kinds or universals. When we say with Aristotle that the end of Man is contemplation, we do not mean that the end of this or that particular man is contemplation (though such things can *also* be true).

So now we are supposing that there is a potential relation between universals of 'being the purpose of' —or 'being directed at', as Monius prefers to put it. This makes it at least possible that the purpose of contingent being is Understanding (or Comprehension). But to get that result from the Mappa Mundi we have to locate the relation of 'being directed at' in the terms in which the map is constructed, just as we located the relation of 'being the differentia of' earlier. To that end, Monius argues that just as the differentia of a Category must be the *material* aspect of another Category, similarly that which is directed at a Category must be the *formal* aspect of another Category. Further, the end must be less specific, more general, than that which is directed towards it. So once again we have to look downwards

and sideways to find that which is directed at a given Category, or upwards and sideways to find that at which a given Category is directed.

The details of how this is done across the map need not detain us, and indeed Monius does not even stop to give them. The crucial instance of the relation, of course, is that which passes through Comprehensibility to Universal Being, starting from Patterned. The Patterned is directed at the Stable, which is directed at the Comprehensible, which is directed at Universal Being. This result is the one that Monius is after. It is a way of saying what he has been wanting to say, which is that the purpose of Contingent Particular Being is that of coming to an understanding of Being as such (or of the form of Being).

This is all pretty amazing, but will it stand scrutiny in the harsh light of day? Obviously it depends enormously on the details of the map as we constructed it, and I have had something to say about that at various points. However, for the main thrust of *Coming to Understanding,* what really matters is how we fill in the boxes in and around the path that runs from Patterned, at the bottom, to Universal Being at the top. Many of my worries did not really concern that part of the picture, and so can be laid aside for present purposes. It seems to me most interesting, therefore, to ask directly whether, if the map remains as Monius suggests, he would indeed get the result he is after. And on this point I have two worries, one rather central and one rather specific.

The first is this. The notion of 'directed at' is dangerous, because it is ambiguous. We might allow that a certain Category, say that of Comprehensibility, is directed at, or exists for the sake of, another, say that of Universal Being, without allowing that what we are to understand, in instances of comprehension that serve the purpose of that Category, is Universal Being. It might be that what we understand is something else—or that it doesn't matter what it is that we are understanding, since what serves the purpose is that we understand, not that we understand this rather than that. To put it another way, purpose is one thing and intentional content (or 'object') is another. That the purpose of understanding should be Universal Being is one thing, but that the content (or 'object') of the understanding that serves that purpose should be Universal Being is another. Monius seems to have moved from the former to the latter, and this looks like a slide.

My second, more specific worry, concerns the original *explanandum.* We saw long ago that Monius varies the account of what it is that he is trying to explain. Sometimes it is Contingent Being; sometimes it is the existence of contingent beings. Now let us allow that the Category of the Patterned aspect of the Stable aspect of the Spatio-temporal aspect of Particular Being is indeed directed at an understanding of the form of Universal Being. Still we have not yet shown that contingent beings exist for the sake of coming to an understanding of the form of

Being. The 'directed at' relation holds between forms (or universals), and the form 'contingent being' is not the form of patterned kinetic spatio-temporal particular being, even though there are instantiations of Patterned Kinetic Spatio-temporal Particular Being that are contingent beings. So officially the result one gets from the map, once all the relations are entered into it, is not the one sought.

I think that this is right, but it seems less worrying to me. If one could show that all contingent beings are spatio-temporal particulars, it would be enough, I think, for Monius's purposes. The worry was rather that contingent being is not what, on the official account, emerges as directed at the comprehension of Universal Being.

Returning then to the first worry: If one allows that there is a slide here, what could one do to repair matters? One option is to insist that the only possible object of understanding is a universal, and hence that understanding as such is directed at universals as such, and therefore at Universal Being. I have considered this suggestion earlier; it does not seem to me to be effective in the present context. An alternative would be to move one stage back, and to say that the Patterned and Stable exists for the sake of the Comprehensible aspect of Universal Being. This at least *looks* as if it is what Monius is after at this point. There remains the awkward point, however, that to exist for the sake of the Comprehensible aspect of Universal Being is not the same as existing for the sake of understanding Universal Being.

Review 4: John Hawthorne

This work attempts to provide a speculative cosmology – a "large-scale" account of the structure and source of reality – via an account of the kinds of Being, where these kinds are to be thought of as necessary universals. In what follows, I shall first critically engage with some of the key themes that drive the speculative cosmology, and then move on to examine in some detail the account of the kinds of Being provided by the author.

Explaining Contingency

One basic challenge for speculative cosmology is to explain contingent reality. That there is contingency in the world is taken to be a datum by most metaphysicians, past and present. But is there any sense really to be made of the question 'Why are there contingent beings'? As the author is aware, there is some pressure towards dismissing this question. After all, one cannot sensibly answer the question by positing some necessary being whose existence entails the contingent beings that we find in the world. Anything that is strictly entailed by what is necessary is also necessary. Hence the shape of this kind of explanation violates the supposition that it is contingent beings whose existence is to be explained. Most notably, then, an explanation of contingent reality that treats it as a necessary upshot of a necessary God with certain essential traits is now ruled out. On the other hand, explaining some contingent beings by treating their existence as entailed by the existence of other contingent beings would explain some contingent beings in terms of others, but would not suffice to explain the totality of contingent beings.

The author's own approach, in short, is to deploy necessary beings to explain contingent beings but to use an explanatory relationship that is weaker than entailment to do the explanatory work, one that is teleological in nature. Theistic approaches to speculative theology, meanwhile, are discarded as satisfactory. One problem besetting such approaches has already been mentioned. A further problem for theism that the author highlights is that it is does not seem that there is any metaphysical guarantee that God is unique to His kind, whereas a satisfactory speculative cosmology should explain contingent existence by appeal to a thing that is unique to its kind (so that the question why this rather than that member of the kind explains contingent existence does not arise).

It is true enough that most philosophers do not question whether there are contingent beings. However, it might be worth noting that, perhaps with good reason, there is a respectable trend in contemporary modal metaphysics towards

taking seriously the view that there are no contingent beings.[1] On this view, everything that exists exists necessarily (every though how each thing is may be contingent). It seems that, for example, I can name the son that such and such a person would have had were she to have conceived at a certain time with a certain sperm. I might call that person 'Fred'. It seems that there is a truth of the form 'Fred would have been the son of such and such if such and such events had occurred'. Such truths would in turn appear to license existential quantifier introduction: There is a being that would have been the son of. . .

In short, the metaphysic that I am sketching has it that there many entities that are contingently abstract or concrete. Fred exists in this world as an abstract entity but would have been concrete if certain events had occurred. I exist in this world as a concrete entity but would have been abstract were certain events to have occurred. It is far from clear that this approach to modal metaphysics is unsatisfactory: if it is right, it forces us to rethink the shape of speculative cosmology. For now, though, let us assume with the author that there are contingent beings in the world.

Before investigating the author's own approach, I do want to highlight some ways that a theistic account of contingency might defend itself against the author's criticisms. In this connection, there are two points that I wish to emphasize.

First, it is open to the theist to maintain that while the existence of God entails the truth of the proposition that there are contingent beings, it does not entail WHICH contingent beings exist. So it is open to the theist to maintain, without absurdity, that it is a necessary truth that contingent beings exist. If Bill and Bob are the only contingent beings, one can with perfect consistency maintain that it is necessary that there are contingent beings but that it is contingent that Bill exists and contingent that Bob exists. Such a theist might be forced to concede that while there is an explanation of contingency, there is not an explanation of why God created Bill and Bob rather than, say, Ted and Alice. And it is not so clearly terrible to concede that such questions as 'Why Bill and Bob rather than someone else?' have no deep answer. I note in particular that it is not at all clear that the author's own teleological approach is equipped to account for why Bill and Bob in particular exist. (Many other possible beings will do for the purpose of the telos of understanding Being.)

Second, it is not at all clear that the author's concern about duplication is well founded. Recalling that Aquinas believed that both God and angels are each necessarily one of a kind, one should be surprised if there were some quick a priori argument available to show that if there is a God, He is duplicable. The author's

[1] See, for example, the modal metaphysics of Timothy Williamson and Edward Zalta.

argument for duplicability proceeds via the assumption that if God exists, he has certain characteristics contingently. Notably, if he realizes a capacity to intend to do something, and could have intended otherwise, then in other possible worlds the capacity is unrealized. The author notes, then, that there are two possible instances of the kind Perfect Particular, one with a capacity unrealized, one with a capacity realized. He concludes that this makes for two possible Gods.

The reasoning is fallacious. We do indeed have two possible profiles: *Perfect plus particular plus capacity realized (call that profile 1) and Perfect plus particular plus capacity realized* (call that profile 2). Let us concede that it is possible that there exists a being that has profile 1 and that it is possible that there exists a being that has profile 2. The inference from Possibly P and Possibly Q to Possibly P and Q is invalid. One cannot conclude that it is possible that there exists both a being with profile 1 and a being with profile 2. Consider further: Pick a world where there exists a being with profile 1. Call the being Fred and the world W1. Pick a world where there exists a being with profile 2. Call the being Joe and the world W2. Is there any valid argument available to prove that Joe is not identical to Fred? There is not. Leibniz Law tells us that if Joe has a property that Fred lacks, then Joe and Bill are distinct. But we have no proof of that: Joe has the property of having profile 2 in world 2. But for all that has been said, Fred has that property too.

The author's discussion takes place against the background of a picture according to which no abstract entity could have an intrinsic duplicate but each concrete particular could. For example, he writes of the universal White that "anything with just the intrinsic properties of this universal would be this universal" (9). Meanwhile, he writes that ". . . to be a universal is to be potentially found in many particulars. The nature or intrinsic character of a particular is just a conjunction of universals. That conjunction, being itself universal, is able to be instantiated in many particulars." (9). Let us consider each of these claims in turn.

What is the intrinsic character of the universal White? The universal is presumably not self-predicating: Snow is white, but the universal White isn't. The intrinsic nature is presumably given by certain second-order universals. But it is by no means clear that there is some sequence of second order universals that are both intrinsic to and unique to the universal White. Consider, by analogy, the numbers zero and one. One might think that there is no intrinsic difference between them. One might think they differ only in relational properties (zero is not the successor of anything, one is the successor of something. . .).

Turning to the second claim, it is by no means clear that it is in the nature of all particulars to be duplicable. It is easy to convince oneself of duplicability in the case of spatial and corporeal substances. In that case, diverse location in space and/or differences in which quantities of matter are had as parts can be the ground

of duplication. But in the case of eternal, non-spatial, non-corporeal beings, things are hardly so straightforward. Note in this connection that if we take a generous view of universals, allowing each intelligible predicate to express a universal, then the claim that any universal is capable of being common to many things is not true. "Being identical to the number three" expresses a universal and yet is not common to many things.

We need to carefully distinguish two roles for the notion of a universal: On the one hand, the idea is used in connection with what is common to many things. On the other hand, the idea is used in connection with the characteristics of a thing. It may be that something counts as a characteristic of a thing and yet is incapable of being common to many things. And this is exactly what Aquinas thought about angelic species – they give the form of angels and render intelligible what an angel is like (insofar as they are cognized) but are not common to many angels.

The author later (page 24) connects his ideas concerning repeatability to a general thesis about the distinction between universals and Particulars, namely that universals are repeatable across space, whereas particulars are only repeatable across time. That view about how to distinguish particulars from universals is, like the thesis about repeatability, very tendentious. It is not clear that particulars are unrepeatable across space: if time travel is possible, then it is quite easy to see how the bilocation of a particular is possible. Meanwhile, it does not appear to be true in general that universals are repeatable across space. For one thing, some universals can only be instantiated by things that do not exist in space. For another, it is arguable that some complex universals (being a square circle) cannot be instantiated at all. Finally, if one is generous enough to allow such characteristics as being identical to Clinton into one's ontology of universals then one will think some universals are only repeatable across time.

Let me turn now to the author's own, positive, speculative cosmology. The key to explaining contingent beings, the author contends, is that they exist for a purpose. This is a legitimate form of explanation. It does not, however, entail that it is a necessary truth that there are contingent beings. Here is the key analogy:

> . . . a purpose explains without necessitating what it explains. 'The spider built the web in order to catch and eat the fly' does not entail that the spider had to build the web. Nonetheless it makes the web-building intelligible" (6).

By analogy: that contingent beings exist for purpose X makes it intelligible that there are contingent beings without rendering this fact necessary. One wonders how well the analogy will stand up. Let us think about why the purpose of catching and eating the fly does not entail that insofar as the spider exists with that purpose,

it builds the web. First, it may be because the purpose could have been accomplished in other ways. Perhaps the spider has two fly catching devices and either one would have sufficed for the purpose. In the particular case of a spider, this is not very likely of course, but it is one way that the entailment might in principle be blocked. Second, it might be that in certain possible situations the spider was handicapped or incompetent – it had the purpose of catching and eating the fly, and a web would have done the trick, but for one reason or another lacked the capacity for successfully building a web. Third, it might be that there was no incompetence on the spider's part, but external forces frustrated the purpose of the spider: a human stamped on the web when it was only partially made etc. When we turn to abstract cosmology, these sources of breakdown seem to have no clear application. If contingent beings exist for the purpose of understanding being, then (a) it does not seem that something else would have accomplished that purpose just as well; and (b)it does not seem that any notion of incompetence or handicap can kick in to explain why, in worlds where contingent beings do not exist, they do not exist; and (c) it is not clear what might be a source of resistance to this purpose. It is worth pressing especially hard on the question of why, in worlds where the purpose exists but there are no contingent beings, the purpose is unrealized. When a spider has a purpose but it is unfulfilled, there is an explanation of why this is so. But it is hard to see how there might be such an explanation available in the case at hand. But then one wonders why, in the case of this particular purpose, it is only realized contingently.

What is the purpose for which contingent beings exist? A fully satisfying explanation, the author insists, must appeal to a fundamental and unimprovable Good. Such a Good, being that for the sake of which contingent beings exist, exists necessarily even though contingent beings don't. The Good cannot, then, have contingent beings as a constituent. (I note in passing the need to rule out the hypothesis that there are contingent constituents, constituents that are had but could have been lacked). The most plausible candidates involve love on the one hand, intelligence on the other. The author opts for a version of the second. Let us consider why he rejects the first, which he glosses as "Loving affirmation of the real, the adequate response of the will to reality" (13). A key principle underlying the author's rejection of this candidate is that "if a good is to be supreme then it cannot be embedded in a different good that contains it as a constitutive part." The reason given is that "For the realization of the more inclusive good will be better than, because inclusive of, the good which it embeds." (14) The reasoning here is fallacious, in that it overlooks the possibility of there being a good of infinite value. Suppose there are infinitely many apples in a (bottomless) basket. Suppose one adds three oranges. The totality of apples plus oranges includes the totality of apples as a proper subset. Yet it is not greater in number than the totality of apples:

there are not more pieces of fruit than there are apples. Similarly, if Good G is of infinite value and good G2 is of finite value, then the combination of G plus G2 will not be of greater value then G alone, even though it is a value that embeds G alone. (If G2 were of infinite value, this wouldn't make for the greater value of the fusion of G and G2 over G either, though would obviously challenge the supremacy of G in a more direct way.) Consider now the author's explanation of why loving affirmation of Being cannot be the supreme Good: "If loving affirmation of Being were a good then presumably loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being in contingent beings would also be a good. But then, loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being in contingent beings would necessarily involve loving affirmation of Being. So loving affirmation of Being is not the Good because if it were a good there would be another good – loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being by contingent beings – which embeds it" (15). It should now be clear enough how one might fairly resist this line of thought. So long as the loving affirmation of Being itself is of infinite value then it can count as unimprovable even though the loving affirmation of the exemplification of Being in contingent Beings embeds it.

The author, for his part, claims that the supreme good is the comprehensive understanding of the form of Being itself. It may seem easy to embed this in a larger good – understanding both the form of Being and the other Categories. The author thinks that this is an illusion: understanding the form of Being involves a grasp of the relation of Being to the Categories. Hence the alleged larger good does not embed an understanding of Being after all.

One wonders, though, whether the embedding problem (if it is, as the author believes, a problem for any candidate Supreme Good) might not arise elsewhere. Leaving aside whether love of Being is the supreme Good, can't we agree that love of Being is at least a Good? And if so, isn't the combination of understanding plus love a good that embeds understanding? Perhaps the author believes that all goods are already implicated in the Supreme good so that, for example, understanding of Being without love of Being is, despite appearances, impossible. Any such thesis requires, at the very least, an extended defense.

One wonders also about whether it is true that an understanding of the form of Being requires an understanding of the relation of Being to any other aspect of Being itself. I offer an analogy. Consider the simple sum '2 plus 2 = 4'. To understand this sum, one needs, obviously, to understand each constituent of the proposition. But it is not altogether clear that in order to understand this sum one has to grasp the whole of arithmetic or even to understand the whole of arithmetic involving addition. There are certainly relations between the numbers 2 and 4 on the one hand and other members of the series of natural numbers on the other. If you like, they are aspects of the numbers 2 and 4. But it does not follow that to be

intelligibly acquainted with those numbers requires that all those "aspects" be understood. Perhaps in response the author would think that I am working with too ordinary a notion of understanding: perhaps the kind of understanding that constitutes the ultimate good is an especially demanding one. Perhaps, in this demanding sense, one cannot truly understanding the concept of any particular natural number without a rather complete mastery of the structure of the natural number series and so on. (Presumably, that is the import of "comprehensive" in the official formulation of the Supreme Good.) I shall not pursue this query further here.

It is worth distinguishing two ways that contingent beings might exist for the sake of the comprehensive understanding of (the form of) Being itself. First, it may be that contingent beings are the vehicles of understanding. That is to say, it may be that it is contingent beings who get to understand Being. Secondly, it may be that contingent beings are the route to understanding. That is to say, it may be that whoever understands Being can only do so by, at least in part, contemplating contingent Beings. These two ways are logically independent of each other. For suppose there are understanding beings – say angels – that exist necessarily. Then, as far as the first consideration goes, the purpose of understanding Being does not require contingent beings. But if the second consideration is right, the purpose of understanding would still require the existence of contingent beings. For if the contemplation of contingent beings is necessary for understanding being then, even if there are necessarily existing understanders, the telos of comprehensive understanding could only be realized in a world where contingent beings exist. In short then, the author still owes us a more precise speculative cosmology: Are contingent beings crucial to understanding because only contingent beings can understand anything or because understanding, to be comprehensive, can only occur in the presence of contingent beings?

The Categories

Though sometimes construed as a work of logical grammar, Aristotle's Categories is probably best viewed as an effort to categorize the Kinds of Being. This is also the project of the author, a project that, in effect, manifests the purpose for which the author believes contingent beings exist. Unlike Aristotle, the author does not think of the fundamental universals as lacking a separate existence, that they exist only by inhering in substances. On the contrary, the author sees the direction of ontological dependence as moving in the other direction.

What is notably missing in Aristotle and laudably present in the author's work is an effort to map out the fundamental relations between the categories. In what follows, I shall be looking in some detail at the architecture that the author

constructs.

The structural centrepiece for the architecture is the universal Being itself. Why is the author so sure that there is such a universal? He presents the following argument: "if everything has Being in common then Being must be a universal" (24). It is not clear that this line of reasoning is altogether compelling. After all, it is true that everything has not being a square circle in common. Does it follow that Not Being a Square Circle is a universal? Perhaps the author is happy to license the inference and so to embrace the universal of Not Being a Square Circle as a universal that, like Being, applies to everything and which therefore, like Being, is self-specifying. But it is not clear that he would want to. One might similarly wonder whether Being Self Identical is a universal on the grounds that it is common to all things that each thing is identical to itself. I shall not press this concern further here.

Even granting that Being exists, one wonders how one is to derive the conclusion that Being exists necessarily. The key, according to the author, is to reflect upon the fact that Being is self-predicating. It is absurd, he contends, to suppose that Being is only contingently self- predicating: "It lies in the very nature of a universal that fails to hold of itself that it fails to hold of itself" (25). It follows that Being is necessarily self predicating. From this it is supposed to follow that Being necessarily exists.

This line of thought is somewhat questionable. There are two problems with it. First, a relatively small problem: it is not at all clear that if a universal fails to hold of itself that it couldn't hold of itself. Consider the universal of Being One of Fewer Than a Million Things. Suppose there are some possible worlds where less than a million things exist, others where more than a million things exist. Suppose this universal exists in all of these worlds. In some of the worlds it is self-predicating, but in other of them it fails to hold of itself. Why is this a relatively small problem? In most cases, it does seem intuitively very odd to suppose that a universal might hold of itself in one world but not in another, as if contingent surroundings could make a difference. In a few special cases, contingent surroundings do make a difference to self- predication: but for no element in the author's architecture does contingent surrounding seem to make a difference to whether that element holds of itself. And in the particular case of Being, it is patently absurd to suppose that it holds of itself in one world but that it exists in a non-self- specifying way in another world. Let us then grant the author's contention that Being is necessarily self-specifying. But here we come to the second, more significant problem: It does not follow thereby that Being necessarily exists. Here is an analogy: To say that John is necessarily identical to John is not to say that it is necessary that John exists (unless we embrace some rather controversial theses in modal logic that are only palatable to those who believe

there are no contingent beings). What follows from the claim that John is necessarily identical to John is the rather more mundane truth than in any world where John does exist, John is identical to John in that world. Consider by analogy the claim that Being is necessarily self-predicating. It does not follow that it is necessary that Being exists. What follows is the rather more mundane truth that in any world where Being exists, it is self-predicating. The rather more mundane truth, note, is enough to rule out the absurd hypothesis that Being might exist any yet fail to hold of itself.

Now, of course, if one could marshall a defense of the thesis that some being is such that it exists in every possible world (or, weaker still, that in every possible world some being or other exists), then one would be in a good position to defend the necessary existence of Being. For it is hard to see how there might be a possible world where something exists but does not instantiate Being. But what exactly is the argument going to be against the hypothesis that there could be an empty world? Without an extended defense of some controversial theses of modal logic and/or modal metaphysics, we are left without a fully satisfactory explanation of the thesis that Being necessarily exists. However, let us for now grant the premise that Being necessarily exists.

In constructing his map of Being, the author is very much guided by the Aristotelian distinction between form and matter. Each universal in the map of being has, corresponding to it, two universals that are to be thought of on the analogy of form and matter. The form and matter are not, here, to be construed as literally parts of the universal that they are the form and matter of. (Nor is it likely that in the Aristotelian usage, form and matter are literally parts of substances). For Aristotle, the form makes intelligible what the thing is. Similarly, the author thinks that "If we ask 'What is it to be Being?' we ask after the form of Being" (26).

When we are introduced to the notion of the form of a universal, then, it is in connection with a "What is it to be that thing?" question. As a minimal requirement upon an acceptable answer, we need the form of a universal to be instantiated by the universal that it is a form of. The author also institutes another requirement upon the form of a universal, namely that it be self-predicating. Thus, what he takes to be the form of Being, namely Universal Being, is both predicable of Being and of itself. This is quite in line with Aristotle's conception: Species, for example, are both self predicating and also instantiated by instances of the species.

The structure of this approach forces a general question upon us: If the form of a universal applies to both itself and the universal, then what is it that distinguishes it from the universal? We can now see the role of the matter of the universal: it will be a universal that renders intelligible the difference between the form of the original universal and the original universal. There is a natural analogy with the role of matter viz a viz substances: One might think that while a self-

predicating form gives the answer to a "what is it?" question, asked of an individual substance, it is matter that distinguishes the individual substance from the form in question: "What individuates the statuesque form common to many statues is the matter of the statue, in this case the specific quantity of bronze from which the statue was originally made" (34).

We might certainly wish to quibble with the metaphysic that the author uses as his source of analogy.

First, it is not at all clear that the question: "What is it to be that thing?", when asked of a thing, really admits of a unique answer. In different contexts "A chair" "A Victorian Chair" "A piece of furniture" "An artifact" might all count as legitimate answers to the "What is it?" question, asked of a particular chair. Similarly, one might reasonably feel there is no unique answer to the question "What is it to be Being?" asked of Being. Why is Universal Being the form of Being, as opposed to Formal Being or Necessary Being? The self-predication requirement, even if it is upheld, does not discriminate between these candidate answers. Moreover, all of the candidates latch on to an aspect of Being. We may reasonably wonder, then, whether the "What is it to be that thing?" question can be settled in a disciplined way.

Second, it is not really very plausible to think that there is a self-predicating form of particular beings. Is the species tiger really an instance of itself? Is there really a statuesque form that is self-predicating?

Third, it is not clear that the matter from which the statue is originally made really suffices to individuate that statue. After all, a statue S1 may be originally made from a certain quantity of matter m, subsequently destroyed, and then a different statue, S2, with the same shape, is made from the same quantity of m. The form of the statues are the same. So is the original quantity of matter, m. So what does individuate this statue from that statue in this case? It is not clear that there is any informative answer to the question. All we can say, perhaps, is that this statue is this statue and that that statue is a different one, and that the "thisness" of each statue admits of no further explanation. Perhaps the same problem will arise in the case of universals. Consider redness. What is the form of the universal redness? Perhaps one will answer by coming up with some self-predicating form that is common to all color properties. But will there then be something than can serve as the matter of redness, that says what is special about redness itself and that distinguishes it from its form? I see no guarantee that an informative answer, in the guise of a matter universal, will always be forthcoming.

Enough by way of general worries about the author's use of the matter/form analogy. Let us now look to see what it amounts to in the architecture. The form of Being is Universal Being. The matter of Being is Contingent Being. Let us note how these relate to each other:

(i) Being and Universal Being are self-predicating, while Particular Being is not.

(ii) Universal Being and Particular Being are subcategories of Being, in that necessarily, anything with Universal Being has Being (but not vice versa) and necessarily, anything with Particular Being has Being (but not vice versa)

(iii) The subcategories are mutually exclusive: Nothing can instantiate both Universal Being and Particular Being.

(iv) The subcategories are exhaustive in that nothing can instantiate Being and yet fail to instantiate either Universal Being and Particular Being.

When the author presents principles governing the architecture of form and matter, he requires (with the Axiom of Application) that the form be self-predicating and (with the Axiom of Dichotomy) that there be two immediate Sub-Categories, one of which is form and one of which is matter. In the light of (I) to (IV) above, however, we might naturally inquire whether
some further principles are true.

First, we might reasonably ask whether it is necessary that the matter not be self- predicating. The Axiom of Self-Application tells us not merely that the form is self-predicating but that it is the hallmark of the form that it is self-predicating. If the matter was self- predicating as well in some cases, then self-predication would not be the hallmark of form. So I presume that the author maintains that the matter of any universal is not self-predicating. It is not altogether clear, however, whether the categorial map respects this requirement. Consider the category Demarcational, which is the matter of the universal Formal. Some things are demarcational, some things not. Individual particulars, for example, do not seem like they are demarcational. Only universals can, it would seem, play the role of being demarcational. But that means that some things are demarcational, others not. We can demarcate the demarcational things from the non-demarcational things. This would appear to imply that the universal Demarcational, is, itself, demarcational, and so is self-specifying. But, as the matter of the Formal, it is not supposed to be self-specifying.

Second, we may reasonably inquire as to whether the subcategories that serve as matter and form are supposed to be both mutually exclusive and exhaustive. The early stages in the construction of the map of Being would lead one to expect an affirmative answer both on the score of exclusiveness and exhaustiveness. The form and matter of Being – Universal and Particular – are both mutually exclusive

and exhaustive. Similarly, Contingent and Necessary are mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories of Universal Being. But as the map unfolds, this feature drops out. Consider, for example the form and matter corresponding to Formal, namely Demarcational and Self-Specifying. It is not at all clear that these are mutually exclusive. Mightn't it well be that a universal is both demarcational and self-specifying and hence instantiates both the property of Being Demarcational and the property of Being Self- Specifying? Similarly, it is not at all clear that the categories Dispositional and Normative are mutually exclusive. For example, the complex universal: Being Disposed to Act Towards the Good, is both a dispositional and a normative universal.

Insofar as the categories of form and matter need not be mutually exclusive, this raises a puzzle about the explanatory role of matter. Recall that matter is brought in by way of explaining the difference between a universal and its form. The form applies to both the target universal and to itself. Thus, in the case of Being and Universal Being, the author writes that "Only different 'matter' could individuate or make distinct the universals in question." How exactly does matter render a universal distinct from its form? In the case of Universal Being and Being, we notice that Being applies to all instances of the Matter (Particular Being) but that Universal Being applies to none of the instances. Generalizing, we may well be led to expect that in general, the matter will apply to all the (possible) instances of the target universal but that it will apply to none of the (possible) instances of the target form. But if there are cases where form and matter are not mutually exclusive, then this cannot be the canonical characteristic of matter. Presumably, though, matter still satisfies the following, weaker condition: It applies to every instance of the target universal but, at most, to only some instances of the form. So long as this weaker condition is satisfied, then it remains possible for matter to play its distinguishing role.

We have seen that matter and form need not be mutually exclusive subcategories. Do they at least need to be exhaustive? That is, should we require an Axiom of Exhaustiveness, namely that every instance of the target universal be an instance of either its form or else of its matter? One is led to assume that the author is operating with this requirement. But he is never explicit about the issue.

It is natural to associate a further requirement with the idea of subcategory. If A is a subcategory of B, then it seems that we should require that every instance of A is an instance of B. The reader will naturally worry here. Consider, for example the form and matter of Sensible – Structual and Qualitative respectively. It is far from clear that the form and matter are subcategories in the required sense. It is very controversial that every instance of each alleged subcategory will be an instance of the target universal Sensible. Mightn't there be structures of certain kinds that are not sensible? Mightn't there be certain qualities that are not sensible?

Of course, the more routine examples of qualities will make reference to sensible qualities. But it may still be, for example, that certain fundamental properties of insensible particulars (subatomic particles, for example) count as qualities. Similarly, mightn't certain structures of those particles count as structural and yet be insensible? It seems, then, that the categories Structural and Quality overlap the category of Sensible, but are not, properly speaking, subcategories of it.

This worry can, I think, be adequately answered. The author does not require that each universal belonging to a subcategory apply only to instances of the target universal. That is maximally evident when one notices that Contingent is a subcategory of Universal. To construct a subcategory one needs to combine the target universal with either form or matter. Thus Singular Efficient Contingent Universal Being is a subcategory of Efficient Contingent Universal Being.

Here is a more serious concern: The form, we recall, is supposed to be self-specifying and also to apply to the target universal. It is not altogether clear that this structural requirement is respected throughout the map of being. This worry is especially pressing in the hemisphere of the map corresponding to the universal Particular Being. Consider for example the universal Kinetic Spatio-Temporal Particular Being. The universal Being Patterned certainly applies to each instance of that universal. But does it apply to the universal itself? I fail to see a good sense in which that universal is itself patterned. (Nor do I see that the form is self-specifying: In what good sense is the universal Patterned itself patterned?)

Similarly, consider the universal Stable Spatio-Temporal Particular Being. That universal is not itself a spatio-temporal being. The universal Continuing only applies, I take it, to beings that exist in time. There is a difference between existing forever and existing timelessly. Correlatively, then, I fail to see that the universal Stable Spatio-Temporal Particular Being is itself a Continuing Being. (For analogous reasons, I would also question whether Continuing is Self-Specifying).

I have voiced sundry abstract structural concerns about the construction of the categories. I wish to move on to some detailed concerns about the particular choices of form and matter in the hemisphere corresponding to Particular Being.

To begin, we need a proper sense of the range of particular beings that can, potentially, fall under the universal Particular Being. We readily call to mind familiar enduring objects – electrons, stones and statues. But there are other candidate particular beings that need to be considered. First, we should recall particulars that are the constituents of space and time: the points, lines and planes of a Euclidean space, the space-time points of Minkowski space-time and their constructs; and so on. Also, worth remembering are property instances: The redness of Rudolph's nose as opposed to redness itself. (Property instances often go by the name 'tropes'). Further, there may be concrete objects that last for only an instant – for example, particles that are so unstable that they are unable to stay

in being. There are also events, both instantanous and temporally extended. Finally, there are candidate particular beings that are not in space-time: angels and numbers. Do all of these kinds of particulars fit comfortably on to the map?

The first division of Particular Being is into Comprehensible and Spatio-Temporal. But it is not clear that this covers all cases. Suppose for example, that angels exist. They are not spatio-temporal. But does it follow that they are comprehensible? That a particular being is not spatio-temporal does not seem to automatically guarantee that it is comprehensible. After all, there is a significant tradition that says that God is mysterious, and hence is not fully comprehensible. Of course, this worry only arises if we assume that the form and matter have to be jointly exhaustive of instances of the target universal, a thesis that the author is not fully explicit about. But if there are beings that are particular but neither spatio-temporal nor comprehensible, then the map is surely incomplete, since there is no good way of relating such beings to the map.

Consider next the form and matter of Spatio-Temporal, namely, Stable and Kinetic. A variety of traits are in play here. First, we may inquire whether it is in a thing's nature to be changing or unchanging. Second, we many inquire whether it is in a thing's nature to be temporary or permanent. Temporary things may be unchanging. Permanent things may be unchanging. Thus, there is logical independence between these features. Consider now a space- time point, a thing that does not in any good sense endure. The Stable and Kinetic are glossed as "Categories subsuming relatively persistent spatio-temporal items as opposed to more or less instantaneous changes" (39). The space-time point is hardly a relatively persistent spatio-temporal item. So we seem forced to put it under the category of Kinetic. But that makes us pause at the gloss on Kinetic as involving "more or less instantanous changes". That category seems designed for application to events. It needs now to be understood in a way that it can apply to a broader range of particulars, of which I have presented one example (the space-time point), though there may be others (property instances, or tropes, for example).

Suppose we were to put the space-time point in the category of the kinetic. Let us examine Kinetic's subcategories. The form and matter are Patterned and Random respectively. These categories have no ready application, it seems, to such entities as space-time points. Once again, one is left wondering about the completeness of the map.

Let me mention in passing two additional problems concerning the subcategories Patterned and Random. Those subcategories do not seem applicable to individual kinetic entities. Rather seem rather applicable to certain groups or clusters of kinetic entities. Moreover, it is not clear what the universal Random really amounts to. As Leibniz was well aware, one can take any set of points on a graph and come up with some equation that defines a curve that passes through all

those points. In connection with the notion of efficient cause one can perhaps define a notion of randomness, viz, as applicable to events that are not the logical upshot of the past in combination with laws of nature. But as contrasted with the notion of patterned, it is not clear that the notion of randomness is in the end intelligible. In short, any set of events can be viewed as conforming to some pattern or other.

Let me turn now to the category Stable. That category is deployed, as we have noted, to mark out permanence as opposed to changeableness. The distinction between the changeable and the unchangeable is gestured towards by two subcategories of the Stable, viz continuing and aggregative. The Aggregative is construed as marking a distinction between things that vary parts over time and things that do not vary in parts over time. Let me make a few observations here.

First, there are two kinds of change that some substances can undergo, each of which being of reasonable metaphysic concern to us– change of parts and change of qualities (or 'accidents'). The aggregative/continuing distinction is a distinction between things that change parts and things that do not. But isn't the distinction between things that change qualitatively and things that do not also of equal fundamental significance? Consider the contrast between a true atom that changes from red to green and back again from moment to moment (if you like, substitute in some properties of fundamental physics for the color properties deployed in this example), and an atom doesn't change throughout its existence. Why does this distinction have no important place on the map?

Second, the author appears to conflate the distinction between spatial and temporal parts. According to standard wisdom, an object may be able to be wholly present at a particular time even if it is a thing that undergoes a change of spatial parts. A hammer may be wholly here now even if it later has a change of shaft. But what then does 'wholly here now' mean if it is consistent with a change of shaft and thus does not entail that all its past, present and future parts are present? 'Wholly present' is typically taken to be a primitive. To make things maximally vivid, imagine that the doctrine of presentism is true (the doctrine that the only things that exist are the ones that currently exist). One can reasonably say that the hammer exists even though it will be the case that the shaft in the workshop will later be part of it. It is not to be claimed, without very controversial assumptions, that only part of the hammer exists. So the hammer wholly exists in the present, even though it will undergo a change of parts in the future.

Of course, if things have temporal parts as well as spatial parts, matters are different. If ordinary things are thought of as aggregates of instantanous objects, then it would be natural to say that no ordinary object is wholly present at one particular time. But that is just to say that while a variety of temporal parts across time is incompatible with being wholly present at a particular time, a variety of

spatial parts across time is consistent with being wholly present at a time.

Let me finally turn to yet another aspect of the hemisphere of the map under Particular Being. The category of Comprehensible has as its subcategories the categories of Cognizable and Sensible. I suspect that this taxonomy relies on some controversial views in the philosophy of perception. There is a distinguished tradition, associated above all with Kant, according to which all perception is conceptually mediated. Without going into excessive detail, this view can be fairly characterized as requiring a commitment to the thesis that insofar as one perceives P, then the propositon that P has to be cognized. This means, of course, that anything that is sensible will be, a fortiori, cognizable. And if this is so, one wonders whether the category of Sensible can play its material role viz a viz Comprehensible in the Categorial map.

The author's work is extremely rich. Beyond the issues that I have discussed, the author makes a variety of illuminating connections between his own work and the efforts of Aristotle and Hegel to understand Being. More importantly, the author attempts to portray a variety of structural relationships between locations on the map using the two Aristotelian causal relations that have not been discussed – efficient and final cause. These add yet more complexity and unity to the map of being. While the work is, overall, extremely engaging, it is not flawless. The suggested architecture of the Categories, as well as its motivating connection to Speculative Cosmology, is liable to substantial criticism at various points. I hope, in what I have said above, to illuminate a number of the important places where the work might be clarified, repaired and improved in significant ways.

Review 5: Brian Leftow

The revival of metaphysics since the early '60s has brought a great many species thought extinct out from hiding: while hard-nosed naturalism rules the roost, views fairly described as Platonist, Aristotelian or Humean now feel safe in broad daylight. These are philosophy's domestic fauna. The more exotic birds are still for the most part gun-shy, and a broadly Hegelian approach to ontological categories has not resurfaced at all. Those with a yen to see one in action will welcome A.M. Monius' *Coming to Understanding.* Nothing if not bold, Monius begins from the necessary existence of a single universal, spins further necessary universals (the Categories) from it by a new sort of dialectic, then claims to trace the existence of all contingent reality to the "impersonal purpose" of the primary universal, Being. All contingent things exist for the sake of a good, Monius contends- and Monius claims to show us what that good is.

Monius is clearer than most Hegelians, and the short span of his monograph hides a wealth of surprising moves. I now discuss some of it, selectively: the topics on which I might have something worthwhile to say.

1. Universals and particulars

For Monius, "at the heart of reality… lies (the) distinction between particulars and universals" (p. 24). Monius simply assumes that there *are* universals- he does not so much as mention nominalism. Perhaps this is his right. Necessarily existing universals are his ultimate reality, his God-substitute. There is no obligation to do natural theology on behalf of one's ultimate; devotees have the right to do systematic theology instead. Monius offers two ways to explicate the universal/particular distinction. One is the standard move resting the distinction on the claim that universals can be in many places at once, but particulars cannot. Some find this claim unsatisfactory. For instance, it does not allow for

> -universals which can only be instanced by things which cannot be located in space (souls, angels, perhaps certain conscious states, sets, and arguably minutes, years and numbers),
>
> -attributes which could be instanced only by one thing in each possible universe, but which count as universals because different things could have them in different possible universes (e.g. the property of being a universe), or

-some relational universals: New York is north of Atlanta, and so is Boston. But where is their being-north-of? Such relations do not seem to have locations.

Perhaps attuned to this, Monius offers another way to distinguish particulars and universals, that

1. particulars can be duplicated while universals cannot (p. 24),

a claim Monius calls "the core" of the universal/particular distinction (p. 8). This "core" claim is puzzling given Monius' thesis that being contingent is the *differentia* of the particular (p. 49). For the *differentia* of being particular is the core of what it is to be particular. Why should something other than the core of being particular be the contribution being particular makes to the core of the particular/universal distinction? But a point more worth making is that Monius asserts (1) without argument that there can be no such thing as a necessarily unique (i.e. unduplicable) particular. Yet there *prima facie* are some.

Numbers appear to be (abstract) particulars. If they are, they are necessarily unique, unduplicable particulars. (If there could be more than one number 1, say, it would make sense to ask how many there are, and ask of the claim that 1+1=2 "which number ones are you adding?" But these questions make no sense.) So if numbers *are* particulars, they seem counter-examples to (1). I now argue that numbers at least *prima facie* are abstract particulars.

"1+1=2" appears to be a statement of identity, like "Cicero = Tully." In statements of identity, singular terms flank the "=" sign. So "1," "2" and so on appear to be singular terms. While singular terms *can* refer to universals (so e.g. "humanity," an abstract singular term), "1," "2" and the like do not obviously do so, for we do not obviously predicate being one, being two etc. of anything. "This is one horse" does not predicate being one. It predicates being one horse. "These are two horses" can be turned into a sort of predication, "these horses are two." But the sentence has an odd ring at best, and if its logical form displays what is really going on when we say "these are two horses, then "this horse is one" would equally display the true logic of "this is one horse." Far from doing so, it seems almost senseless. (One *what*?) Counting does not predicate numbers. It pairs the members of a group with the symbols for the positive integers: we pair the first horse with "1," the second with "2" and so on until we exhaust the group we're counting. So counting at most predicates of the counted group's members such properties as being first or being paired with "1." And arithmetic does not seem to predicate. "Pure" arithmetic, done in the abstract ("1+1=2"), does not even *prima facie* involve subjects of which to predicate numbers. Its statements are all

identity-statements *about* numbers. As to applied arithmetic ("these two horses and these two horses make four horses"), if it really predicates, it does so in all cases. But the sum of 1 and –2 is –1, and there can be nothing of which we predicate being –1 of any quantity or kind. (One can avoid this argument only by making invidious distinctions between types of number, claiming e.g. that "1" really expresses or refers to a number while "-1" does not. Such claims can perhaps be motivated, but that takes work.) Applied arithmetic is really in the end parasitic on the logic of counting ("if you count up these two horses and then count two more horses, you will have counted four horses").

So number-terms do not obviously predicate anything of anything. Thus numbers do not seem to be universals. *Prima facie,* then, in statements like "1+1=2," number-terms refer to unduplicable particular abstract objects.

Monius can perhaps resist this example. His belief in universals precludes many ways to do so- for instance, he cannot reject abstract objects wholesale. But he could perhaps suggest that despite appearances, numbers are really universals predicable of individuals in groups ("these horses are four"), or that number-terms are shorthand for universals predicated of the groups themselves ("this group has four members"), or that numbers are really second-order universals, i.e. that the numeral "2" in "there are two flies in my soup" really expresses a second order universal, *having two instances*, which is being predicated of the first order universal *being a fly in my soup* . On the second sort of view, groups join substances in contingent reality: the world contains pairs and trios in the same way it contains parrots and toucans.

These moves would require some change in Monius' table of categories. There is no obvious place for groups on the contingent side of it (p. 49). Further, mathematics is a body of necessary truths. So it is plausible that some sort of necessary entity lies behind its truths- and it would be hard for Monius to avoid this claim given that he already concedes that there *are* abstract necessary beings. So if numbers are universals, they are necessary universals. Monius equates being a necessary universal and being (part or all of) a category. So if he takes the "out" I've suggested, he'll need to find a place in his table of categories for numbers, or perhaps for the logical particles ("all,""="" etc.) Frege and Russell have taught us to use in giving a logical analysis of number-statements.

Perhaps, then, Monius can deal with numbers. But another sort of apparently unduplicable abstract particular will be tougher. Sets are abstract and particular. They also (it seems) cannot be duplicated. For no two sets can have all the same intrinsic attributes. A set's entire intrinsic character consists in having the membership it does- the set {A, B}, for instance, is intrinsically nothing other than a set which contains A and contains B, or (equivalently) A and B 'taken together' as a set. But one axiom of any standard set theory is the Axiom of

Extensionality, which has it that sets are *defined* by their membership, that there cannot be two sets with all and only the same members. If sets' intrinsic characters cannot be duplicated, sets cannot be duplicated. Here Monius has a tougher row to hoe. Perhaps he can argue (*very* much counter to intuition) that sets are universals, i.e. that "there is a set {A, B}" really asserts that A and B instance a universal relation, *exhausting a group* , and that set-theory is really relation theory. This can be done; one well-regarded example of it is in George Bealer's *Quality and Concept* (Oxford, 1981). Another move, slightly different, would say that there are no sets, their ontological job instead being done by some sort of universal. Another option might be to weaken the duplicability requirement a bit: perhaps something can count as "duplicable" not only if it can co-exist with something instancing all and only the same universals, but also if there *could have been instead of it* a different individual something instancing all and only the same universals. Given this loosening, perhaps Monius could claim that even if a particular individual, Alpha, is in fact the set consisting of A and B, there could have been instead a different individual, Beta, who would have been this set. Of course, this would leave the task of explaining just what distinguishes Alpha from Beta. It would have to be something extrinsic, else Monius would forfeit his claim, below, that particulars' intrinsic traits are one and all universals. I argue below that identity and distinction cannot turn on extrinsic traits. If I am correct about this, Monius cannot take the Alpha/Beta way out.

Monius also faces a challenge from unduplicable concrete particulars. Some see God as one. Anselm and Aquinas, for instance, adopt the doctrine of divine simplicity. This identifies God with His nature, deity, and so allows that God has some traits of a universal. A classical theist could agree with Monius that anything identical with a universal is unduplicable and then say: deity is unduplicable, but God = deity, so God is unduplicable. Still, divine simplicity is a tough sell these days, and Monius' "*reductio ad absurdum*" of theism (p. 8) suggests that he will happily do without God. Still, there may be other unduplicable concreta. I can show this by considering Monius' reason for making duplicability "the core" (p. 8) of the universal/particular distinction:

> The nature or intrinsic character of a particular is just a conjunction of universals. That conjunction, being itself universal, is able to be instantiated in many particulars. Such particulars with a common universal nature are… duplicates (p. 9).

Monius here claims that

2. a particular's intrinsic character consists entirely of universals.

Now on Monius' assumptions, there must be something to *make* duplicate particulars distinct from one another- an "individuator." They cannot just primitively *be* distinct from one another. For if duplicate particulars contained only universals but no individuator, then where we'd want to say that there are duplicate particulars- particulars with all and only the same universal properties- there would just be complexes of universals. There would be the same complex for each particular. But if universals can't be duplicated, neither can their complexes, which are just complex universals. So without an individuator, the "two" complexes of universals would collapse into one. What prevents the collapse must be that each particular is not *just* a complex of universals. Rather, each must contain some non-universal item to which the universals are "tied"- an individuator, enabling there to be two complexes containing just the same universals. On Monius' assumptions, then, without an individuator, there could not be two particulars which instance intrinsically all and only the same universals- and so particulars would not after all be duplicable. Thus Monius is committed to individuators for duplicate particulars. But if (2) is true and duplicate particulars have individuators, then

3. intrinsic-duplicate particulars would be made distinct from one another (individuated) by something extrinsic.

But it's not clear that extrinsic factors can ever really individuate. (3) is arguably false.

To see this, we need some sense of what it is for an item to have a property intrinsically. "Intrinsic" is a tough notion to explicate. But the best sort of account may be one Rae Langton and David Lewis develop in ''Defining 'Intrinsic'' (*Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 58 (1998), 333-45). (There are other accounts of the intrinsic in the literature; most would be equally useful for the arguments I give, I believe.) On this broad approach, very roughly, an attribute is intrinsic just in case whether an item has the attribute is settled entirely within its own skin. Equivalent rough formulations might be "the item could have the attribute even if the universe ended at its skin," or "the item's having the attribute does not imply that there is any other item which has or lacks any attribute." Given this sort of account of the intrinsic, one way to see that individuation must be intrinsically grounded appeals to a puzzle case common in the literature on personal identity.

Suppose that Joe's cerebrum is physically and psychologically fully symmetrical, i.e. contains in each mirror-image lobe full imprints of all Joe's memories and all the behavioral dispositions which together constitute Joe's psyche and personality. Now suppose that we take one lobe, destroy the rest of

Joe's body, and transplant the lobe to a body which has a cerebellum but no cerebrum, thereby constituting a fully functional human being. We can even suppose that as the operation goes on, the one lobe generates a stream of conscious experience fully continuous with Joe's stream right up to the moment of the operation. Is the resulting person Joe? He will think he is. He will have every psychological trait of Joe, and all his memories. We can even suppose that the "empty" body was cloned from Joe's. These are all powerful incentives to say that the resulting person is Joe.

Now let's alter the setup a bit. We start with two "unowned" clone bodies. We remove Joe's brain, destroy the rest of Joe's body, and transplant one symmetric cerebral lobe to each empty skull, constituting two fully functional persons, each of whom thinks he's Joe and has a stream of conscious experience which seamlessly continues Joe's. Which one *is* Joe? If who they are can be extrinsically determined, then here's the best answer: "Had just one survived the operation, he would have been Joe. But the two have equal claim to be Joe, and can't both be Joe. For if they were both Joe, then if one died shortly thereafter, Joe would be alive and dead at once. Now if each has equal claim to be Joe but both can't be, neither one is Joe, for there is nothing to favor one's claim over the other's. Had either survived alone, he'd've been Joe. But given that both survived, neither is Joe. Whether one is Joe depends on whether the other lobe survived the transplant to constitute a second candidate Joe."

This answer includes the idea that identity is determined by something *outside* the resulting persons' skins. For each is Joe *unless* the other survives. I submit that this answer is absurd. Whether one survivor is Joe can't depend on whether there is a second survivor. It just is not plausible that whether someone is Joe depends on something outside his skin. Joe could be Joe even if the universe ended at his skin. (Granted, he wouldn't live long.) And this is relevant to (3) because being Joe makes Joe distinct from all else. It's because Joe is Joe that he's not anything else. Who one is determines who and what one isn't. It's not the other way around, i.e. that because Joe is not anything else, he's Joe. Not being anything not identical with Joe wouldn't make an individual any one person rather than another. If there is no Moe, all the things not identical with Joe are also not identical with Moe. Delete Joe from reality: Joe or Moe could fill the hole left. Nothing demands that Joe, not Moe, be there.

Identity with Joe is an intrinsic property. Distinctness from all that is not Joe is an extrinsic property Joe come to have if there are other things from which to be distinct. But this extrinsic property is intrinsically determined- by the identity, not by the other things "outside." When we balk at accepting that identity can be extrinsically determined, rejecting the absurd answer above, we thereby balk at the claim that distinctness from all else can be. For distinctness from all else is just a

consequence of having a particular identity. Thus I submit that (3) is false. Duplicate particulars would have to be individuated intrinsically, for their identities individuate them. But this point is quite general. It applies as well to particulars which do not happen to have duplicates.

If identity and individuation are intrinsically grounded, and so (3) is false, then there cannot *be* intrinsically duplicate concrete particulars: (1) is also false. Every concrete particular is necessarily unique intrinsically. For what makes an item A itself is something intrinsic, something which would have to be duplicated to produce something which was in all intrinsic respects A's duplicate. But duplicate that which determines identity, and you have not a duplicate of A but A itself. Since there can't be two distinct items identical with A (this would imply that A is distinct from A), it follows that if A's identity is intrinsically determined, A can't be duplicated. This entails that (2) is also false. Every particular's intrinsic character contains something which can't be in many places at once, barring time-travel. If I first stand here at 10 a.m., then a while later time-travelling back to 10 and stand over there, I and whatever makes me unique are both here and there at 10. But time-travel can't make me change category: even if I can be in many places at once in this way, I'm not a universal. So every particular's intrinsic character contains something which is not a universal.

Duplicability can't make the difference between particulars and universals. A second way to see this doesn't require arguing that identity is intrinsically grounded. For if universals themselves instance universals, they may be duplicable in the same sense particulars are, at least if as Monius says each has an individuating element- what he calls its matter (pp. 27-8)- plus a common nature it shares with other universals. If Monius' individuator (matter)/common nature (form) approach to universals is correct, each universal will have a common nature which is duplicated and an individuating element which is not. But the same is true for particulars: there are the natures they share, and also an individuating element which renders them distinct from each other and which is not shared. Universals thus appear duplicable in the same sense particulars are. It's true that nothing with all the intrinsic properties of white could fail to be identical with this universal, for what individuates the universal is intrinsic to it. But equally, what individuates a particular is intrinsic to that particular. So equally, anything with all the intrinsic properties of this particular would be this particular. A particular is duplicable in that *what does not individuate it* can be found elsewhere. The same holds for universals.

Monius needs another way to make the particular/universal distinction if the claim about spatial repeatability won't do. Perhaps the best move would be to give up both (1) and the spatial-repeatability criterion for a different one: universals can have instances. Particulars cannot.

Monius does not tell us *what kind* of universal he believes in, and just what is it to have an attribute "in common" (p. 24). There are two options. He might hold to Aristotelian immanent universals. These are wholly present in each of their instances, and this provides the sense in which they are "common" to their instances. Or Monius might believe in transcendent Platonic Forms, not literally present in any instance, but "had in common" in the sense that each particular dog, say, is a partial imitation or manifestation of Perfect Dog- i.e. that each dog is "graded" by reference to the same Ideal. Monius believes that some universals are predicated of themselves (the "Axiom of Self-Application," p. 43). This makes questionable sense on an Aristotelian conception of universals. One usually supposes that there is some real distinction between what a predicate predicates and the predicate's subject. Nothing is really distinct from itself. On Aristotelian terms, to have a property is to have something (a universal) present in one, or in one's matter. Universals are immaterial, and nothing can be present in itself: that's too much like being a proper part of itself. Or again: Aristotelian instances are *cases* of their universals, *particular illustrations* of more general realities. But nothing is more particular or general than itself. So given that Monius wants to claim self-predication, he ought to opt for Platonic Forms. Perfect Dog is a dog: this makes sense, for Perfect Dog (at least on my reading of Plato) is just a non-spatiotemporal particular, which functions as a universal due to how material particulars are related to it. So too, Being is *a* being, one such that other things count as beings by approaching its ideal being sufficiently: Being is an ideal particular which functions as a universal due to how other things are related to it. But given the uniqueness of universals/Forms, if 'universals' are in fact ideal particulars, this would require Monius to ditch once and for all the claim that particulars can't be duplicated. Further, if universals are really abstract particulars, then particulars of one sort *can* have instances, and so the best way I know to make out the universal/particular distinction is ruled out. Again, Plato ran into the Third Man Argument precisely because he self-predicated his Forms. If he took the Platonic route, Monius would owe us an account of how he proposes to avoid this. Thus either standard conception of universals seems difficult for Monius: either his self-predication claim seems incoherent, or the price of maintaining it is his favorite way to distinguish particulars from universals and its best substitute. I can't offer positive guidance here; I do not know of a way to make property self-predication plausible save by offering particular cases, as Monius does (so e.g. "the universal *colored if green* is itself colored if green"). The lack of a good theory of how this can be so remains a good reason to be suspicious of the (apparent) cases. I'd seriously consider jettisoning the talk of self-predication; Axiom 3 ("self-application is the hallmark of the formal sub-Category of a given Category") weakens the entire theory of universals. Adding to the general difficulty of the

issue is that Monius sometimes loosens his self-predication requirement, calling it a case of self-predication when he asserts of the category Stable Spatiotemporal Particular Being that it is stable (p.39) but not spatiotemporal or particular. If one doesn't predicate the *entire* category of itself, does one really have a case of self-predication? On the Universal side of Monius' category-scheme, many or maybe all of the self-predicating universals applied as wholes. What *principled* reason is there for things to be different on the scheme's Particular side?

Monius believes in both necessarily and contingently existing universals; perhaps he could be a Platonist for the necessary and self-predicated and an Aristotelian about the rest. But he does not tell us what criterion he uses for sorting universals as necessary and contingent. He does assert that being material is the differentia for contingent universals (p. 51), so perhaps his criterion involves being instanced in matter. But the claim that a universal exists contingently if it is instanced in matter won't do, on his own account (material things are beings; Being exists necessarily). So he could only hold that a universal is contingent if it is such by nature as to be instanced *only* in matter. But this doesn't fit his example of the kind *16th-century opera* (p. 28), at least without a fight. These operas existed in their composers' minds before ever being written down, and for all we know, this means that they existed immaterially. For that matter, choirs of angels or discarnate souls could perform them- unless Monius wants to deny that there could be angels or souls. That denial would take some arguing. These are surely conceivable, and conceivability is *defeasible evidence* of possibility, at least. Defeasible evidence carries the day unless something defeats it, i.e. is outweighing evidence for the negation of what the defeasible evidence supports. It's not clear what defeater can be offered here, particularly in the case of angels.

Monius may try to show how he sorts universals into contingent and necessary in this passage:

> Contingent universals exist only if instantiated… If there were no contracts then there would be no universal relation of contracting… Such universals do not exist *ante rem,* i.e. before their instances. By contrast, Universal Being… is necessary and not contingent (pp. 27-8).

The argument may be something like this:

4. if a universal U is such that the conditional "if there were no instances of U, U would not exist" is true, U does not exist *ante rem.*

5. if a universal does not exist *ante rem*, it does not exist necessarily.

6. if a universal does not exist necessarily, it exists contingently.

But it is equally true of Being that if there were no beings- i.e. not even Being itself- then the universal, Being, would not have been. And it is equally true of Universal Being that if there were no universals, not even itself, then Universal Being would not have been. Why does this not render Being and Universal Being contingent? One wonders whether the distinction for Monius is really just this: Being and Universal Being are necessarily instanced, by themselves, and all other categorical universals are thus necessarily instanced too, as parts of Being, while contingent universals are not necessarily instanced (perhaps because not self-instancing?). If this is correct, then even Being is in a sense not *ante rem*: it exists only because it is instanced, but has the good fortune to provide itself an instance. (More on this anon.)

Monius may also try to show his criterion in this passage:

> The natural kind Electron would not have existed if there had been no electrons. Likewise for the laws or relations among natural kinds… had there been no electrons, there would have been no laws governing them. The laws of nature are as contingent as the kinds they relate. For (they) are not deducible from the necessary structure of Being (p. 4).

Now the claim about laws is debatable. If there were no electrons, why *couldn't* there be a natural law to the effect that were there any electrons, they would have negative charge, or laws charting how other sorts of particles would interact with electrons if there were any? If the brain generates consciousness, a natural law governs this. With just a slight change in conditions on our planet, perhaps consciousness and brains would never have emerged anywhere in the universe. But surely it's possible that there be a universe so slightly different from ours in contingent fact and yet identical in natural laws with ours: in other words, changing the facts just enough to prevent conscious beings surely need not carry any change of natural law with it. If this is so, then it's possible that there be a natural law governing the emergence of consciousness even if consciousness or brains never actually emerge: i.e. even if the law has nothing to govern. It's hard to see what could base these laws if not the existence of unexemplified natural kinds, Electron or Brain- particularly if one is willing in general to posit necessarily existing universals. Actually, though, it's compatible with letting laws exist even without particulars to govern that the laws exist contingently. (This is the view of Michael Tooley, to whom I owe the "consciousness" argument.") So

Monius could have the claim that the laws for contingent particulars are contingent without having to say that the laws would not exist without particulars to govern.

Still, the main point here is the one about deducibility. This is not a happy word-choice for Monius' purposes, for "deducible" makes it sound as if something depended on whether someone could actually do a deduction: it introduces a subjective note. Monius would do better to say that the necessary structure- does not entail these, or simply that it does not contain them (whatever the structure contains, it entails, since all parts of it are necessary). It's certainly true that if something isn't entailed by any necessary truth, it's contingent. But using this talk of entailment or deducibility as a criterion of which universals are contingent would presuppose having filled out "the necessary structure of Being" with a particular set of universals already. And what we're asking for here is a procedure for doing precisely that.

In any event, criterion or no, Monius owes us more of a case that universals come in both necessary and contingent flavors. Why shouldn't universals all be of one fundamental sort? It is simpler and more elegant to hold that all universals are necessary or that all are contingent. As simplicity and elegance are virtues in any theory, we need some reason to adopt a more complicated position, one which compensates for the loss of simplicity. And there is some reason to grant necessity to even those universals Monius calls contingent. Plausibly, it necessarily is possible that there be items which are operas and written in the 16th century. A good way to ground this possibility is in the claim that there necessarily is a kind-universal, *16th-century opera*. For universals are by nature things which *can be instanced*; thus a kind's existing is well suited to ground the possibility of there being instances of that kind. Of course, if all universals were necessary, Monius could not simply equate being a necessary universal and being categorical (p. 21), and would need some other way to draw the categorical/non-categorical line. But the necessary/categorical equation is not plausible anyway. Whitehead, for one, offered a scheme of categories while holding it to be merely the highest-level generalization experience warrants, and so contingent. There was nothing obviously absurd in doing so. Again, simplicity and elegance favor the claim that all universals are necessary or all are contingent. But if either of these disjuncts is true, it is not the case that all and only necessary universals are categorical. If all universals are contingent, then all categorical universals are, or else there are no categorical universals. If all universals are necessary, then either all universals are categories, or some necessary universals are not categorical: and the former would be true, surely, only if there were no universals for such common kinds as Dog and Cat, since Dog and Cat are not ontological categories. Thus considerations of simplicity and elegance favor rejecting the necessary/categorical equation.

2. Being and existence

So far I have discussed only Monius' general theory of universals. I now turn to the categorical specifics: to Monius' view of what universals there are. Monius' Axiom of Unity is that

> Being itself is the *summum genus*, the most inclusive of all the necessary universals that are the Categories (p. 43).

Monius' argument for this is that

> Each thing that is, is a being. But then all things that are have Being in common… Being exists. (p. 24).

The argument takes it for granted that if there is a multiply satisfied predicate, "__is a being," then that predicate expresses some kind of universal property. (We are to ignore Ockham's teeth, grinding just off-stage. So be it.) But to move from the predicate to the property requires a further, general premise. I now argue that some of the most obvious candidates for this general premise are false or not available to Monius, and that the claim that there is a property of being is questionable even to those (like myself) who agree with Monius that there are some universals.

One general premise permitting Monius' inference would be the claim that

7. every grammatical predicate expresses a real universal.

But (7) is false. For some grammatical predicates give rise to paradox. The grammatical predicate "__is a set of all and only those sets which are not members of themselves" seems coherent. There *are* sets which are not members of themselves. The set of cats is not itself a cat. So there should (it seems) be a set of all and only such sets. But suppose there is such a set, A. Is A a member of itself? If it is, then since it is a set only of those items which are not members of themselves, it follows that A is not a member of itself. If A is not a member of itself, then since A is a set of all such sets, it follows that A *is* a member of itself. A is a member of itself just in case it is not a member of itself. It would be a contradiction for A to exist- and so there is no such set. So the predicate "__is a set of all and only those sets which are not members of themselves" can't be satisfied. Again, the predicate "__is a barber who shaves all and only those who do not shave themselves" seems coherent. There are people who do not shave themselves. If there's just one barber in town, couldn't he be the one who shaves

them all? But now think of the barber: does he shave himself? If he does, then since he is the barber who shaves only those who do not shave themselves, it follows that he does not shave himself. If he does not, then since he is the barber who shaves all those who do not shave themselves, he does. So he shaves himself just in case he does not shave himself. So there cannot be such a barber: the predicate cannot be satisfied. If either predicate expressed a universal, then, the universal would be one which nothing could exemplify. Since universals just are things which can be exemplified, can be had by multiple particulars (p. 9), there are no universals which can't be found in even one particular. And so the predicates just mentioned express no universal.

Now Monius might reply that he needs not (7), but only the weaker

8. every satisfied predicate expresses a real universal.

For "__is a being" is certainly satisfied. But (8) also appears false. There are satisfied predicates which *cannot* express universals. For in the sentences "Monius is Monius" and "Monius is identical with Monius," the predicates ("__is Monius" and "__ is identical with Monius") cannot be satisfied in different places at once unless Monius masters time-travel. And they cannot be satisfied by two distinct particulars at any time.

The problem with these predicates might be that they are identity-predicates. But "__is a being" is not. So perhaps Monius needs only the still weaker

9. every satisfied predicate that is not an identity-predicate expresses a real universal.

But there's a case against (9) too. Some predicates are logically complex. Consider the predicate "__is round and red." Granting that there are universals of roundness and redness, why should we in addition think that there is a conjunctive universal, *round and red*, expressed by this predicate? This would seem completely otiose- any ontological job the conjunctive property supposedly did could be done as well by the conjuncts. And even if we defy Ockham to the extent of positing universals, there is still good reason to use his Razor when we can, and posit no more universals than are absolutely necessary. (For one thing, if one can't show that a particular universal is needed to do some ontological job, one has no way to defend the posit.) Further, if one asserted that there is *round and red*, one would have to explain what distinguishes this from the conjuncts taken separately. Is there logical a universal, *andness* ? Monius does not obviously think so; his diagram of categories does not include such logical universals, even though it is necessarily the case (on his account) that Being exists *and* Universal Being exists.

This point about logical universals could, incidentally, be an oversight worth rectifying. For it could be that logical universals are involved in the structure of Being as Monius depicts it. Monius claims that everything whatever is a being. But not every being exemplifies every universal in the circular diagram of Being on p. 51. So I can see only one way for it to come out that everything exemplifies Monius' Being, and that is to hold that (a) the whole diagram represents a disjunction of ultimate kinds (b) every being exemplifies at least some disjunct of this overall disjunctive universal, and (c) whatever has some disjunct has the whole disjunction as an attribute. This would make perfect sense: but it would involve there being a relation of disjunction as part of what structures Being. As an aspect of Being, it will exist necessarily (says Monius) and so also be a category (since for Monius, all necessarily existing universals are categorical). Given a real, objective *or, and* could be defined in terms of it and negation in the usual way, and the way would be clear to providing a real explanation of both why *round and red* differs from round and red separately and why *round and red* exists (we need the *or* for Being; given that and negation we also have the *and* ; given *and*, what's to stop it holding wherever it can hold?).

Perhaps, then, Monius could defend (9). I do not find this move plausible, though. To me the Ockhamist argument against complex universals holds even if we had an objective universal *andness* : even if it's there, why hold that it is present in more places than it absolutely must be? But really, Monius needn't brave the Ockhamist argument. For the predicate "__is a being" is not logically complex. So he can make do with

10. every satisfied logically simple predicate expresses a real universal.

(10) needn't mention identity-predicates, as these plausibly are logically complex. (They involve a connective, "=.")

But even (10) and the satisfied predicate "__is a being" may not be enough to give us a universal, Being. On Monius' account, Being is not logically simple. It is structured, and (say I) on the most persuasive way of understanding Monius' structure-proposal , the structures involved include disjunction. (More on *this* anon too.) If Being is not logically simple, it's not clear that the predicate expressing it can be. For whether a predicate is logically simple depends on whether it makes a logically simple (logically unstructured) contribution to the truth-conditions of a sentence. If the property a predicate expresses is logically structured, the predicate's contribution to the sentence's truth-conditions is too: for its contribution is just that that property is exemplified. So (10) won't deliver what Monius takes Being to be. And even if we abstract from this, there is the more general problem (of which Monius has given us an example) that even if the

predicate expresses a property, the property needn't conform to the predicate's surface grammatical form.

Nor need it be at the same level of generality as the predicate. A view Monius does not consider would have it that categories are classes of real universals which are not *themselves* real universals. There's a decent chance this is how Aristotle thought about category-predicates, though he was probably a realist about universals in general. On this view, a category-predicate, e.g. *relation*, does not express a single universal of categorical generality. Instead, it might express a very large disjunction of very specific relations: *father-son or to the left of or above, etc.* So one can well wonder why even realists about universals should accept that category-predicates (e.g. "relation") express single non-disjunctive category-level universals. Here's a positive suggestion against this wonderment: universals themselves may also fall into kinds. If kinds are in general universals, then universals' kinds will be, too. Nothing favors the claim that only some *kind*-predicates express universals. So perhaps category-predicates express universals because they express very high level abstract kinds. But "__is a being" is not even a real kind-predicate. It does not classify, because there is nothing that does not fall under it. So even an argument to save real category-universals would not, I think, save Being.

The upshot of this discussion is that Monius does not assert or argue all he needs to get from there being a multiply-satisfied predicate "__is a being" to the conclusion that there is a universal, Being. (10) is more plausible than (7)-(9), but won't deliver Monius-style Being. To use (9), Monius needs a case against the Ockhamist argument plus an assurance that the universal involved matches in logical form and level of generality the surface grammatical form predicate involved. These are three tall orders.

I now suggest that "__is a being" does not in fact express a property. For (I ask) do we *need* a universal, Being? Monius glides between talk of being and talk of existing as if there were no difference between the two:

> Being has being… Like… mere beings, (Being) also exists. It also is a being (p. 25).

But there is a difference. The Being which tops Porphyry's tree is not the same thing as real existence. The Porphyrian tree-topping "__is a being" is a first order predicate, the most general abstract thing you can say to characterize a thing. "__is a being" is the kind of predicate that describes, though one can question whether it actually does so. (Whatever genuinely describes, thereby also in a way classifies. To call a thing red classifies it as a red thing. But "__is a being" does not seem to classify.) The standard line today would say that "exists" is not the kind of

predicate that describes, if indeed it is a predicate at all. (A consensus stemming from Kant, Frege and Russell says that it is not.) Instead, "exists" asserts the instancing of a description. This is what the "existential quantifier" of today's logic does. Almost all today take existence as a *second-level* predicate, a predicate of properties or descriptions, akin to number-predicates. To say that something exists, on the standard view, is not to say what kind of thing it is, or describe it, but to do something like saying that the number of things instancing its description is not zero. We can't do without real existence in our metaphysic, or the existential quantifier in our logic. Does positing a property of being in addition to these serve any ontological purpose? I see none, and so suggest that there is no such property. But suppose now that we rephrase Monius in terms of existence:

> Each thing that is, exists. But then all things that are have Existence in common… But now if everything has Existence in common, then Existence must be a universal (adding a parallel to a sentence on p. 24).

It's false, on the standard account, that existence is a universal, a property of particular existents. On the standard treatment, "__exists" is a predicate not of existent things but of descriptions or perhaps properties. Nor can Existence be a higher-order universal, a property of properties: for to say that cats exist is not to say that Cathood exists, but *would* be if "cats exist" predicated a property, existence, of the universal Cathood. And one can easily get away with positing no real ontological constituent of things at all here; one doesn't need an entity called Existence to respect the fact that things exist, or undergird the use of existential quantifiers.

Another line of attack on "being" deserves note. Kant denied that existence is a predicate, on grounds which extend themselves to the case of being. Kant's claim was that a genuine predicate adds content to the concept of a thing, while adding "and it exists" does not alter its concept at all. But "and it's a being" seems in the same boat: whatever we conceive, we conceive as a being, automatically. "__is a being" adds no content. It is a vacuous description. It cannot be explicated or defined. It does not set apart some items as *not* falling into its extension. Do vacuous descriptions really describe? If not, there is *a fortiori* no real descriptive property they predicate. If "_is a being" is not really a characterizing predicate, that's because there's no characterizing property for it to predicate, and it's not at all clear why we need non-characterizing properties.

But suppose that despite all this, there is such a thing as a universal, Being, and that Being is a being. Monius asks whether it is

> merely contingent that Being is predicated of itself… Can this be an accident, due to the fact that there are other things, where these other things themselves might not have existed?… it lies in the very nature of a universal to hold of itself, if it does so hold. So it lies in the very nature of Being that it holds of itself… This is just to say that Being exists necessarily. (P. 25)

But it seems easily imaginable that it *is* an accident that Being exists. Suppose that there only contingently is something rather than nothing, and that Being exists only if some beings *have* it. This too would be so due to the nature of Being: that it is an *Aristotelian* universal, and so depends for being on having instances. In assuming that it is just a matter of its nature whether Being applies to itself, Monius in effect assumes that Being, *is there to exemplify itself,* regardless of whether it has (other) instances. What doesn't exist has no properties, including itself: Being's nature settles whether Being has being only if Being is there, with a nature. So this argument takes for granted the Platonist view that this universal, if it exists, exists independent of having instances. Further, if Being's claim to necessity rests on its being self-exemplifying, a reply seems available: what's necessary is not that Being be, but a conditional, that if Being exists, it exists necessarily. This conditional does not imply that Being does or must exist; it leaves Being contingent. To make his argument stick, Monius needs a case for the claim that Being's existence does not depend on having instances. One route to this case might run through the theory of possibility: perhaps a good or the best theory of how it can be possible before any dinosaurs exist that there be dinosaurs is that there is a nature, dinosaurhood, which evolution can cause to be instanced. If so, perhaps ditto for beings. The metaphysics of necessity and possibility could help Monius to the Platonism he needs.

3. The structure of Being

For Monius, Being is a complex universal- one consisting of many other universals. Once he has Being on the table, Monius begins to dissect it. The first step is to note that Being comes in two kinds, particular and universal. (Note that these kinds form a disjunction: being a being is being particular or being universal. Each of these breaks down into further disjunctions, which Monius seems to intend as jointly exhaustive and for the most part mutually exclusive: e.g. universals turn out to be necessary or contingent. Thus as suggested earlier, for Monius, Being's logical structure is one of disjunctions nested within disjunctions.) This raises a problem:

> The most general account of what it is to be Being is this: to be a thing that is a universal. So Universal Being can be thought of as the most general form of being… Like Being… Universal Being is universal. So both Being and Universal Being have the same most general specification of their form. What then distinguishes Being from Universal Being? (pp. 26-7)

Monius' claim is that the most general kind under which Being falls, of which it is a member, is Universal. If Being is a universal, this is true. But it's also problematic. Universal Being for him is a sub-kind of Being, which is the most general kind of all. How can the highest genus belong to a lower kind, i.e. *fall under* that kind? Doesn't that imply that the highest kind is lower than itself in the kind-hierarchy, as if Animal were both a genus in which Man falls and a kind of man? This puzzles me deeply, and Monius nowhere addresses it. And the fact is that he needn't run into this problem.

It's true that the *most* general thing one can say of Being's or of Universal Being's kind is that it is a universal. But things fall under multiple kinds. (I am man and animal.) Another way to distinguish Being from Universal Being would be *via* less inclusive kinds under which they fall. Universal Being, for instance, is not merely a universal but a non-universally-applicable universal. But there's a still simpler way to deal with the issue, for the relation each has to Universal Being is different. Universal Being is *identical* with Universal Being, as well as a case of it. Being is not. It is merely a *case* of Universal Being (waiving my worry about sub- and super-kinds). Being isn't predicated of Being and of Universal Being in the same way: in the case of Being, it's predicated *per modum identitatis*. Another distinction: in the case of Being, Universal Being is a form which doesn't give the exact nature. (If to be Being were to be Universal Being, there'd be no particular beings.) In the case of Universal Being, it does give the exact nature (to be Universal Being *is* to be Universal Being). To distinguish two universals, it's enough to show some property one has and the other doesn't. I've given some. Further, each has these properties intrinsically, by its very nature, and so this fits nicely with a suggestion I make below, to treat universals (or some of them) as self-individuated.

Monius' Axiom of Dichotomy has it that

> Every Category or necessary universal has an immediate sub-Categorywhich stands to it as form, and another… which stands to it as its matter (p. 43).

A reader schooled in contemporary philosophy might put it this way: Being is a disjunction of disjunctions of universals. Each disjunction has a disjunct which is self-predicative ("formal") and one which is not ("material"). Monius intends the material disjunct as an individuator, something which distinguishes the whole disjunction from its formal disjunct, and in a way he's right: the whole disjunction includes a disjunct the formal disjunct does not, and this does distinguish them. But he doesn't need this claim. The whole disjunction is merely a case of the formal disjunct, while the formal disjunct is also identical with the formal disjunct. And the Axiom once more raises the problem just noted above, of how a super-kind can be an instance of a sub-kind.

Be this as it may, the Axiom encapsulates the result of what Monius calls a "strategy" for filling out the complex structure which is Being:

> First find the most general form of (a category). Then argue that it applies to itself. Then ask of (the category) and the form of (the category) "what distinguishes these two universals?" It will be an aspect of (the category) which is not an aspect of the form of (the category). Thus it will distinguish two universals which can have the same form predicated of them. It will thus in a quite literal sense be the individuating matter of (the category-universal). (P. 27)

This strategy seems to generate an infinite regress of categories: whatever universal distinguishes the form of a categorical universal and the universal itself will also be subject to it. The Axiom embraces this, with its claim that *every* category has formal and material sub-categories. We are not actually capable of comprehending distinctly each member of an infinite series. So if the structure of Universal Being includes an infinite hierarchy of universals, we cannot comprehend it. (Comprehending something entails understanding it *fully*.) It's not clear that any being of finite cognitive capacity could do better. Infinite regresses are always problematic, but this one is particularly so for Monius, for he claims that the point of all Creation is the comprehension of Being (p. 17). If no being of finite cognitive capacity can fully comprehend Being, and there is no being of infinite cognitive capacity (Monius seems to deny God, and he offers no omniscient substitute), what Monius calls the point of all creation is currently unreachable. Further, when Monius denies God, he does so fully aware that if there is no necessary and perfect being, there can be none. So unless some contingent being could have an infinite cognitive capacity- which might well carry much of the standard divine nature with it, and so also raise Monius' ire- if Being has an infinitely complex structure, what Monius calls the point of all creation might be unreachable in principle. So Monius has some reason to seek a way of

"generating" category from category with some intrinsic finite stopping-point. I thus suggest a different tack on individuating universals, which does not appeal to Monius' form-matter/nature-individuator dichotomy. Whatever guarantees that a universal exists and is precisely itself guarantees that it is not anything else, and so individuates it from all other universals. But on Monius' account, the nature of (at least necessary) universals plays the first two roles. Why not just say too that necessary universals' natures individuate them: i.e. that they are what they are by nature, and this is enough to render them distinct from all else? In the case of material things self-individuation won't do, Monius thinks, as they're "duplicable." Thus on Monius' terms an individuating factor is needed. But Monius denies that universals are duplicable. So it is open to him to call universals self-individuated and abort the regress. Or if this does not appeal, he can still abort the regress by saying that at some point, the regress terminates in a single universal which is self-individuated by nature. Perhaps Universal Being is distinct from all other universals simply because it is the only universal which is *nothing but universal*, i.e. which has no other aspect to its nature.

4. The necessary and the contingent

Monius divides the category Universal Being into Necessary and Contingent (p. 27). He does not explain why this qualifies as a distinction of *kind*, or one of category, or why he picks necessary/ contingent as the *next* division of categories. It's equally true that all universals are either made of wood or not made of wood, this division being a function of their natures. But wooden/non-wooden is not a categorical division. Or if one wants an example which doesn't involve a disjunct no universal satisfies, all universals are either natural-kind (dog, cat) or not so (red, loud), and are so by their very natures- yet natural kind/not isn't a categorical division, on Monius' account. Monius picks as categorical disjunctions only ones are (by intention, at least) jointly exhaustive and based on universals' natures. But this doesn't suffice to explain his choices of what's "categorical." Many disjunctions of this sort are not.

Monius relates Necessary to Contingent Universal Being as form to matter, "form" being the disjunct of Universal Being which is also a property of it, "matter" being what distinguishes Universal Being from this disjunct (p. 28). To justify the "form" move, Monius writes that

> Universal Being… is necessary… So the most general specification of the form of Universal Being is Necessary Universal Being (p. 28).

One *could* read the second sentence as "the disjunct of Universal Being which is most general of all those disjuncts gathered under the category Necessary Universal Being is Necessary Universal Being." So taken, it is clearly true. Taken otherwise, the sentence is problematic. Monius writes that

> The form of a thing… is that aspect of a thing that is properly cited in response to the question: What is it to be this thing? (p. 26).

But Necessary Universal being *isn't* the most general answer to the question "what it is to be Universal Being?" The most general answer to this question is the most general predicate which gives Universal Being's kind, the one which gives *least* information. That is Universal or (if we waive my worries about calling Being a kind) Being, not Necessary Universal. To say of Universal Being that it is Necessary Universal Being is to say something with more informational content than to say that it is Universal Being. Necessary Universal is a more specific form, less general than "Universal Being" itself, because it is one of two kinds universal being comes in; fewer universals are necessary universals than are universals. Thus if one goes along with Monius' talk of form here, it seems that Universal is the form of Necessary Universal Being, not *vice-versa,* and Necessary is its individuator.

Monius treats necessary and contingent as divisions only of universal being, and on the Particular side treats contingency as the differentia of the particular (p. 49). This entails that there can be necessary and contingent universals, but only contingent particulars. I've already questioned the claim that universals come in both sorts. But given Monius' belief in both, he might be well advised to withdraw the differentia-claim, and instead have necessary and contingent as divisions both of the particular and of the universal. That is, perhaps he should extend the categories necessary and contingent to both sides of the universal/particular divide, so that the overall scheme of categories at this level looks like this ("N" abbreviating "necessary,""C" standing for "contingent"):

NNNNNNCCCCCCC
N Universal C
N Particular C
NNNNNNCCCCCCC

There are two arguments for this. One is that Monius' move introduces an unintuitive asymmetry in the category-scheme: on the Universal side, "contingent" is outside "universal," while on the Particular side it is not outside Particular. Why should this be? The second, more important reply is that there quite arguably are

not only contingent particulars: it seems to me false that Being "is not necessarily instantiated by anything outside its nature" (p.25). *Pace* Monius, God may well exist, and most philosophers take Him to be both a particular and a necessary being (so too Monius, p. 7). Less controversially, numbers appear to be particulars. But if mathematics is necessarily true, numbers exist necessarily. So numbers too seem to be necessary particulars. And if sets are particular, Monius seems sunk, for on his own terms are many necessary sets, e.g. {Being}, {Being, Universal Being} and {{Being}, {Being, Universal Being}}. As suggested above, Monius could, with some work, get universals to do the jobs of sets and numbers; what's clear here is just that he needs to do so to defend his way of dealing with the necessary and the contingent. But even if he can do the needed ontological grunt-work, if contingency is the very *differentia* of particularity, there is something deeply incoherent in the notion of a necessary particular: such a thing is in a fairly strong sense inconceivable. Even if Monius can dispatch all the apparent counter-examples to his claim, making out that claim that these concepts are incoherent will take some doing.

Monius asserts that the *differentia* of Contingent (Universal) Being is being material (p. 51). To be Contingent Universal Being, then, is to be that of Universal Being which is material. Every category, says Monius has just a "formal" and a "material" disjunct (Axiom of Dichotomy). To be a material disjunct is just to be that in a disjunction which is not the formal disjunct, and so distinguishes the disjunction as a whole from the formal disjunct. In the case of Universal Being, the formal disjunct is Necessary Universal Being. So, it emerges, to be Contingent Universal Being is just to be that of Universal Being which is not Necessary Universal Being. If this is just a way to say that to be a contingent universal is to be a universal that is not necessary, Monius is surely correct, but one can't help wishing for an easier ride to the conclusion.

5. Form and matter

Monius next divides Necessary Universal Being into formal and material (p. 30). In context, we can read this as follows: Being is the totality of necessary universals, composed of nested disjunctions of universals. Each of these disjunctions has a "formal" and "material" component. So to be Necessary Universal Being is to be either formal or material: that is, every necessary universal, by the nature of necessary universalhood, consists of one of Monius' dichotomous disjunctions. It seems, then, that the Necessary Universal Being side of the contingent/necessary disjunction is what sets the nature of the rest of the categories, and so of Being, which they compose:

Necessary Universality… indicates the form of Being (p. 30).

Monius next analyzes Formal and Material Necessary Universality. Formal Necessary Universality turns out to consist of being self-specifying (self-predicated) and being demarcational, being "the what-it-is-to-be of a thing [which] sets off or demarcates one kind of thing from another" (p. 31). But the entities here just *are* kinds. To set one kind off from other kinds is to individuate it, by making it itself rather than another kind. To be a material universal is to be a contained individuator: so Material Necessary Universality turns out to be being individuative and being componential. (Here the disjunctions turn inclusive.) But the formal aspect of a universal equally individuates it, as just noted. And it is also a component of it, in the broad sense of 'component' which applies to immaterial universals: the formal and material elements of a universal make it up. So both parts of what Monius sees as the role of material universals seem to occur on the formal side too. Perhaps the only real difference here lies in the self-predication of the formal universals: but given the problems self-predication brings with it, perhaps in the end this ground of difference ought to disappear as well.

6. "Causal" relations among universals

Monius claims that the (supposed) fact that each particular thing has all four of Aristotle's causes must be rooted in the nature of Being, in something necessary, not contingent (p. 35). This supposed fact is stunningly unobvious. Souls, angels, numbers, space, time, God and sets would have no material cause. Quantum particles popping out of a quantum vacuum may well have no efficient cause. If the "particular things" involved include events (and why not?), these may have neither material nor efficient causes (what is an event made of? And quantum theory teaches us to expect uncaused events). Finally, the claim that *anyt*hing has a final cause, exists for a purpose, is something only theists will be disposed to grant: and Monius is no fan of theism. Be that as it may, even if we granted Monius' "fact," there would still be a case, even on Monius' terms, that the four-causal structure is contingent. Monius insists that the natures of contingent things are universals which exist contingently. These natures determine what the things' forms and appropriate matters are. These in turn determine how they can be brought to be, and in service of what ends. If the whole of contingent reality is just a tissue of contingently instantiated natures, then the causal relations these natures involve will also be instanced only contingently. So the explanation for the 4-cause schema may lie in contingent natures rather than the nature of Being.

Monius calls teleological and efficient causation sub-kinds of contingent universal being (p. 35). If I read him aright, this amounts to claiming that to be a

contingent universal is to be either an efficient or a final-causal relation. (If this is *not* what it means, then what's involved in disjunctions on the contingent side of Universal Being differs dramatically from what's involved on the necessary side. Monius, however, signals no such shift.) If this is true, what becomes of natural-kind universals, or other contingent qualities or non-causal relations? Moreover, Monius claims that there are teleological relations among the universals which make up Being, which are not contingent (pp. 52ff- see below). So there necessarily are cases of Teleological Relation, which seems to make it a necessary, not a contingent universal. Monius even claims that something at least analogous to efficient causation exists within Being (pp. 44-6). (It's as much like efficient causation as an individuating component universal is like matter, perhaps.) So not "all instances of teleological or efficient relations [are] instances of… Contingent Universal Being" (p. 35): some instances exist necessarily.

If teleological and efficient relations between substances qualify as kinds of contingent universal, I don't see why (say) natural substantial kind and material kind don't also qualify. After all, "any instances" of these "have to be instances of the… category that is contingent universal being," i.e. kinds of contingent universal. Further, Monius' reason for putting teleological and efficient causation into the structure of being and on the side of the contingent is just that the relevant questions "apply to and have real answers in the case of each particular thing." But the same holds for material and formal causation, unless one believes in formless matter or immaterial particulars like angels or God. If Monius is not on the side of the angels, then seemingly these should get in on the Contingent side of the ring as well, providing an overlap between contingent and necessary.

Let me now turn briefly to Monius' claim that there are teleological relations between universals. Monius writes that

> This is not after all so puzzling, since arguably the primary use of statements of purpose is to assert a purposive relation to a universal… to ascribe a purpose to something is to relate it to an outcome- the end- that may or may not be achieved. It is confused to think of this end as a possible particular. Someone aims to run a four-minute mile. Suppose he succeeds, then it makes no sense to ask: was that the particular four-minute mile he was aiming to run?… the runner's end… in fact… is the act-kind: his running a four-minute mile. His having that end means that any instance of the universal would count as success… Not only is the end a universal, but in many cases such ends are assigned to whole kinds or universals… So Aristotle held that the dominant end of Man is contemplation, where it makes no sense to ask "which man?" or "which act of contemplation?" Here is a

> typical attribution of purpose where the primary terms of the relation are universals. So it is with the claims concerning purpose which we will make when it comes to the structure of Being. (P. 52)

But there's a slide in Monius' example. The runner's end *is not* the universal, his running a four-minute mile. It is the production of some particular *instance* of the universal- as Monius sees. The runner doesn't aim at some particular possible mile, assuming that there are such things. But he aims at producing *some particular mile or other.* We use the act-kind to describe this aim because it lets us describe the kind of particular he's aiming for, and because there is not some merely possible particular which is his aim. If the runner's end were a universal, he would be trying to create rather than instance a universal- wouldn't he? Further, the questions Monius imagines us posing to Aristotle do make sense. The answers are "every man" and "some appropriate act or other." The end for the kind man is an end a token of which is there for every instance of the kind man, namely to perform an instance of a particular act-kind. The use of universal predicates in this talk of ends is just shorthand.

Perhaps Monius' point really is that there are teleological relations, grounded in the necessary structure of things, between the *instances* of the categories. I don't see that his arguments warrant anything more, or that he really gives sense to the notion of one universal being that for the sake of which another exists. (He does develop a rule for saying what category is directed at what, but not an account of what the directedness *amounts to*- no *what-it-is* for this sort of relation, merely a procedure for saying where it's instanced.) The difficulty making sense of one universal existing for another's sake is related to that of saying that one efficient-causally produces another, since goals are usually the goals of agents, or the goals agents implant in artifacts. So perhaps we can make some headway thus: as efficient causation between universals really turns out to be something like static componency, so final causation turns out to be a static contribution to value. Perhaps, then, we could restate the claims Monius aims at (P. 57) thus: what give value to patterned being is the stable beings which emerge within it. What gives value to stable beings is the emergence of comprehensible beings. And what gives value to the existence of comprehensible beings is universal being: that is, things which are comprehensible are worth comprehending because by so doing, one comprehends universal being.

7. A note on identity

I will not comment on Monius' categories of Particular Being, save to express surprise at his claim that

> spatio-temporal particulars… can be merely partly there at each time at which they exist, in the sense of having varying parts over time. Such complexes as… repairable artifacts that can undergo changes of parts [have an] identity over time [which] is best thought of sequentially, i.e. as consisting in different things at different moments of time (p. 41).

A body which changes parts is wholly present at each instant of its existence. I may well be such a body: surely I am wholly here. Such a body simply consists of different parts at various times at which it is wholly present; different sets of parts are wholly present with it. Saying that bodies which change parts are for that reason only partly there opens up large cans of worms. I now contain no atoms which were not in my body 8 years ago. Does this mean that I am not identical at all, even in part, with the man who wore my clothes back then? My wife would be surprised. What about when I had 41% of those atoms: was the I of 8 years back then 41% there? Does this mean that I-then and I-with-41% were really just 41% identical? It sure seems to. But identity does not really come in degrees. I cannot be 41% identical with anything (though I can have 41% of its composition). For degreed identity can't be transitive (i.e. have the property that for all ABC, if A=B and B=C then A=C). For if A is 50% identical with B, and B 50% identical with C, A might well be less than 50% identical with C. Further, if A is 99% identical with B and B 1% identical with C, it might be that A is 0% identical with C: so even the existence of some degree of identity, however small, can't be transitive if identity is degreed. I take this to refute the claim that identity is degreed. For identity *is* transitive. If A=B and B=C, then it does follow that A=C. It seems to me, then, that Monius would do well to simply withdraw his claims about continuants' identity over time. Doing so would not (I think) alter his system in any fundamental way.

8. A priori?

Monius claims that his categorical scheme is graspable *a priori* (p. 41). This claim is debatable. The system starts with the claim that there are beings, and so being is a universal. One might claim to know *a priori* that there is one being (via something like Descartes' *cogito*), but how could one get a second, *a priori*? And without a second, is there a case that Being is a universal? Again, the categories include those of causal relations, matter, form, dispositions, norms: how can one claim that we can know of such things *a priori*? (Monius gives no hint of being a Kantian, for example.) Surely we can only learn about causal relations by experience of particular cases (I touch the stove and it causes a burn), and we do

not grasp the category of causation save by first coming up against particular cases, then generalizing or abstracting. Could one know of Aristotle's material-formal division without knowing that some things are matter? If not, then this claim to *a priori knowability* implies that we are able to know *a priori* that something material exists. That's a stretch, even given Monius' extended usage of 'matter." If all of this is horribly off the mark, then Monius' use of "*a priori*" needs explaining. He could perhaps make out his case if he adopted Philip Kitcher's way of explaining the *a priori.* (See e.g. his *Nature of Mathematical Knowledge* (Oxford, 1983).) Perhaps, though, his point is that we learn what the categories *are*- i.e. which of our concepts are categorical- by *a priori* reflection. This is a much smaller claim; it could be true even if we *acquired* all our categorical concepts only empirically.

9. Of God and Monius

Monius aims to get a speculative cosmology out of his category-scheme. He sees its rivals as theism and the Many Worlds Hypothesis, on which

> all the possible ways things could be are equally real and are all included in a super-ensemble which exhausts reality. Since this ensemble includes all possibilities, the ensemble and all its parts and aspects are necessary… this falsifies our original intuition of contingency. [On it] what is necessary merely appears to be contingent from a local point of view. (P. 4)

This criticism appears to fail. Even if the ensemble includes all possibilities, each part could be contingent, for it might not be necessary that the possibilities (parts) be these rather than others. Contingent possibilities are allowed in all modal logics not including S5, which is to say all but the "strongest" modal systems. (For details on modal logics, see GE Hughes and MJ Cresswell, *modal logic* (Methuen, 1968)). And if it's contingent that each part exists, it seems to follow that the whole exists contingently as well. What's necessary is this truth: given that these are all the possibilities, one of them is the actual world, or contains the universe we inhabit.

Monius has three arguments against theism. One is that appeal to God is otiose:

> That some things happen because they should, i.e. because it is good that they do… is what makes sense of someone's forming and acting on a plan. What really makes intentional goal-directed action intelligible is the perceived good or reason for which it is done…

> Theism's… explanation ultimately consists in this: It is because contingent existence is good that God wills it… Thus [it] embodies the idea that some things happen because they should. Once that is admitted, the appeal to divine intention drops out as no longer fundamental. The sheer appeal to a good to be realized can itself be explanatory. Why then suppose that such end-invoking explanation must be mediated by an intention? (Pp. 6, 7)

To make sense of someone's intentional action, I cite an intention and a belief: he goes to the refrigerator because he intends to get a snack and believes that there is food there. To explain the intention further, I can appeal to other intentions or to desires: he intends to get the snack because he intends to study, or desires to quiet the grumblings in his gut. At no point do or need I appeal merely to its being good that he get the snack, in short: what make sense of the action are the agent's prevening mental states, which may include beliefs about various goods or intentions to produce them. This is a fairly standard view. To overturn it would take quite some argument. Thus too, what explains God's forming a creative intent is His *desire* for the good. The explanation is efficient-, not final-causal. Why does He have the desire? There you can appeal directly to the attractiveness of the good itself: but still the desire, as a mental particular, only comes to be because God *recognizes* and as it were *turns toward* this good. The explanation here is still efficient-causal- God producing the intention- only the agent Himself is the cause to which we appeal.

Suppose that the good involved is required- morally necessary. Even so, it does not fully explain God's forming His intentions. It's also required that God have a particular character and set of powers. One must appeal to God's background trait of necessary moral perfection, which guarantees His responding to such requirements, and His actually recognizing this good and producing the intention efficient-causally. If what He chooses is good but not mandatory, one must also bring in (say) His character as explaining (somehow) His preference for this over other incompatible goods. What brings the intention to be is God, acting in light of a good, not the good itself: God is the efficient cause of the intention. *A fortiori* He's the efficient cause of the existence of what He intends! Monius can show that "appeal to intention" can drop out only in God's case only if he can show that what God wills in creating would've or could've happened anyway even if there were no God. I don't think the first can be done, and I just don't see that Monius has done the second.

Monius' second charge is that theism doesn't relate God to the categories in the right way:

> One familiar theistic thought is that the categories are… ideas in the mind of God. [But] God as a being will like all other beings merely exemplify Being. Being cannot then by an idea in the mind of God. God has to be a being, has to exemplify Being, to have a mind at all. Being thus emerges as more fundamental than any particular being could be. If Being is prior to particular beings and God is a particular being then Being is prior to God. [P. 9]

The theist move Monius mentions has however a second part: while some necessary universals are ideas in the mind of God, others are aspects of His nature. Aquinas (*Summa Theologiae* Ia 3, 3-4) and Tillich are happy to say that God *is* Being itself- that what we view concretely as God is equally well viewed abstractly as Being. Monius need to say something against this, if he doesn't endorse it. (And he can't object that nothing can be both a being and Being, for on his account Being is both.) Another theist countermove here would say something like: Being depends on God as Aristotelian immanent universals do on their instances. Being exists because God *has* Being. Particularity exists because God *is* particular, Universality because He has universal ideas. Why not? Theism has more versions than Monius takes up, and so more resources.

Monius' third argument runs this way:

> According to theism, God is a necessary and perfect particular who has a capacity to form and act out of a creative intention. Since the world… is… contingent, this… capacity could have remained unrealized. But if an instance of the kind Necessary and Perfect Particular could com with a certain capacity realized and also without that capacity realized then two instances of the kind necessary and Perfect particular seems conceivable, hence possible, hence actual by the nature of the kind in question. For to be a necessary being is to be such that your possibility implies your actual existence. So we have a *reductio ad absurdum* of theism: if there is one God who created the world… then there is The Other God, who did not. Notice that what is appealed to… is the co-possibility of the two Gods. They are co-possible because the full intrinsic description of one does not exclude the full intrinsic description of the other. (P. 8)

Here many points need making. One is that (a) it's conceivable that something instance the kind N&PP and will F and (b) it is conceivable that something instance the kind N&PP and not will F do not entail (c) it is conceivable that two things instance the kind N&PP. For nothing rules it out that (a) and (b) conceive

the same N&PP twice. "Something" doesn't pick out *one particular* thing, and nothing in (b) implies that "something" picks out in (b) something other than it picks out in (a). One can show that an inference fails by giving a parallel. Thus "it is conceivable that something instance the kind necessarily existing necessarily unique being and will F" and "it is conceivable that something instance the kind NENUB and not will F" do not entail "it is conceivable that two things instance the kind NENUB." For while the premises are true, the conclusion is false: it is not conceivable that two distinct beings each be necessarily the sole member of any kind. This is because one can easily derive a contradiction from this supposition.

Another point worth making is that conceivability does not entail possibility-or at least, not every sort of conceivability does. It is in some sense conceivable that there be a proof of Goldbach's Conjecture. It is in the same sense conceivable that there be a disproof of it. There cannot be both, obviously. Further, as the Conjecture is a mathematical claim, it is either necessarily true or necessarily false, and so either necessarily provable or necessarily not. So either it is conceivable (in this sense) but not possible that there be a proof, or it is (in this sense) conceivable but not possible that there be a disproof. Monius could perhaps distinguish senses of conceivability, then see if a weaker version of the argument survives. Perhaps even if conceivability doesn't guarantee possibility, some sort of conceivability is at least evidence for the right sort of possibility. But even without this point, the argument seems fallacious. "It is possible that there be a God who is F" and "it is possible that there be a God who is not F" does not entail that it is possible that there be 2 Gods, for it could be the same God who is possibly F and possibly not F. The logic is as in the conceivability case above.

Third, what Monius means in his comment about co-possibility is that the instantiation of one's full intrinsic description doesn't preclude the instantiation of the other's. But it's not clear that *anything*'s intrinsic description could preclude anything else's satisfying any other intrinsic description. Recall our approach to being intrinsic: an attribute is intrinsic just in case whether an item has the attribute is settled entirely within its own skin, or the item's having the attribute does not imply that there is any other item which has or lacks any attribute. If this approach to being intrinsic is roughly on target, nothing's intrinsic character precludes the satisfying of any other description by any other thing. For if an item's having attribute F entails that (say) no other item has G, it *follows* that it does not have F purely intrinsically. There are other approaches to being intrinsic in the literature; I think most will have this result, though.

Even if we waive this, the condition given doesn't really guarantee co-possibility. For items also have extrinsic properties, and sometimes these keep other items from being co-possible. Trivial example: God's intrinsic description does not include the predicate 'necessarily unique of His kind.' For this is not an

intrinsic predicate: it implies that nothing else has the property of deity, and so whether God has it has implications for what's "outside His skin." All the same, God is usually understood to have this extrinsic property by nature. (A rationale: God is by nature maximally perfect, and this includes being so perfect that nothing else can equal His perfection.) And this property rules out co-existing with a second God. More generally, a purely intrinsic description of two items settles whether they're co-possible only if it does so in every possible case. (If it does not, it isn't a genuine sufficient condition.) But such a description doesn't settle the question of whether it's possible that a world contain an intrinsic duplicate of some item, for it doesn't settle whether the original item has a property ruling out duplication: such a property would not be intrinsic.

I do not think, then, that Monius' case against other cosmologies succeeds.

10. The Cosmology

Monius' own cosmological claim is a bit unclear. He asserts that Being "has the contingent capacity to issue in particularity" (p. 6). This *sounds* like a claim that Being efficiently causes something. But his ultimate claim turns out to be only that the point of all things is comprehension of Universal Being. Monius don't say anything to show that this point, or things' having this point, somehow efficiently accounts for their existence, despite an apparent claim to display contingent reality's "origin" (p. 3). Perhaps Monius means to claim that purely final-causal explanation *can* account for the existence of something. Perhaps his theory is that contingent things exist because they should: period. In this case we can see why he tries to show that in the case of purposive explanation, there is some fundamental appeal to things' existing *simply* because they should. But I've already suggested that he doesn't really come up with a convincing account of this.

In any case, Monius holds that contingent beings exist for the sake of a "fundamental and supreme good":

> In the case of explaining all of contingent existence… the Good in question must be fundamental and supreme. It must be… fundamental… in the sense of not being good because it is a means or condition of some other good. For if the Good in question were good only as a means or condition for another good then that other good would be the end for the sake of which contingent beings exist… the Good in question must be supreme, in that it cannot be outweighed or counterbalanced by any combination of goods. For if it could be in this way counterbalanced or outweighed… then the question would remain, why do contingent beings exist for the sake of the Good you

> allege, rather than for… this combination of good which counterbalances or outweighs it? (P. 10)

Monius' "fundamental" condition applies to *any* purposive explanation, not just this one. If I tug the handle in order to open the refrigerator door, and open the door *only* to get at the food, I tug the door to get at the food. The fundamental good is the one which really explains my action. The question Monius raises to warrant the "supreme" condition is ambiguous between two senses, (a) why are they, in fact, for the sake of this one, not that? (b) what reason can you give to convince me that they are for the sake of this one, not that? One can dismiss the (a)-question: if they *are* in fact for the sake of this one, not that, it doesn't matter *why* this is so. This "why" is just a further question one can raise, and does not of itself cast doubt on the claim that they *are* for this, not that. Because this is so, the possibility of raising the (a)-question can't motivate the "supreme" condition. But a requirement motivated by the (b)-question isn't really one of supremacy: it's simply one that you have an adequate argument for your view. I don't offhand see why there couldn't be a good greater than one for which all contingent particulars exist. On traditional theism, they all exist for (say) the sake of loving and contemplating God. But there is a greater good than this, namely that of *being* God. This "outweighs" the total good of creaturely contemplation, or else either (a) it would be better to be a universe which loved God than to be God, which doesn't sound right, or (b) the good of being the totality of creatures loving God would be incommensurable with that of being God, which flies in the face of the theist claim that just in virtue of being divine, God is more perfect than anything else. I don't see anything incoherent about this theist position. Perhaps Monius could start toward motivating the Supremacy condition by figuring out something that *is* wrong with the theist view.

Leaving this aside, Monius sees a purely purposive explanation as the right sort because purposes can explain without necessitating what they explain, thus preserving the contingency of contingent beings. I now raise a question about whether Monius' view really does in the end preserve all the contingency we intuitively believe in. Monius writes that a purpose explains without necessitating what it explains.

> "The spider build the web in order to catch and eat the fly" does not entail that the spider had to build the web. Nonetheless it makes the web-building intelligible… the idea of impersonal purpose [to which I appeal] is no more than the idea that some things happen because they should, i.e. because it is good that they do so. (P. 6)

"Should" has a freight "good" does not: "should" implies that it *ought* to happen. Many good things are not things which we ought to do, i.e. not things we would be wrong not to do. This difference matters. What ought to happen is *morally necessary*. (In fact, in standard deontic logics, one defines "ought" as a strict analogue to the modal operator "necessarily.") What is good is morally permissible but not necessary. What's morally necessary can't rationally be overridden by other purposes or simply not acted on. So we fail to act on it only at the price of our full rationality. Can Being itself not respond to what 'should' be so? Monius does not show that it can, and the value-relations which make being comprehended Being's "impersonal purpose" (p. 6) obtain necessarily. If Being must 'respond,' Monius' system abolishes some contingency too, but in a different way. On his terms, it seems not to come out contingent that there are particular beings, contingent beings, or minds.

A purpose 'does not necessitate,' in one sense, because it isn't an efficient cause. But by the same token, for all Monius has been able to show, a purpose can't on its own explain anything coming into being: what explains is an agent, acting on the purpose, or at least adopting it (and so bringing into being a state of intention). A purpose 'does not necessitate,' in another sense, only if there is more than one way to achieve it, or the one who has it can fail to act on it. A purpose to eat, or eat flies, does not necessitate the spider to build the web, if and because the spider has some other way to feed, or feed on flies, or the spider can override this purpose, or fail to act on it for no reason at all. But Monius' Being has no other way to get itself comprehended (as it were) than to issue in comprehending minds. So in my second sense, Being's purpose (as Monius calls it) *seems to necessitate* getting contingent minds into being, and so the production of particulars. Further, Monius intends that Being has this "purpose" necessarily, since the teleological relations between universals which constitute this purpose's existing obtain necessarily. So Monius seems threatened with the consequence that there necessarily are contingent minds, particulars, contingent beings, and whatever conditions are necessary for minds' emergence. To fix this, he must show that Being has some other way to get itself comprehended, or that it might have had some other purpose, or that it can override or fail to 'act' on its "purpose." A nice way to do so would be to concede the existence of a necessary mind, perhaps one with the infinite cognitive capacity to assure that Being is comprehended. Aquinas, for instance, would say that the necessary mind necessarily comprehends its own nature, Being, but contingently creates beings it loves.

When philosophers review philosophy, we tend to focus on things we think we can improve: criticism is the best help we can give each other. But some things need no improvement. Monius has a commendable passion for metaphysics, an eye to questions worth asking, and the courage to pursue opinions and maneuvers

not likely to find favor in the wide community of analytic metaphysicians. Given the scope of the task he undertakes, it is almost inevitable that the views and arguments he advances could stand a good deal more development. Then again, this last may be just a way to say that Monius leaves us wanting more.

I add here some additional comments which did not fit themselves well to the flowing-review format. I key them to the MS. Under page-headings, the numbers give text-lines. (I do not count section headings or spaces between paragraphs as lines.) Where there are two numbers separated by a comma: the first is a page number. I address the author as "you."

p.1

-- 23-4 "ideal language" analytic philosophers like Gustav Bergmann took them to be making proposals about the logical form of the best language in which to describe the world. This counts as a kind of indirect knowledge about the world, or at least it'd take some argument to show that it doesn't. In any case, it's a genuine, non-stipulative subject-matter: Bergmann and his school did not take metaphysics as poetry.

p.2

-- 8-9- the argument shows that science *can't* provide this, not that it doesn't attempt to.

-- 10-11- it's not really fair to call it a limitation of science not to be able to say why there's something, not nothing: you claim later that this question *can't be* answered.

-- 2d full par.- You here use "Being" in two senses: as the name of a concrete whole, something which can't be exemplified, and as the name of a universal, something which is exemplified. This is confusing: is it the universal or the totality or both which has "structure"? Is your point that the structure of the universal is in some sense also the structure of the totality, because the totality exemplifies it? (P. 3 "the structure of Being or of reality as a whole" could be read this way.) Better to introduce distinct terms here: keep Being for the universal, and why not just say "reality as a whole" when you mean the other sense?

Which "Being" is the subject of the first two questions that follow? (If both, you ought to make this explicit.) Being in the sense of reality as a whole may have structures science can investigate, e.g. the geometric structure of the spacetime continuum, if everything there is exists in spacetime. So what sort of structure is it

that science can't look into? And it isn't obvious that everything in science really focuses on individual beings: space-time's geometry may be a matter of relations *between* individuals, if there is not a further individual called Spacetime.

p.3

-- 5-6- Kant would reply: not every question which it makes sense to ask of part of the world ("Being") ought to be asked about the world as a whole. For if we divide the world into non-overlapping parts AB, it's clear where (say) a cause of B would have to come from (namely, A) and what relation would link the cause to B (namely, the same relation we find among parts of B). Neither is clear if we seek a cause of the whole AB. So we "banish the question" because *prima facie* the preconditions for answering it are lacking: a question which cannot be answered ought not to be asked. This is just a recasting of Kant's criticism of the cosmological argument. It suggests that you need to do more than ask a rhetorical question here. Perhaps you could reply by talking about the *type of explanation* you want to offer. As I read you, it is in the end wholly final-causal, not efficient. If it is, perhaps Kant's strictures wouldn't apply.

-- 7-8- "reality exists" is a tautology. It requires no explaining. Perhaps you mean "contingent reality"? But "contingent reality exists" is also a tautology, even though it is contingently true. Perhaps the best formula is "why reality includes contingent beings"?

p.4

-- 14-5- perhaps original, but not unique. A similar broadly Neo-Platonist account is advanced in John Leslie, *Value and Existence.* His basic theme too is that there are contingent beings because there should be.

-- 27-8- you're right that if God necessarily exists and necessarily wills that P, P comes out necessary. But this doesn't obscure *all* differences between God and the "contingent"- only the modal one. Some relevant ones remaining could be that God is not spatio-temporal while all else is, or that God is immaterial while no other substance is. In other words, one could grant Spinoza his modal monism and still have a clear basis for a distinction between God and nature.

p.6

-- 1- What's contingent is that it *uses* this capacity. Surely if it has it, it has it by nature. But how can an abstract thing, a universal, be an efficient cause? I know of no way to make sense of this.

-- 13-4- this sentence is ambiguous between (a) "the realizing of this purpose is unplanned" (b) "the existence of the purpose is unplanned." On (a), theists would say that there being contingent particulars is a result of God's plan; you ought to rule this reply out here. On (b), I'm not sure it's possible to plan to adopt a purpose. If I intend to intend that P, it seems to follow that I intend, simpliciter, that P.

-- 17-8- you never argue this, as far as I can see. You should.

p.7

-- 6-4 from bottom- why is this a problem? It doesn't seem to rule out the claim that this one did in fact do it, and one needs only that claim to have an adequate account of where contingents came from.

p.10

-- (1)- why "is"? why not merely "causes" or "entails"? You need to argue to rule these out, else the formulation simply unfairly prejudices things in favor of Being.

-- (2)- the rationale here isn't clear to me. If there are two NP&Ps, for instance, and only one causes all that is contingent, it provides a perfectly adequate explanation for the existence of the contingent. "Why the one and not the other?"

--(p. 7): why does it matter if the sole project is to say where contingent beings came from? Further, that a thing is *capable* of being duplicated does not entail that it actually has been duplicated. Only the latter would raise the "Why the one and not the other?" question.

p.18

-- 20-22- for Kant, categories are forms of understanding. So they exist necessarily only if minds do. Would Kant call it necessary that there be minds?

p.19

-- 11-13- rather, can only have *metaphysical* significance. It could be useful in the philosophy of language.

-- 16-7- why "Being = necessary universality"? Because Being ultimately includes all necessary universals? Having the property of humanity make something human. By parity, having the property necessary universality makes something a necessary universal (or so it would seem). But being a being doesn't make something a necessary universal, else nothing would be contingent. Please clarify.

-- 23-5- either O. is way off base or the translation needs altering. Both concepts and vocal signs exist. So both are "existing things," whence (on this translation) both are only referred to. But in fact vocal signs both refer and are referred to (one can talk about words), and as vocal signs exist, existing things both refer and are referred to.

p.20

-- 1-2- also to classify and recognize in accord with this meaning. One needn't bring in universals to ascribe these abilities.

-- 5-4 up- it's debatable whether Aristotelian accidents *are* beings (Aquinas, who was no mean Aristotle-commentator, was careful to call them only "things" by which substances have being in certain ways, and so to deny them this status). And why say that substances *necessarily* have to have these? Aristotle believed in immaterial substances which lack most or all of them. And even in the case of material substances, is it really necessary that they have all, or is it just a fact about them that they do? I'm not sure Aristotle *claims* that it is even a contingent fact that all material substances have all the sorts of accident. Do the heavenly spheres have posture? The entire material universe is for Aristotle a finite material body which cannot have what he calls place, since an Aristotelian place is "the inmost surface of the *containing* body."

-- Last-21, 1- A. would say he'd answered this (*modulo* rejecting the claim that Being is) by saying all the various ways things have being.

p.21

-- 4-5- but something is said about the relations between instances of the categories, which A. would think the only relevant topic here. Save for substance, all are categories of accidents. Relations between these would thus be accidents of accidents. And A. denies that accidents can have accidents. (If they could, the distinction between them and substances would be threatened.)

-- 5-6- but if there were such relations, they'd just be instances of the category of relation: no need to posit another category.

-- 6-8- are such accounts available in the Physics and Metaphysics?

-- 8-10- A. would hardly call this a criticism, as he denies that there *are* such Forms.

-- 13-14- why say that being categorical implies this? Please clarify.

-- 22- P. doesn't call it a category, does he? (He's doing logic, not metaphysics, in his own mind.) Why think this is so?

p.26

-- 2- most metaphysicians past and present would disagree. (Or am I wrong?- if I am, that would itself be worth showing.) If so, some justification is needed here. What metaphysics is is defined at least partly by its history: metaphysics is what the metaphysicians have done. So if you can't show that many or most have seen themselves has having to answer this question, you're offering an "error theory" of metaphysics, claiming that most who've done it have really missed its central issue. That's not plausible.

p.33

-- 2 up- what powers do statues have *as such,* apart from powers to be perceived in certain ways?

-- Last- I'd see a form as a categorical state *underlying* and giving rise to a cluster of powers, which are the kind's proper accidents- unless you're really reducing forms like humanity to differentiae like rationality (which does seem a cluster of powers). At any rate, this isn't the intuitive characterization of an Aristotelian substantial form. You should give a footnote explaining why you take the notion this way.

p.34

-- 2-5- if forms are universals, shouldn't you say that the matter individuates the statue, not the form?

-- 1st full par.- a statue's form is genuinely a form: but it's an accidental form. Beyond the obvious point that statues aren't alive, this comparison isn't helpful. There is certainly a form which is destroyed when the statue is: the shape which makes the matter a statue. There certainly seem to be such things as mere alterations in a statue: one can chip just a fleck off one edge, for instance. Or else what are "mere alterations," and what are changes which aren't? Finally, *what* is form in the primary sense in a live thing? The example given is of a thing which has a form: you haven't pointed the form out, unless being alive is what you mean.

p.37

-- 3-5- you can't have it both ways. If the singular causal transactions "constitute" the laws, they determine what the laws are. Then it's only metaphorically that we can say that the laws shape or determine the singular cases. If the laws really do shape what singular events occur, then they have some reality antecedent to the events- e.g. as unexemplified universals- and so aren't really constituted by them. One or the other must "come first"- unless I'm seriously missing something. Your solution to the explanation-puzzle really comes down on the law-antecedent side of this.

p.39

-- 12-3- isn't it supposed to be the case that nothing falls into more than one category at a particular level? But the same things are both spatio-temporal and comprehensible: physics comprehends the nature of matter, and we can comprehend the way matter is taken up into the purpose of getting Being contemplated. Or else you're using "comprehensible" in a restricted technical sense which ought to be made explicit.

p.41

-- 1-4- things immediately given to sense are mediately given to intellectual cognition: we can think abstractly about what we see. Why isn't this a case of the same things falling into two categories at the same level? Also, why not take sensing as a kind of cognition? Cognition is taking in and processing information. Sensing does both..

-- l. 17- you mean "former."

-- Last par.- we do not merely sense qualities. We see substances *as* substances (not to acknowledge this leads to the British empiricist withering away of the very concept of substance). But there's no apparent room for this in your scheme: substances as such are neither qualities, nor structures, nor structures of qualities. Or if you mean to say that substances *are* structures of qualities (as on e.g. the bundle theory of substance), that's very controversial, and requires discussion.

p.44

-- 5-3 up: necessary-for applies quite well- only equally between any sets of necessary universals. Particular Being, let's say, is necessary for Universal Being, because this conditional is true: were there no Particular Being, there would be no Universal Being. Equally, it's true that were there no Universal Being, there would be no Particular Being. This is because such conditionals are "counterpossibles," conditionals with necessarily false antecedents. And on the

standard treatment of these, all such conditionals are true. (See e.g. David Lewis' *Counterfactuals* (Harvard '73).

Some claim that literal relations of production can obtain among necessary beings. See Thomas Morris and Christopher Menzel, "Absolute Creation," *American Philosophical Quarterly* c. 1986

p.45

-- 3-5- it's not obvious, really, that a genuine causal relation would have to discriminate. Consider two playing-cards set three inches apart and falling toward one another. They meet, each stops the other, and they then hold one another up, forming two legs of a triangle (the table they're on providing the third). Each is then causing the other to remain upright. Why couldn't something similar hold among all necessary universals: each set of them in a related way holding the rest in being?

p.46

-- 1st full par.- the relation here seems far closer to part-whole than to efficient causation: you seem to show that differentiae are (as it were) material causes of species.

p.51

-- Some of *differentia* claims here are implausible. You have it that what makes a universal contingent is that it is a universal instanced (only?) by material things. (I have to take "material" this way, since you've already allowed that necessary universals have material components.) This implies that there cannot be a contingent immaterial being. But surely it's at least possible that there be such things as souls and angels: immaterial, but not necessary. These are surely conceivable, and conceivability is *defeasible evidence* of possibility, at least. Defeasible evidence carries the day unless something defeats it, i.e. is outweighing evidence for the negation of what the defeasible evidence supports. What defeater can you offer here? And in any case, why *can't* the universal for a material kind exist necessarily? Defenders of divine idea theories have held that God necessarily has the universal Cathood in mind. I can see nothing absurd in this. Again, you have it that what makes a particular spatiotemporal is being sensible. But tracts of space and stretches of time are spatio-temporal particulars and yet cannot be sensed. (Perhaps you can reply here with a simple denial, adopting a theory that there are no spaces or times or spacetime, merely universals of spatiotemporal relation. If so, that theory requires some arguing.) So are quantum particles too small to be sensed, unless by "sensible" you mean "whose existence can be

concluded from some thinking about directly given sensible evidence": in which case God could count as sensible, as could universals.

It would be clearer, if I'm right as to your position, to have the inmost circle divided into particular and universal and label the whole diagram "Being." Even without the point about disjunction, this would better display that Being is "all-inclusive" (p8, cf 30 the full diagram gives what it is to be Being).