

Problèmes de Métaphysique I et II

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Two key differences :

- Modality is 'quantificational', essence is not.
- Modality is 'representational', essence is not.

Two claims :

- Essence is a-modal : to say, of a , that it is essentially F , is not to say anything about the modal status of " Fa ".
- Essence may be contingent : it is possible that there is a thing, a , which is essentially F but contingently F .

Distinguish

- counterfactuals
- counterevaluatives
- counterepistemics

Distinguish

- (1) Suppose that pigs fly / that murder is right.
- (2) Imagine that pigs fly / that murder is right.
- (3) Accept as fictionally true that pigs fly / that murder is right.
- (4) Pretend that pigs fly / that murder is right.
- (5) Make-believedly see pigs fly / approve of murder.

"in virtue of":

ontological priority : processes, matter, parts, exemplars, tokens, instances and concreta are ontologically more basic than substances, forms, wholes, species, types, properties and abstracta.

dependency relations : substances, forms, wholes, species, types, properties and abstracta depend on their processes, matter, parts, exemplars, tokens, instances and concreta.

essential determination : properties, abstracta, types, species, wholes, forms and substances could not be what they are and have *different* instances, concreta, tokens, exemplars, parts, matter and processes.

individuation : processes, matter, parts, exemplars, tokens, instances and concreta are individuated by and identified with recourse to their substances, forms, wholes, species, types, abstracta and properties.

property transference : processes, matter, parts, exemplars, tokens, concreta and instances *inherit* some of their properties from their substances, forms, wholes, species, types, abstracta and properties.

Species of determination :

1. substance/process : coming to exist and ceasing to be are often fading in and withering out (ontological vagueness).
2. form/matter : forms can gradually change their matter (Theseus' ship).
3. whole/parts : wholes change their parts (Tibbles shedding its hairs).
4. species/exemplars : species evolve and new species come into being (Darwinian evolution vs. Aristotelian species-essentialism).
5. types/tokens : typehood depends on extrinsic and contingent, often intentional, features (another person with a very different voice repeating what I say).
6. abstracta/concreta : many abstracta change (the UN, the average Englishman, the ideal of a just society).
7. universals/instances : partial resemblance is not transitive (Goodman's problems for resemblance nominalism).

Both " Fa in virtue of b " and " b makes a F " are closely connected to one species of " Fa because of Gb ". In cases of property transference, some sentence of the form " Fa because q " is true, where q ascribes an essential property to a or mentions the essence of F . Mulligan (2006a: 38) calls this the "because" of essence", which he claims is required by

the essential “because”. The latter, I would say, is nothing other than essential determination :¹

1. my life has the spatio-temporal properties it has *because* it is traced out by me ;
2. the lump of bronze has the shape it has *because* it constitutes a certain statue ;
3. my arm is alive *because* it is a part of me ;
4. the Dodo became extinct *because* its last exemplar died ;
5. the type “man” is true of men *because* its tokens are used a certain way ;
6. the average Swiss becomes richer *because* the Swiss are making more money ;
7. *being red* resembles *being orange* more than it does *being blue* *because* red things being more similar to orange things than they are to blue things.

But even the essential “because” has a confusing variety of uses. We have to distinguish, both with respect to the *explanans* and to the *explanandum*, cases where what is explained / what explains is a fact, a property or a particular. This gives us nine cases to consider (the *explananda* arranged horizontally, the *explanantia* arranged vertically) :

	fact	property	particular
fact	$\text{Expl}(q,p)$	G (is what it is) because q	a (exists) because q
property	$\Box_F p$	$F \Rightarrow G$	a (exists) because of F
particular	$\Box_b p$	G (is what it is) because of b	$b \Rightarrow a$

Not for all of these relation types exist expressions in English for determination relations. For the left column, we have “ p because q ”, “it is true in virtue of what it is to be an F that p ” and “it is true in virtue of the essence of a that p ”, while for those in the middle and the right columns we have to find some more cumbersome locution. Two relation types stand out, however : the constitution of a property by another (“ $F \Rightarrow G$ ”), to which we will come back in sct. ??, and the relation of ontological dependence (“ $b \Rightarrow a$ ”), on which more below. Let us focus for the moment on determination relations explaining a fact, in particular those expressed by a sentential operator.

1. Properties are parts of (the sum of) their instances and convey to them some of their properties (higher-order properties, adverbials). Instances have a qualitative profile and are located with respect to it.
2. Abstracta are parts of (the sum of) their concreta and convey to them some of their properties (numerosity). Concreta have a formal profile.
3. Types are parts of (the sum of) their tokens and convey to them some of their properties (supertypes). Tokens have a typehood-profile.
4. Species are parts of (the sum of) their exemplars and convey to them some of their properties (essential determinations). Exemplars have a biological profile.
5. Wholes are parts of (the sum of) their parts and convey to them some of their properties (parthood properties). Parts have a mereological profile.
6. Forms are parts of (the sum of) their matter and convey to them some of their properties (persistence conditions).
7. Substances are parts of (the sum of) their process and convey to them some of their properties (identity conditions).

Références

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- Mulligan, Kevin, 2007. “Two Dogmas of Truthmaking”. In Monnoyer, Jean-Maurice, editor, *Metaphysics and Truthmakers*. Frankfurt a.M. : Ontos. Proceedings of the Conference “Truths and Truthmakers, 20 Years After”, Aix-en-Provence, December 10-12, 2004

¹I do not wish to commit myself to the further claim that if a sentence “ Fa because q ” with an essential “because” is true, then “ q ” is more ontologically fundamental than “ Fa ” and that a is not ontologically basic (Mulligan 2006b 2007).