WHAT DOES ATHENS HAVE TO DO WITH EDINBURGH?
Can an Immanent-Realist View of Universals Help us Understand T.F. Torrance's Conception of Reality?

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Abstract: *The kataphystic epistemology of T.F. Torrance is established upon a conception of reality determined by God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. However, understanding exactly what Torrance conceived the nature of reality to be is one of the more difficult challenges facing his interpreters. Torrance did not articulate his view of reality in formal proofs, but rather as the obedient response to God's self-revelation. Problematically, however, Torrance's attempts to establish connections between a theologically determined conception of reality and the view of reality in twentieth century physics has been subjected to continued criticism. This paper asks whether a fresh approach can help to clarify what Torrance's conception of reality is via a comparative analysis with an immanent-realist reading of Aristotle's formal discussion of ousia in the Categories. It is not argued that Torrance developed his conception of reality under the determination of Aristotelian metaphysics. It is argued that by such an analysis, we might understand Torrance's theologically determined understanding of reality a little better, particularly on the crucial matters such as the actual existence of reality independent of the observer and its own intrinsic intelligibility in intimate conjunction with phenomena.*

T.F. Torrance's *kataphystic* epistemological approach implies a particular conception of reality. The "scientific" attempt to know reality in accordance with its nature, such that reality might be known under the determination of its inherent rationality (instead of the human mind impressing its own rational

forms upon reality) contains within itself fundamental convictions about the way things are.[1] However, Torrance did not provide a focused metaphysical or formal account of his ontology to accompany this epistemology.[2] On one level, this is understandable; Torrance was a Christian theologian operating with a view of reality which he believed to be necessitated by God's self-revelation as the Triune Creator. What is the need for formal proof of realist ontology when obedience to God's self-revelation requires an understanding of reality that undergirds a *kataphystic* epistemology? In this respect, Torrance had a robust theological foundation for believing reality to be amenable to an epistemological stance in which knowledge is formed in accordance with the nature of reality.

However, the way in which Torrance described his conception of reality has left some work for those who follow behind. Torrance tended to communicate his convictions about reality by co-ordinating his theologically determined understanding of reality to the natural sciences, chiefly physics.[3] Yet, many interpreters and critics of Torrance have drawn attention to the problematic nature of Torrance's understanding of developments in twentieth century science.[4] Consequently, the attempt to explicate Torrance's understanding of reality through his discussion on the natural sciences is fraught with difficulties

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1   This inquiry has been given fresh impetus recently by T. Stevick, *Encountering Reality: T.F. Torrance on Truth and Human Understanding* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016).

2   Perhaps the closest he comes is his theses on truth, T.F. Torrance, "Truth and Authority: Theses on Truth," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 38 (1972), 215-242.

3   This is a common feature in Torrance's corpus. See, for example, T.F. Torrance, *The Ground and Grammar of Theology*, Belfast: Christian Journals, 1980. New Edition, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), 110-145.

4   Including, W.H., Wong, "An Appraisal of the Interpretation of Einsteinian Physics in T.F. Torrance's Scientific Theology," PhD, The University of Aberdeen (1994); T. Luoma, *Incarnation and Physics: Natural Science in the Theology of Thomas F. Torrance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2002, 116-117; C. Weightman, *Theology in a Polanyian Universe: The Theology of Thomas Torrance* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 191-193; D. Munchin, *Is Theology a Science? The Nature of the Scientific Enterprise in the Scientific Theology of Thomas F. Torrance and the Anarchic Epistemology of Paul Feyerabend* (Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 2011), 58-59, 61-67; I. Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1966), 272 n27. Meanwhile, contrary understandings of Einsteinian physics are commonplace. A. Fine, *The Shaky Game: Einstein, Realism and Quantum Theory* (Chicago: Chicago University Press), 1986, 86-111; J., Polkinghorne, *Reason and Reality: The Relationship between Science and Theology* (Atlanta: Trinity Press International, 1991), 85; A., Grünbaum, "The Philosophical Retention of Absolute Space in Einstein's General Theory of Relativity," *Philosophical Review* 66.4 (1957), 525-534.

and limited in what it can achieve.[5] Given these difficulties, the inquiry into the conception of reality that provided the foundation for Torrance's *kata physin* epistemology may be well served by adopting new angles of approach.

This essay is a comparative analysis between Torrance's theologically determined understanding of reality and an immanent-realist understanding of universals in Aristotle's *Categories*. It is argued that - although these are two incredibly different approaches to understanding reality – a comparative analysis yields some interesting connections on account of which new avenues of approach are opened to Torrance's conception of reality. At first sight, this seems unlikely. Aristotle's analysis of being *qua* being provides a formal account of the way things are. Torrance, however, articulated his understanding of reality under the determination of God's self-revelation as Triune Creator. So, while I am aware that the approach taken here is counter-intuitive, it is my view that some new light can be shed on Torrance's understanding of reality by holding it in relation to an immanent-realist view of universals.

To be clear, this is *not* a proposal that Torrance's conception of reality is determined by Aristotle, and nor is this a proposal that we should understand Torrance within such a schema. Rather, it is a suggestion that our understanding of Torrance's *theologically determined* conception of reality may be aided through holding it in relation to a formal ontology with which it has some points of compatibility.

Kataphystic Knowledge

Kataphystic knowledge asserts that knowledge is authentic only when it is determined in both conceptual representations and the method of inquiry by the actual state of affairs in reality.[6] To know *kata physin* is to know reality in accordance with its nature.[7] Torrance traced the use of this phrase to the "dogmatic" scientists of Alexandria in the first century AD,[8] in their conception of

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5   For example, J. Morrison, *Knowledge of the Self-Revealing God in the Thought of Thomas Forsyth Torrance* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 77-97.

6   T.F. Torrance, *God and Rationality* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 52-53, 114-116 & T.F. Torrance, *Theological Science* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), 25-26, 198.

7   T.F. Torrance, *Divine Meaning: Studies in Patristic Hermeneutics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 204-205.

8   T.F. Torrance, *Theological and Natural Science* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002), 5-6. *Contra* Stevick, who has argued that Torrance traced the term to fourth century Greek patristic writers. Stevick, "*Kata Physin*: A Critical Exploration of the Epistemology of T.F. Torrance as it Relates to the Philosophy of Theological and Natural Science," PhD, University of Saint Andrews (2015), 3-6.

"science as proceeding strictly in accordance with nature (*kata physin)*, in order bring to light the actual nature of reality under question."[9] In the light of this precedent, *kataphystic* knowledge is a disciplined form of human knowing, such that thought may be determined in accordance with the nature of reality, so to facilitate the disclosure of the order of things in reality itself.

As a corollary of this, in *kataphystic* epistemology human reason does not operate according to its own laws or *a priori* logical constructs, but rather in accordance with the rationality that is inherent to reality. This is well demonstrated by Torrance's understanding of scientific knowledge as a disciplined form of knowledge, which attempts to "know something strictly in accordance with its own nature."[10] For Torrance, knowing in accordance with its nature involves the natural intelligible form of reality to shape the structure of human concepts concerning it. Torrance explained that scientific knowledge is that through which "we bring the inherent rationality of things to light and expression as we let the realities we investigate disclose themselves to us under our questioning and we on our part submit our minds to their intrinsic connections and order."[11] As such, the counterpoint to Torrance's conception of *kataphystic* epistemology is the object-making mode of thought he associated with the transcendental idealism of Immanuel Kant, in which "a thing is 'known' only as it is coercively grasped and projected as an 'object' through an inflexible conceptual structure," which imposes its own version of rational form upon reality.[12]

As a function of this determination of thought from the side of reality, Torrance posited a distinction between general science and special science.[13] General science is the scientific principle that *reality is to be known in accordance with its nature*. Special science is the determination of a specific mode of inquiry by the unique demands of the nature of the particular reality it is orientated toward. The special sciences are the manifold of sciences, necessitated by principle of general science to know different realities in accordance with their nature.[14] By this mechanism, Torrance repudiated a universal scientific method, which would constitute the imposition of an *a priori* logical framework upon reality.[15]

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9   Torrance, *Theological and Natural Science*, 6.

10   T.F. Torrance, "Science, Theology and Unity," *Theology Today* 21 (1964), 149-154.

11   Torrance, *Theological Science*, xi.

12   Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 9-10.

13   Torrance, *Theological Science*, 112ff.

14   See also Alister McGrath's comments on the stratification of the sciences. A.E., McGrath, *A Scientific Theology, Volume 2: Reality* (London: T&T Clark, 2002), 219-226.

15   Torrance, *Theological Science*, 112.

There is no one universal scientific approach to all possible objects, because all possible objects are not the same, and they require a corresponding manner of being cognized. Through this, Torrance articulated the fundamental premise of his *kataphystic* approach: human reason does not operate in accordance with its own laws, but rather, it operates in accordance with the independent nature of reality.[16]

Torrance's *kataphystic* approach is well demonstrated by his understanding of the dogmatic science of the sixteenth century. Here, a universally applied method of valid inference from fixed axioms was replaced with an attempt to develop positive knowledge that is determined by reality itself.[17] To illustrate, Torrance pointed to Francis Bacon's interrogative questioning in which – so Torrance understood – Bacon sought to allow the implicit rational structure of reality to be disclosed through speculative questioning, rather than imposing a predetermined rational form upon it.[18] In *kata physin* epistemology, then, it is the nature of reality that determines thought. But this leaves the question, what must reality be like if it is to be known in this way?

Torrance's Understanding of Reality

In order for Torrance's *kataphystic* epistemology to be intelligible, Travis Stevick has argued that two suppositions regarding reality must be held: (i) that there is something which exists independently of the knower and (ii) that we have some form of epistemic access to it.[19] While these are very sensible observations, they are too broad, and leave unsaid implicit conditions that need to be drawn out and made explicit. As it stands, Stevick's proposals are open to misinterpretation by any who do not hold such pronounced realist convictions.

First, Stevick's proposal that reality exists independent from the knower should be clarified to include a clear statement of the *intelligibility of reality aside from the rational form imposed upon it from the side of humanity*. It is only in this way that human rationality will be prevented from imposing its own

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16   For this reason, Torrance can be favourably compared to the position of Karl Barth in his dispute with Heinrich Scholz over the scientific status of theology. See K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics: Volume One, Part One: The Doctrine of the Word of God*, 8-10; H. Scholz, "Wie is eine evangelische Theologie als Wissenschaft möglich?" *Zwischen den Zeiten* 9 (1931), 8-53. See also, McGrath, *Scientific Theology*, 2.285-290 & W. Pannenberg, *Philosophy of Science* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1976), 265-275.

17   Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 89. .

18   Torrance, *Theological Science*, 71-72.

19   Stevick, "*Kata Physin,*" xi, 6-9.

rational form upon reality, but rather be orientated to exposing the antecedent coherence in reality itself.[20] This is an important clarification, as – in Torrance's view – to simply hold to the independent existence of reality is not the same thing as maintaining the priority of the intrinsic rationality of reality.[21] It is essential to Torrance's epistemology that reality has *both* independent existence and an independent cognizable form aside from correlation to the observer. Aside from this, the problems that Torrance associated with the formal notation of predicate logic may obtain in our conception of reality:

> [symbolic logic] appears to restrict relations, and therefore form and order, to the world of the mind, while positing things and existence in the nature of the real world, which not only denies the latter any inherent rationality or knowability but implies that the more we think in terms of relations the more we misrepresent it.[22]

Second, Stevick's supposition that we have some form of epistemic access to reality should be clarified by a clear statement of the correspondence in Torrance's thought between reality's independent intelligibility and the way reality appears to the observer,[23] such that reality can be known as it is in itself. If this clarification

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20 It is evident that this is Stevick's ultimate intention. See Stevick, "*Kata Physin,*" 133.

21 It is not sufficient to say that reality exists independent from the knower, as this on its own does not necessitate that the inherent order of reality must determine how we are to think of it. In Torrance's view, Kant recognized the existence of reality aside from his transcendental deductions, however, sensible intuitions were interpreted through the mental categories such that intelligible form is imposed upon the way things appear from an idealized and *a priori* rational structure. Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 38-422; *Reality and Evangelical Theology*, 39-41. For a similar analysis of Kant, see K.R. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*. Fourth Edition (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 179f.

22 Torrance, *Theological Science*, 225.

23 This close correspondence between the intrinsic intelligibility of reality and phenomena is nuanced in Torrance's thought. There are occasions in which Torrance could be understood as identifying a disconnect between the formal structures of reality and material appearance. Torrance referred to Einstein's aphorism "God does not wear his heart on his sleeve," explaining it as meaning that "the real secrets of nature cannot be read off the patterns of the phenomenal surface. That is to say we cannot deduce from appearances the deep structures of reality." However, it is important to note that Torrance went on to say, "Einstein's concern was to penetrate into the underlying ontological structure of the ordered regularity of things, to which the phenomenal patterns of that regularity are coordinated, and by which they are controlled." T.F. Torrance, *The Ground and Grammar of Theology: Consonance between Theology and Science* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), 119. How are we to understand this complexity? Torrance's opposition to ontological dualism (see the discussion below) means that to posit any rupture in the relation between formal structure and material appearance would be to insert a

is not made, epistemic access could be mistaken for naïve empiricism where thought is controlled only by the way things appear considered independently from any connection to reality's internal intelligibility.[24] Torrance's antipathy to this is well demonstrated by his resistance to "observationalist" conceptions of science,[25] along with the methodological and observationalist conceptions of

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damaging inconsistency into Torrance's thought. In my view, Torrance meant that the way things appear cannot be *abstracted* from the ontic structures that gave rise to them, and interpreted only in the shallows of the surface pattern (see Torrance's definition of abstraction, T.F. Torrance, "Notes and Concepts" in T.F. Torrance (ed), *Belief in Science and the Christian Life: The Relevance of Michael Polanyi's Thought for Christian Life and Faith*, 1980, 133. See also Torrance's frequent assertions that Einstein's approach was antithetical to this. Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 162; T.F. Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order*, 15, 80.). Instead, we are to think conjunctively across the levels of the empirical and the theoretical, in which through "intellective penetration or theoretic insight," phenomena are held in intimate connection to the intelligibility of reality that gave rise to them (see Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 122). Torrance's caution is with taking phenomenal events and interpreting them in accordance with human rationality, rather than understanding phenomena as inherently significant. Torrance's comments, therefore, do not indicate any disconnect between the way things appear and the intelligible order that controls them (see my discussion on Torrance's stratified understanding of reality below). Instead, Torrance's comments demonstrate that we do not move from phenomena to the intelligible order by logical deduction (T.F. Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence in the Frame of Knowledge*, 114, 76, 78, 81-82, 119; T.F. Torrance, *Theological and Natural Science*, 30) for this is to impose an alien rational framework upon reality (consonant with Torrance's antipathy to object-making modes of thought, see Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 9-10). Torrance's complaint is not with the empirical component of knowledge, but rather with the creation of artificial knowledge by imposing rational form upon phenomena, instead of deep, object-oriented knowledge. So, the movement from phenomena to reality is by intuitive insight, a pre-logical and subsidiary awareness of the ontological state of affairs that control the pattern of phenomena, and *not by logical deduction from experience*. See Torrance's important clarification on this matter, Torrance, *Reality and Scientific Theology*, 83-84. See also the connected identification of Einstein's conception of science, Torrance, *Reality and Scientific Theology*, 160-161. See also, Torrance's associated discussion of a bipolar conceptuality in which the empirical and the theoretical components of knowledge operate together such that we do not impose our own rationality upon phenomena. See T.F. Torrance, "Theological Realism," in eds. B. Hebblethwaite and S. Sutherland, *The Philosophical Frontiers of Christian Theology: Essays Presented to D.M. Mackinnon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 169-198 (esp. 183-192). In this connection, Torrance's comment that the scientist has to be "committed to a fundamental attitude to the world, which affects all theory-laden experiment" (Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 45), is not evidence of interpreting experience through a pre-established schema, but rather a statement of ultimate beliefs, whereby the Christian theist may interact with phenomena with the ultimate belief that it has a created intelligibility (Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 52-61).

24   Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 73.

25   Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 6-7.

objectivity which this engenders.[26] Aside from this clarification, epistemic access could be understood as being uniquely concerned with the observable, "bracketing off from its purview […] any concept of being or substance as refractory to its analytical method."[27]

When these elements are drawn out, Stevick's two suppositions regarding reality upon which Torrance's epistemology is comprehensible can be expanded to four:

- The independent existence of reality aside from correlation to the consciousness of the observer.
- Reality has its own internal structure which is autonomous from correlation to the cognitive structures of the observer.
- The ontic identity of reality manifests itself through the way it appears such that phenomena are held in intimate conjunction with reality *per se*.
- There is a means of epistemic access to reality whereby the inherent order of phenomena owing to its correlation to the ontic character of reality is imposed upon the human mind.

It may be objected that Torrance's view of reality was not developed in order to meet the criteria of a predetermined epistemological system (such a thing would be contrary to Torrance's entire project). This is not what is being suggested. Instead, the above has reversed from Torrance's *kataphystic* approach to the suppositions regarding reality that make this approach intelligible. This approach on its own, however, is not sufficient. Torrance was primarily a Christian theologian, who sought to think in obedience to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. As such, it is to the theological basis of Torrance's conception of reality that the discussion must turn.

Despite this, interpreters of Torrance's thought have attempted to identify the character of Torrance's conception of reality. James Morrison has pointed to the significance of Scottish common sense realism to Torrance's thought.[28] Douglas Trook has identified Torrance as holding a form of realist metaphysics on the grounds that Torrance believes in the actuality of reality beyond that which can be observed.[29] Similarly, Roland Spjuth sees aspects of metaphysical

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26   Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 73.

27   Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 63.

28   Morrison, *Self-Revealing*, 19-20.

29   D. Trook, "Unified Christocentric Field: Toward a Time-Eternity Relativity Model for the Theological Hermeneutics in the Onto-Relational Theology of Thomas F. Torrance," PhD, Drew University (1986), 3-6.

realism in Torrance's position.[30] The particular strength of Spjuth's analysis is the emphasis he lays on Torrance's view that the *logical validity in conceptual systems is primarily derived from the antecedent coherence of reality itself*. Consequently, Spjuth sees more clearly than others that conceptual coherence is the formal articulation of the rational form inherent in reality.[31] Tapio Luoma has argued that the consubstantiality between appearance and reality inherent in the Nicene *homoousion* forms the basis of Torrance's realist metaphysic in which reality compels the observer to think in accordance with it.[32] Most recently, Stevick has attempted to establish some correlation between Torrance's position and Roy Bhaskar through the insistence upon mechanisms more ontologically basic than phenomena which determine phenomena.[33] As such, Stevick draws an association between Torrance and transcendental realism.

The inherent danger in these approaches is the temptation to force Torrance into metaphysical categories into which he will not fit. One way to prevent this is to prioritize Torrance's theologically determined conception of reality through his "Christocentric" understanding of creation.[34] Torrance understood creation from the controlling principle of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. From this basis, Torrance understood creation as that which is made in accordance with the will of the Father through the *Logos* in contrast to the eternal generation of the Son from the being of the Father.[35] In this way, Torrance asserted the creation of the world from nothing, tracing its existence to the volition of God.[36] From this basis, Torrance was able to stress the freedom of God from creation

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30   R. Spjuth, *Creation, Contingence and Divine Presence in the Theologies of Thomas F. Torrance and Eberhard Jüngel* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1995), 94-101.

31   Spjuth, *Creation*, 96ff.

32   T. Luoma, *Incarnation and Physics*, 64ff.

33   Stevick, "*Kata Physin*", 56. See also, Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science* (Leeds: Leeds Books, 1976), 20; 25; 46-47; 202.

34   Torrance, *The Trinitarian Faith: The Evangelical Theology of the Ancient Catholic Church* (T&T Clark, 1988), 84.

35   T.F. Torrance, *Trinitarian Faith*, 79ff; T.F. Torrance, *The Christian Doctrine of God: One Being Three Persons* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 208ff. An approach Torrance learnt from Fr. G. Florovsky whose concept of "transcendental entelechy" is an important (and often neglected) conceptual parallel to Torrance's notion of contingent intelligibility. See G. Florovsky, "Creation and Creaturehood," in *Creation and Redemption: Volume Three in the Collected Works of Georges Florovsky Emeritus Professor of Eastern Church History* (Belmont: Nordland, 1976), 43-78. See A.J.D. Irving, "Fr. Georges Florovsky and Thomas F. Torrance on the Doctrine of Creation," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, forthcoming, 2017.

36   Torrance, *Trinitarian Faith*, 84-89 & 95-98.

and (established within God's freedom) the freedom of creation from God, in terms of its *discrete existence*.[37] Moreover, Torrance asserted that both matter and form are alike as created from nothing, drawing the conclusion that one does not have precedence over the other.[38] In this connection, Torrance was able to assert the contingent intelligibility of creation; creation is pervaded with one constant order that is endowed upon it through the creative act of God.[39] By so doing, Torrance substantiated the connection between creation from nothing and the intelligibility of creation through lengthy expositions of the thought of Athanasius,[40] Basil of Caesarea[41] and John Philoponus.[42] Set upon the doctrine of creation Torrance's conception of reality is characterized by the actual existence of creation and creation's rational order, endowed upon it by God on account of which it is intelligible aside from the rational activity of humanity. This brief outline of Torrance's doctrine of creation sets the trajectory for an understanding of reality as *existing aside from humanity*, and composed of an *intelligible order aside from the imposition of rational form from the side of humanity*. Further insight is given into these guiding principles through three characteristically Torrancian ideas: (a) intrinsic intelligibility; (b) the truth of being; (c) a stratified understanding of reality.

(a) By intrinsic intelligibility (and its various synonyms[43]), Torrance meant that the property of being intelligible is not imposed upon reality from without, but rather is inherent to reality. This intrinsic intelligibility takes the form of an internal coherence which makes reality amenable to our understanding.[44] The

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37   Torrance, *Trinitarian Faith*, 105-109.

38   Torrance, *Trinitarian Faith*, 97-97.

39   T.F. Torrance, *The Ground and Grammar of Theology* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 1980), 53; *Trinitarian Faith*, 102-104.

40   Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 76-77; *Trinitarian Faith*, 93-104; *Theological and Natural Science*, 36-37 & T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation: Essays towards Evangelical and Catholic Unity in the East and West* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1975), 217-221.

41   T.F. Torrance, "Revelation, Creation and Law," *Heythrop Journal*, XXXVII, 1996, 272-283; T.F. Torrance, "The Three Hierarchs and the Greek Christian Mind," in *Texts and Studies*, Volume III, 1984; *Trinitarian Faith*, 104.

42   Torrance, *Theological and Natural Science*, 7-12; 63-67; 85-90 & 97-119.

43   Including: inherent intelligibility (T.F. Torrance, *Reality and Scientific Theology* [Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1985], 7); inner rationality (Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 94), immanent rationality (Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 51); and interior logic (*Theological Science*, 205, 212).

44   See Torrance's critique of Kant. T.F. Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence in the Frame of Knowledge: Explorations in the Interrelations of Scientific and Theological*

intrinsic intelligibility of reality is the *order* inherent to reality which is the very structure of reality in accordance with which it is to be understood. This internal order of reality is bound to Torrance's notion of onto-relations, as the being-constituting relations that are the very internal order of reality.[45] Conceiving of reality as intrinsically intelligible is the distinctive character of what Torrance identified as the "classical mind."[46] This has two implications. First, the intrinsic intelligibility of reality is the assertion that reality external to humanity is coherent independent of any logical formalization from the side of humanity. Second, on account of this antecedent order, reality is able to be cognized as it is in itself, because human conceptual structures can be determined by the antecedent rational form in reality.[47] The intrinsic intelligibility of reality is thus the *sine qua non* of all scientific inquiry.[48] It is important to note that the intelligibility of creation is a *contingent* intelligibility. The rational coherence by which reality may be understood is not self-sufficient, but is rather gifted by God. As such, reality might not have been, or might have been other than it is. It is on this basis of the contingent openness of reality that the emphasis of the intrinsic intelligibility of reality may not lead to determinism.

Antithetical to intrinsic intelligibility is Torrance's understanding of ontological dualism, which Torrance held to be the incompatible or artificial relationship between the intelligible and sensible elements of reality.[49] For Torrance's account

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Enterprise (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 36-46.

45   T.F. Torrance, *Reality and Evangelical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1982), 43-45. See especially Torrance's analysis of James Clerk Maxwell. Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 223; 227-228. See also, Morrison, *Self-Revealing*, 77-83 & Luoma, *Incarnation*, 108-109.

46   Torrance, *Reality and Scientific Theology*, 1-31.

47   Torrance held that John Philoponus' assertion of the intrinsic intelligibility of reality through his kinetic theory of light was the foundation for an epistemological approach in which reality could be known out from its inherent rational form. Torrance, *Theological and Natural Science*, 35-36. In a similar fashion, Torrance insisted that Einstein's theories demonstrated reality to be inherently intelligible and constituted by an independent order (Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 72-73, 250). Such a conception of reality, led to an epistemological approach in which theories sought to expose that interior order rather than impose a predetermined logical schema upon reality. Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 82; *Ground and Grammar*, 121-122. It is on this account that Torrance argued that modern physics has had to abandon *a priori* Euclidean geometry and adopt other geometries more congenial to the nature of reality. See Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 133-134.

48   Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 131; *Theological Science*, xi.

49   See Luoma's analysis of dualism and Torrance's distinctive position within the wider field. Luoma, *Incarnation*, 83-85. My own analysis suggests that Torrance's notion of

of the relation of the intelligible and sensible as *incompatible*, see Torrance's analysis of Plato's *Timaeus* 27D -28A;[50] for Torrance's account of the *artificial* relation between the intelligible and the sensible, see Torrance's analysis of the absolute-relative distinction in Newtonian physics.[51] Contrary to ontological dualism, Torrance's intrinsic intelligibility is the integration of the intelligible and the sensible.[52] Reality as it appears to the observer in sensible phenomena is already "interfused" with an intelligible pattern on account of its antecedent order which is inseparable from its manifestation in sensibility.[53] Thus through the notion of intrinsic intelligibility, Torrance asserted that reality is inherently coherent, and does not receive its coherence from the imposition of rational form from some absolute framework, be it Newtonian absolute space or any philosophical prolegomena, such as the transcendental deductions of a Kantian ego.[54] Importantly, this implicit and independent orderliness and coherence of reality is the presupposition of rational knowledge of reality,[55] in which the conceptual constructions of humanity can be determined by the antecedent and ontic coherence of reality.[56]

(b) The truth of being expresses Torrance's conviction that truth is primarily a property of reality. The truth of being is the actual state of affairs that reality is in. Yet, alongside ontic actuality, the truth of being is also the *manifestation* of reality as it is *per se*. So, the truth of being includes a reference to the consubstantiality between reality as it is in itself and reality as it discloses itself to be.

The truth is that which is what it is and that which discloses what it is as it is. The concept of truth enshrines at once the reality of things and the revelation of things as they are in reality. Truth comes to view in its own majesty, freedom and authority, compelling us by the power of what it is to assent to it and acknowledge it for what it is in itself.[57]

"incompatibility" demonstrates a comparatively broad understanding of dualism as the un-natural relationship between poles. See Torrance, *Belief in Science and the Christian Life*, 136. Torrance views as dualistic a relationship which is artificial, or in some way un-organic such that the integration does not extend to the most basic level of reality.

50   Torrance, *Divine Meaning*, 22-25; 160-162.

51   Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 12-36; 61-105; *Ground and Grammar*, 21-25.

52   Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 122.

53   Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 88.

54   Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 9-10.

55   Torrance, *Theological Science*, xi; T.F. Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 26.

56   Torrance, *Ground and* Grammar, 97; 113.

57   Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 303.

Torrance's position is notable in that truth is not primarily identified as the appropriate relation between concept and reality.[58] Truth for Torrance is primarily a characteristic of reality independent from any correlation to the cognitive operations of humanity. A thing is what it is, and this is its truth.[59] The second aspect of the truth of being is its self-disclosure of what it is. As such, truth for Torrance embraces both what something is (truth *per se*) and that the disclosure of that thing such as it is in itself (truth *ad alios*). This is demonstrated through Torrance's understanding of *physis*. *Physis*, Torrance argued, has a double significance referring to what something is in itself, and also to the concrete presence of that reality as it gives itself to be known.[60] Thus *physis* denotes a reality that discloses itself to the observer as it is in itself.[61] As such, Torrance's analysis of *physis* runs in parallel to his understanding of the truth of being.

Tapio Luoma has argued that Torrance's understanding of the *homoousion* should be understood in this connection. Luoma has argued that the *homoousion* is at the heart of Torrance's realism, for through it Torrance insists that the being of God is inseparable from his self-revelation in the person of Jesus Christ.[62] Luoma argues that this undergirds a conception of reality that recognizes the consubstantiality between reality itself and phenomena. According to Luoma, it is on these grounds that the observer can truly be compelled to think in accordance with the nature of reality. While Luoma's point does bring out very clearly the close conjunction between the truth of being *in se* and the truth of being *ad alios*, Torrance did not present his conception of the correlation between reality and appearance with recourse to the *homoousion*.[63] However,

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58   For Torrance's stratified approach to truth and his debt to Anselm on this, see Torrance, *Reality and Scientific Theology*, 140-146.

59   Stevick neglects the manifestation of reality as part of the truth of being. T.M. Stevick, "Truth and Language in the Theology of Thomas F. Torrance," *Participatio Supplementary Volume* 2 (2013), 67-101. By this oversight, Stevick obscures the supposition of co-ordination between reality and appearance, which undergirds intuition as the means of epistemic access to reality, as discussed above.

60   T.F. Torrance, *Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ*, ed. R. Walker, (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009), 202-203.

61   Torrance, *Reconciliation*, 244, 247-248. A distinction must be made here between God and created reality. God as both subject and object of revelation discloses himself to humanity. Created reality, however, must be interrogated in order to be known. The language of "discloses itself" is not then intended to communicate passivity on the side of humanity, but rather that reality is known out from its own inherent intelligibility.

62   Luoma, *Incarnation*, 65-70. For the epistemological significance of the *homoousion*, see Torrance, *Reconciliation*, 240-248.

63   Aside from one illustrative reference. See Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 162.

Luoma is correct to point out that something very much like the *homoousion* is at work in Torrance's understanding of conjunction between appearance and reality. This feature of Torrance's conception of reality is more appropriately analyzed through Torrance's appropriation of a stratified conceptualization of reality, and the relationship between the intelligible and the sensible elements of reality that it implies.

(c) Torrance conceptualized reality as a stratified structure. Through this device, Torrance claimed that the intelligible order of reality determines the behavior of sensible phenomena, such that phenomena have an implicit coherent character derived from the antecedent order of the intelligibility of reality.[64] Torrance tended to conceptualize this hierarchical structure with three strata. By taking a cross-section of two strata from Torrance's hierarchy, the mechanisms that drive the stratified structure of reality can be understood. The immediately higher stratum of the pair exercises control over the behavior of the immediately lower stratum, such that the principles and patterns at the higher stratum impose themselves upon the activity at the lower stratum. Borrowing from Michael Polanyi, Torrance explained that the higher stratum exercises "marginal control" over the lower,[65] such that the activity of the lower stratum is under the determination of patterns at the higher stratum over which it has no control. Adding some flesh to the bones, sensible phenomena are the lowest stratum of Torrance's hierarchy, and the higher strata of reality are the levels of reality's internal intelligibility, with the highest stratum as the ultimate, supra-sensible relations that constitute the ontological character of any given thing. In this way, the order and the pattern that is the intrinsic intelligibility of reality exercises determinative influence over the way things appear. Phenomena are characterized by an implicit pattern owing to their determination by the higher strata of the intelligibility of reality. The logical form of reality is inherent to reality and it manifests itself through phenomena.[66]

A brief comment is required here on the question of epistemic access to reality. Torrance is adamant that the inquirer cannot abstract phenomena from the intelligible structures that govern their behavior and analyse them in isolation as though there is no ontic order that has given rise to the particular pattern

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64   Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order*, 20.

65   Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order,* 20. See also, R.K., Martin, *The Incarnate Ground of the Christian Faith: Toward a Christian Theological Epistemology for the Educational Ministry of the Church* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1998), 229-234.

66   Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 160.

that is implicit in phenomena.[67] As phenomena are composed of an inherent rational pattern owing to its determination from the intrinsic intelligibility of reality, there must be a means of access whereby that implicit rational pattern in phenomena can be apprehended with the minimum interference from human rationality. Torrance turned to the notion of *intuition* as the crucial means of epistemic access, through which reality is apprehended in its unity and as a whole.[68]

Intuition is Torrance's way to apprehend reality so that the determination of phenomena by their intrinsic structures are not obscured. As a function of this, intuition is Torrance's alternative to abstractive forms of induction that treat phenomena on their own, abstracting them from their natural network of meaning and formalizing them instead in accordance with an idealized rational schema via logical deduction. By this is not meant that Torrance was indifferent toward the empirical component of knowledge. The empirical component remains essential, but it is not considered in the observable alone (*contra* positivism). Instead, the empirical elements are apprehended as infused with comprehensible form from the very beginning on account of their determination by the intrinsic intelligibility of reality. In this way, through experience, a subsidiary awareness of the intrinsic intelligibility of reality is developed.[69] The reason that reality can be taken as a whole in this way is that phenomena and the governing intelligibility of reality are themselves integrated.[70] In such a context, the task of developing concepts is not the *imposition* of logical form upon phenomena, but rather is the *exposition* of logical form that is implicit in phenomena on account of its determination (*kata physin*) by the intelligible order of reality in itself. However, this is not to suggest that Torrance had a simplistic view of the movement from appearance to reality. Torrance operated with a sophisticated critical realism in which human concepts are never a picturing model of reality through isomorphic correspondence. In this way, our knowledge never exhausts reality and reality can never be reduced to our statements about it. Reality is composed of a depth of intelligibility that *always* exceeds human capacity to cognize and explicate it.[71]

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67 See Torrance's resistance to positivism and also for Torrance's rejection of conventional or pragmatic scientific concepts, unrelated to the internal ontic order of reality. Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 63-64.

68 Torrance, *Theological Science*, 165n3.

69 Torrance, *Transformation and Convergence*, 154.

70 See Torrance's discussion of a unitary basis of knowledge, T.F. Torrance, *Juridical Law and Physical Law* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1982), 23-34 (esp. 25).

71 Torrance, *Reality and Scientific*, 52-53.

Stepping across from Torrance's general conception of reality to theology, Torrance's approach to the doctrine of the Trinity should be understood in connection to the principle of an interior order determining the outward manifestation. On account of the *homoousion*, and the associated implications for the unity of the being and act of God, Torrance insisted upon holding the economic and the ontological Trinity in close co-ordination.[72] Through this coordination it may be seen that the trinitarian pattern of God's salvific activity in the economy of salvation is determined by the triune being of God in his internal relations.[73] The threefold structure of God's self-revelation is not imposed by theological formalization, but rather it is determined by God's internal relations as Father, Son, and Spirit. Torrance writes,

> It is, then, in the activity of the economic Trinity alone that we may learn something of the ontological Trinity, for we believe that the pattern of coactivity between the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit in the economic Trinity is through the Communion of the Spirit a real reflection of the pattern of the coactivity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the ontological Trinity. It is indeed more than a reflection of it, for it is grounded in it, is altogether inseparable from it, and actually flows from it.[74]

As a function of this commitment to the determination of God's outward relations by his internal relations, Torrance made the characteristic claim that the triune relations of God are the "ground and grammar" of theology.[75] The triune relations of God determines God's outward relations and so through God's outward relations the very structure of theological formalization.[76]

Torrance articulated a theologically determined conception of reality that has a number of elements. First, reality has an independent existence aside from the observer. Second, this independent reality is not characterless but has its own internal structure which is its intrinsic intelligibility. Third, this reality is able to manifest itself such that the way it appears is determined by the inner order of reality. Fourth, on account of this, humanity have some means of epistemic access reality as it is in itself. It is on these suppositions that Torrance's *kata physin* epistemology has its foundation.

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72 Torrance, *Christian Doctrine of God*, 114.

73 Torrance, *Christian Doctrine of God*, 82.

74 Torrance, *Christian Doctrine of God*, 198.

75 Torrance, *Ground and Grammar*, 158-159.

76 Torrance, *Reconciliation*, 260-265.

An Immanent-Realist Reading of Universals in Aristotle's *Categories*[77]

An immanent-realist view of universals is the conviction that the universal is real (it does not only have conceptual existence), but that it only has subsistence when instantiated in a particular.[78] The particular, though, is mutually dependent on the universal, as the particular which instantiates the universal is also dependent on the universal in order to be something.[79] Accordingly, the immanent-realist view of the universal affirms a nexus of ideas: the instantiation of the universal in a particular is necessary to its subsistence; the universal really exists aside from human conceptual formation and the instantiation of the universal in the particular is necessary for the ontological classification of the particular.

The immanent-realist reading of universals may be more clearly seen through holding it in relief to the alternative approaches to the relationship between the universal and the particular.[80] On the one hand, the universal could be thought of as a separate and transcendent entity, the existence of which is separate from instantiation in the particular. This is an *ante rem* view of universals (meaning that

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77   By "universal" I mean a nature that is common across all the members of a certain kind of things. Hospers helpfully suggests that the universal is a property that is shared across many particulars of one ontological grouping that are essential to what that thing is. J., Hospers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited, 1967), 354 & T. Irwin, *A History of Western Philosophy, Volume 1: Classical Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 123.

78   C. Erismann, "*Non Est Natura Sine Persona*. The Issue of uninstantiated universals from late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages," in *Methods and Methodologies: Aristotelian Logic: East and West 500-1500*, eds. M Cameron, J. Marenbon, (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 75-91, esp., 75. For the articulation of an immanent-realist view of universals in Christian theology, see C. Erismann, "A World of Hypostases: John of Damascus' Rethinking of Aristotle's Categorical Ontology," *Studia Patristica*, 50 (2011), 269-287 & J. Zachhuber, "Universals in the Greek Church Fathers," in *Universals in Ancient Philosophy*, eds. R. Chiaradonna & G. Galluzzo, (Pisa: Edizioni Della Normale, 2013), 425-470.

79   My view is established on an essentialist position: the universal is essential to the individual aside from which the individual cannot exist. See C. Witt, *Substance and Essence in Aristotle* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 1. See the excellent discussion of the mutual inter-dependence of universals and particulars in immanent-realism C. Erismann, "Immanent-Realism: A Reconstruction of an Early Medieval Solution to the Problem of Universals," *Documenti E Studi Sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale* 18 (2007), 211-229, esp. 217ff. See also, C.S. Gilmore, "In Defence of Spatially Related Universals," *Australian Journal of Philosophy*, 81 (2003), 420-428.

80   The best discussion of the pertinent philosophical background remains A.C. Lloyd, "Neoplatonic Logic and Aristotelian Logic: I," *Phronesis* 1 (1955), 58-79, esp., 59-64. For a more recent recapitulation of these categories, see R. Cross, "Gregory of Nyssa on Universals," *Vigiliae Christianae*, 56.4 (2002), 372-410, esp., 374ff.

universals exist *before* particulars). On the other hand, universals could have no real existence at all, and only exist in conceptual form as abstractions from sense data. This is a *post rem* view of universals (meaning that universals exist *after* the particulars). In this light, an immanent-realist understanding of universals is the assertion that universals truly exist (they are not concepts), but they do not exist in transcendent form, but have their subsistence within the particular. This is an *in re* view of universals (universals exist within the particular, and never aside from them).[81] The characterization of *ousia* in Aristotle's *Categories* can justifiably be read as an immanent-realist view of universals.[82]

Aristotle's *Categories* is an exercise in predication and classification. It is a logical discourse analysing that which can be said of any particular thing. The different manner in which a subject can be predicated (*ousia*, place, time, quality, relation, action, &c.) are the different categories. Through the categories, then, Aristotle attempted to classify and define the things that are through employing different sorts of predications.[83] The following is concerned with Aristotle's classification through the category of *ousia*. To predicate a subject with regards to its *ousia* is to identify that which a subject is[84] (as if answering the question "what is it?").[85] However, the exact definition that Aristotle ascribes to *ousia* is not easy to ascertain.[86] Consequently, that which Aristotle meant by *ousia*, is best determined by his application of the category.

In the *Categories*, Aristotle attaches *ousia* as a predicate in two different ways.[87] As a function of this, Aristotle's conception of *ousia* is internally differentiated into two distinct poles. At one pole of the internal distinction is *ousia* as the individuated – and so subsistent – particular. This is the basic subject of inherent and grammatical predication (it contains all other properties and

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81   Erismann, "Immanent Realism," 211-212.

82   Erismann, "*Non est Natura Sine Persona,*" 75-78.

83   Aristotle, "Categories," in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation: Volume One*, ed. J. Barnes, trans. J.L. Ackrill, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 1a1. T. Irwin, *Aristotle's First Principles* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1988), 55. See also, A. Code, "Aristotle's Logic and Metaphysics," in *Routledge History of Philosophy, Volume III: From Aristotle to Augustine*, ed. Furley, D., (London: Routledge, 1999), 42.

84   Code, "Aristotle's Logic," 41.

85   Aristotle, "Metaphysics," in *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation: Volume Two*, ed. Barnes, J., trans. Ross, W.D. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 11028b1-3 & 1030a18-20.

86   C. Athanasopoulos, "*Ousia* in Aristotle's Categories," *Logique & Analyse*, 53 (2010), 211-243, cited 217.

87   Irwin, *First*, 55.

cannot be predicated of anything else).[88] In this sense, *ousia* denotes "the idea of independent existence."[89] At the other pole is *ousia* as the common nature. [90] Here, *ousia* denotes *what* any subject is with regards to its ontological kind.[91] So, *ousia* can denote a subsistent particular, or *ousia* can denote the common nature that classifies a subject.[92] Consistent with the agenda of the *Categories* as a whole, *ousia* is understood as containing an internal dialectic of the individual substance and the common nature. This provides Aristotle with a powerful tool of distinguishing between homonymous subjects. For example, the two distinct men who are rightly described as "man" at the level of common nature can be distinguished as "Richard" and "Jamie" at the level of particular substance, the greatest degree of precision in predication.

In the *Categories*, *ousia* as subsistent particular receives the title "primary substance." and *ousia* as common nature is called "secondary substance." The vitally important point is the interdependence between primary substance and secondary substance. This interdependence can be demonstrated through four correlate statements, with two referring to primary substance and two referring to secondary substance. These four correlate statements are displayed in the following table.

	Concerning Primary Substance	**Concerning Secondary Substance**
Correlate Statement No.1.	(a) Primary substance is a unique particular that will not be predicated of anything other than the individual which it denotes.	(b) Secondary substance is a common nature and can be predicated univocally across particulars of one kind.
Correlate Statement No. 2	(a) Primary substance is independent in its subsistence. It does not require instantiation in anything else, but rather provides concrete extension to secondary substance. Yet, primary substance requires secondary substance for ontological form.	(b) Secondary substance is dependent on instantiation in primary substance in order to have subsistence.

88   J. Zachhuber, "Individuality and the Theological Debate About 'Hypostasis,'" in *Individuality in Late Antiquity*, eds. A. Torrance & J. Zachhuber, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 91-111, cited 96.

89   Mackinnon, "Substance," 100.

90   Irwin, *Classical*, 148-149; F. Lewis, *Substance and Predication in Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 4.

91   Irwin, *First*, 56.

92   Stead, *Divine Substance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 69.

The correlate nature of these statements is intended to reflect the profound interdependence of the primary substance and the secondary substance as two complementary poles within Aristotle's conception of *ousia*. As such, these four correlate statements constitute an immanent-realist reading of Aristotle on the status of universals in relation to the particular. The following analysis takes each pair of correlate statements in turn.

The first pair of statements concerns the *distinction* between primary substance as a subsistent particular and secondary substance as a common nature. The secondary substance is a common nature that is shared between distinct particulars of one ontological group. As such, a secondary substance has the capacity to be predicated equally of any number of particulars that are of one kind. On the other hand, a primary substance is an individual, and therefore cannot be predicated of anything other than the individual.

A substance - that which is named "substance" most properly, primarily and most of all - is that which is neither predictable of a subject nor in a subject. For example, the individual human or the individual horse. The species to which the things called primary substances belong, are called *secondary substances*, as also are the genera of these species. For example, the individual man belongs in a species, man, and animal is a genus of the species; so these - both man and animal - are called secondary substances. [93]

The above distinction indicates that the pole of *ousia* identified as "primary substance" is that which will not be predicated of anything further, whereas "secondary substance" is the pole within *ousia* which can be predicated of multiple particulars.[94] Secondary substance can be predicated unequivocally of numerous particulars because it denotes a common nature shared by various individuals.[95] This correlation between unequivocal predication and ontological co-ordination is well described by Johannes Zachhuber: "unequivocal predication is the test to be applied if it is to be determined whether two things are of the same ontological rank."[96] In other words, when two distinct particulars share a common nature, it is to be indicated by the appropriate common noun being predicated to them univocally.[97]

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93   Aristotle, "Categories," 2a 11-18.

94   Lewis, *Predicatio*n, 4.

95   Lewis, *Predication*, 17.

96   Zachhuber, J., "The Problem of Universals in Late Ancient Philosophy and Theology," *Millennium*, 2 (2005), 137-174, cited 147.

97   J., Zachhuber, "Basil and the Three Hypostases Tradition," *ZAC*, 5 (2001), pp. 65-85, cited 84; Kenny, A *New History of Western Philosophy Volume One: Ancient Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 218-220.

On the other hand, primary substance corresponds directly to the subject in a subject-predicate sentence. It cannot be properly predicated of anything other than the individual. Therefore, to say that a primary substance will not be predicated of any other is to say that a primary substance does not belong to any other subject. In this sense, the primary substance should be understood as the unique individual, an independently subsisting concrete[98] reality in which properties inhere. So, grammatically the primary substance is the subject of a predicate clause, and metaphysically, it is the bearer of properties.[99] In this way, Aristotle's scheme both concerns metaphysical nature and also logical predication.

The second pair of statements concerns the status of the subsistence of primary and secondary substance. Secondary substance is dependent upon its instantiation in primary substance in order to have subsistence. Primary substance is an independent subsistence,[100] meaning that it does not require instantiation in any more basic subsistence in order for its actuality.[101] Christopher Stead has written of this distinction, "individuals exist in their own right, whereas universals in some sense depend upon them."[102] In a similar fashion, Pamela Hood has identified the difference between secondary and primary substance in Aristotle with respect to its difference to Platonic thought: "For Aristotle, no universal exists uninstantiated; that is universals do not have separate existence the way in which Plato's forms do." [103]

Secondary substance is dependent upon instantiation in the primary substance in order to have subsistence. [104] Primary substance is that apart from which secondary substance would remain in a state of non-subsistence.[105] Therefore, in contradistinction to Platonic theory of forms which operates with an *ante rem* view of the universals existing before the particular,[106] Aristotle presents a

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98   H.G. Alexander, *The Language and Logic of Philosophy* (New York: University Press of America, 1988), 107-113.

99   Code, "Logic," 44; Irwin, *First*, 82.

100 Lewis, *Predication*, pp. 10-11.

101 Erismann, "Hypostases," 283.

102 Stead, *Divine Substance*, 61.

103 P. Hood, *Aristotle on the Category of Relation* (New York: University Press of America, 2004), 6. See also Erismann, "*Non est Natura Sine Persona,*" 75-76.

104 Irwin, *First*, 80; P., Corkum, "Aristotle on Ontological Dependence," *Phronesis*, 53 (2008), 65-92, cited 67.

105 Aristotle, "Categories," 2b5-6. See also, Lewis, *Predication*, pp. 63-65; Hood, *Category*, 6.

106 Irwin, *Thought*, 124.

view of universals that is categorically *in re*, that is to say, the universals have subsistence in so much as they are instantiated in the particular.[107]

However, Aristotle's insistence upon the subsistence of secondary substance within primary substance should not be understood as advocating a *post rem* view of universals consistent with ontological nominalism (universals as concepts formed via deduction from the aggregate of particulars). Aristotle is clear that secondary substance is something in itself, and it is not constituted by assimilating the commonalities of members of a common group into a gathering concept.[108] The common nature is real, but it is immanent in the particular: it is the immanent universal. Moreover, what the primary substance is with regard to its nature is only determined in relation to the secondary substance. Grammatically, this is through being predicated with regard to secondary substance. Metaphysically, the primary substance is the subsistent particular within which the common nature inheres. In short, primary substance is dependent upon secondary substance in order to be this or that kind of thing. In this way, Aristotle's conception of *ousia* functions on the inter-dependence of secondary substance upon primary substance for subsistence and of primary substance on secondary substance for rational form. Essentially, therefore, the internal dynamics of Aristotelian *ousia* will not permit any bifurcation of matter and form.

Exploring the Connections

Can our understanding of Torrance's conception of reality be advanced by holding it in relation to an immanent-realist understanding of universals found in the inner workings of Aristotelian *ousia*? There are many very good reasons to stop this line of inquiry before it has begun. Torrance himself would hardly have appreciated any suggestion that he was determined in his thought by an *a priori* conception of the nature of being, with the implication that he operated with an implicit rational schema as an unspoken *preambula fidei*! For example, Torrance explicitly stated that Calvin reversed the line of Aristotelian questioning such that abstract inquiry into the essence of the thing (*quid sit*), which came first in Aristotelian inquiry was replaced by *a posteriori* questioning (*quale sit*) which began with the actuality of what is being inquired into.[109] As such, Torrance argued, the orientation of Calvin's questioning was to interrogate reality such

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107 See also, Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 1040b 25-27; 1086a30-35; 997a21-22.

108 See Erismann, "Immanent Realism," 281-282.

109 Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 33.

that our knowledge is determined by reality.[110] Might this proposal undercut this transition and force Torrance's conception of reality onto the rocks of *a priori* inquiry into being itself? I think not. Rather, what is being suggested is that the *a posteriori* conception of reality Torrance took from God's self-revelation might be helpfully grasped by those hoping to continue the project of *kataphystic* theology through holding it in relation to a formal discussion of reality that is reached through very different means, but yet retains some interesting points of compatibility.

There remain other issues with the proposed approach. Aside from his frequent insistence that matter and form or structure and substance be held together, Torrance referred to Aristotelian metaphysical terminology very infrequently,[111] and on the occasions where he did refer to it, he is critical of the deterministic epistemological approaches that he associated with it.[112] For example, Torrance is highly critical of Aristotle's understanding of space.[113] This is particularly significant, for Torrance understood Aristotle's attitude to space to have profoundly negative implications for his epistemological approach. Far from facilitating an inquiry into reality in its own inherent order, Torrance understood Aristotelian space to facilitate an understanding of reality built upon the imposition of an absolute framework upon sensory data, organizing it in accordance with an external schema, with deleterious effects on the apprehension of the inherent rationality of reality.[114]

Despite all of this, a comparative analysis of Torrance's conception of reality and internal dynamics of Aristotelian *ousia* gives us new perspectives which help us understand Torrance's view of reality a little better. There are three areas where our understanding of Torrance's "ontology" can be furthered by this connection. In drawing these out, I will also comment on how I see this facilitating our understanding of Torrance on reality.

First, Torrance's antipathy to ontological dualism as the improper relation of the formal and material aspects of reality may be positively orientated on a

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110 Torrance, *God and Rationality*, 33.

111 I am aware of only three occasions in the whole of Torrance's corpus. T.F. Torrance, "Scientific Hermeneutics According to St Thomas Aquinas," *Journal of Theological Studies* 13 (1962), 259-289, cited, 259-260; *Theological Science*, 243-244 and *Divine and Contingent Order*, 30.

112 Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order*, 30. However, Torrance is nuanced in his analysis of the impact of Aristotelian thought upon medieval hermeneutics. Torrance, "Scientific Hermeneutics According to St. Thomas Aquinas," 260-261.

113 Torrance, *Divine Meaning*, 297-299.

114 Torrance, *Divine Meaning*, 299ff.

spectrum of possible ontologies by holding it in relation to an Aristotelian *in review* of universals. Simply, in my view, Torrance's unitary conception of reality bears some correspondence to the internal dynamics of Aristotle's *ousia*, in that both insist upon the integration of matter and form. Certainly, the mutual resistance to the antecedent or posterior existence of the intelligible in favour of a profound integration of the intelligible and the sensible does suggest some *prima facia* compatibility. It is my view that in positively establishing Torrance's resistance to dualism, interpreters of Torrance's thought may appeal to immanent-realism as a viable conceptual parallel.

For example, in a section in his article "Scientific Hermeneutics According to St. Thomas Aquinas" (1962), Torrance outlined an understanding of the relationship between the common nature and the particular in Aristotle, which demonstrates an immanent-realist reading of the Greek philosopher.[115] Torrance understood Aristotle's formal discussion of primary and secondary substance to have be an *in re* account of universals.[116] Intriguingly, Torrance presented the relationship of the common and the particular in *a manner that bears significant correspondence to his own unitary conception of reality.*[117] That is to say, in his re-presentation of Aristotle's *ousia* some unmistakably Torrancian themes emerge. Torrance transferred the discussion from the language of universals onto terminology more compatible with his own concerns regarding the relationship of the intelligible and the sensible, stating that "Aristotelian philosophy refused to separate matter and form."[118] Moreover, there is an unmistakable ring of Torrance-like thought in his discussion of the organization of matter by the inherent rational form: "Thus a particular object is a matter as it is determined according to some organic pattern or form and the form is the determinate structure according to which the object is organized."[119] Torrance described the unity of matter and form in Aristotle in such a way that mirrors his concept of the determination of phenomena under the marginal control of the "interior structure" of the intelligibility of reality. As such, Torrance's *presentation* of Aristotle's thought corresponds to his own convictions regarding reality.

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115 Torrance, "Scientific Hermeneutics According to St. Thomas Aquinas," 259. See also Torrance, *DCO*, 30.

116 Torrance, "Scientific Hermeneutics According to St. Thomas Aquinas," 259.

117 Torrance, "Scientific Hermeneutics According to St. Thomas Aquinas," 259.

118 Torrance, "Scientific Hermeneutics According to St. Thomas Aquinas," 260. This is startling for its similarity to David Armstrong's assertion "there is no separation of particulars and universals." D. Armstrong *Nominalism and Realism: Universals and Scientific Realism: Volume 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 113.

119 Torrance, "Scientific Hermeneutics According to St. Thomas Aquinas," 260.

Second, our comprehension of the means by which Torrance upheld the view that rational form is not imposed upon reality by an idealized *a priori* framework is aided through comparing it to Aristotle's ontology. It is a rarely discussed fact that Torrance used a device that bears strong correspondence to an immanent realist view of universals in his own philosophy of theology. In the fifth chapter of *Theological Science* in which Torrance sought to provide an account of the relationship between the logic inherent in reality the logical forms of human conceptual representations (which he calls the problem of *ontologic*), Torrance turned to the notion of the "concrete universal."[120] The name of the concept itself certainly bears resemblance to an immanent-realist view of universals. What is more, Torrance contrasted the concrete universal to an abstract universal, meaning a *post rem* view of the universal as something not real, but rather developed as a concept via deduction from experience.[121] Torrance's concrete universal is an assertion of the *reality* of that which is intelligible as opposed to a merely conceptual existence. As will be seen this is crucial to Torrance's argumentation for by this principle he asserted that *the orderly relation between particular events is not the product of the imposition of the rational form of humanity, but is the actual state of affairs.* Moreover, this intelligible order of things is not transcendent, but is rather inseparable from the concrete world of sensible particulars.

Torrance used the concrete universal at a crucial point in his response to the problem of *ontologic*. The concrete universal is the locus at which existence statements[122] and coherence statements[123] overlap. Coherence statements are coherent not on account of any epistemic adequacy from the side of the knower, but because that which is referred to by existence statements is inherently coherent. The coherence of a logical system – to Torrance – is on account of the rationality of reality. At the crux of this relationship is the concrete universal. Through the concrete universal, the empirical level of intuitive contact with reality is pregnant with an implicit coherence. On account of this, existence statements are characterized by an implicit rational pattern, which is brought to explicit articulation through coherence statements. It is certainly noteworthy

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120 Torrance, *Theological Science*, 243-244. So far as I am aware, this is Torrance's only use of this notion.

121 Torrance, *Theological Science*, 243.

122 Statements that refer beyond themselves to reality. See also, T.F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconstruction* (London: SCM Press, 1965), 52ff.

123 Statements that refer to other statements in the development of conceptual structures characterized by valid inference. Torrance, *Reconstruction*, 52ff.

that at a point of pivotal importance to Torrance's epistemology, the point at which the inherent rational form of reality impresses itself upon the rational form of human concepts, Torrance appealed to a concept that so resembles an immanent-realist view of universals.

Third, our understanding of Torrance's commitment to the priority of the rationality of reality may be understood a little better through establishing its lineage through Karl Barth's interpretation of Anselm's immanent-realist view of universals. This proposal must be immediately qualified. Although Anselm was a major influence on Torrance's conception of reality,[124] the text in which Anselm unequivocally associated himself with such a view of universals (*Monologion*) is not given attention by Torrance. However, the ontological implications of Anselm's immanent-realism are brought to Torrance through Barth's important analysis of Anselm's *Proslogion*.

 Turning first to Anselm's immanent-realism. Anselm articulated an understanding of substance which carries an internal distinction, reminiscent of Aristotle: "every substance is classified either as a universal, which is essentially common to many substances (as to-be-a-man is common to individual men), or else as a particular (*individual*)."[125] Christophe Erismann has demonstrated that Anselm's recapitulation of this Aristotelian treatment of substance is distinctive in that he is not concerned with logical predication, but rather with a realist understanding of the universal as a common nature that is instantiated in particulars.[126] While Torrance does not engage with Anselm's *Monologion*, the theme of ontological realism does come through to him both in his analysis of *De Veritate* and also through his assertion of the significance of Anselm's ontology to Karl Barth's transition from dialectical to dogmatic theology. This leaves the matter as to whether Anselm's immanent realism had any influence over Torrance unclear. However, the evidence suggests that something at least partly compatible with immanent-realism was at play in Torrance's thought through Barth.

The crucial factor is Barth's treatment of *ratio* in Anselm's *Proslogion*. Famously, Barth argued that the ontic *ratio* takes precedence over the noetic *ratio*.[127] Particularly significant is Barth's assertion that "the *ratio* is the rationality of the object in so far as it makes it intelligible to a being who can understand"

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124 Torrance, *Reality and Scientific*, 88-89, 141-147; T.F. Torrance, "The Ethical Implications of Anselm's *De* Veritate" in *Theologie Zeitschrift* 24 (1968), 309-319.

125 Anselm, *Monologion*, XXVII, p.45, II. 6-8. Cited from Erismann, "Immanent Realism," 216.

126 Erismann, "Immanent-Realism," 216-217.

127 Barth, *Anselm*, 44-59.

such that "ontic rationality precedes noetic."[128] According to this observation, it follows that accurate knowledge is that which is in accordance to the object's ontic *ratio*.[129] Reality has ontological status independent from the observer. In Torrance's view, Barth's study of Anselm is the "decisive turning point in [Barth's] thinking,"[130] in the transfer from dialectical to dogmatic theology,[131] for it placed the emphasis upon the *ratio veritatis* of the antecedent reality of God in his self-revelation determining all subsequent theological thought.[132] This point is emphasized in Torrance's important analysis of the priority of ontic *ratio* as that to which noetic *ratio* must correspond.[133]

Stephen Wigley has demonstrated that Torrance's own understanding of the priority of ontic rationality over human understanding has robust roots in Barth's treatment of Anselm.[134] This impression is confirmed by Torrance's own analysis of Anselm's *De Veritate*, which he claimed was characterized by 'the stratification of truth':

> the truths of statement and signification presuppose the *truth of being*, or what Anselm calls "the truth of the essence (or existence) of things" (*veritas essentiae rerum*). The truth of a thing or of a being is its reality, what it actually is.[135]

This bears striking resemblance to Barth's analysis of Anselm's *Proslogion* above in that priority is laid on reality being that which it is, in relation to which

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128 Barth, *Anselm*, 50.

129   S. Wigley, "Karl Barth on Anselm: The Influence of Anselm's 'Theological Scheme' on T.F. Torrance and Eberhard Jüngel," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 46.1 (1993), 79-97, esp. 82-83.

130 T.F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: an Introduction to his Early Theology, 1910-1931*, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1962), 182.

131 This view has been challenged by Bruce McCormack. However, while McCormack questions the transition Barth's thought underwent on these grounds (arguing that similar positions can be found in Barth's earlier thought), McCormack upholds Torrance's interpretation of the ontic *ratio*'s priority over noetic. B. McCormack, *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*, 438. For other treatments of the significance of ontic *ratio* in Barth's thought, see E. Jüngel, "Einführung in Leben und Werk Karl Barths" in E. Jüngel *Barth-Studien* (Zurich: Gütersloh, 1982), 48 and I. Spieckermann, *Gotteserkenntnis: Ein Beitrag zur Grundfrage der nouen Theologie Karl Barths* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1985), 228-229.

132 T.F. Torrance, *Karl Barth: Biblical and Evangelical Theologian* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1990), 150-152.

133 Torrance, *Karl Barth: Introduction*, 186-189.

134 Wigley, "Karl Barth on Anselm," 85.

135 Torrance, *Reality and Scientific*, 145.

humanity's noetic constructs are determined. While it would be to overstate the case to claim a direct line from Aristotle to Anselm's immanent-realism through Barth's ontological realism and finally ending at Torrance's analysis of *De Veritate*, there is certainly a cluster of ideas that are compatible with one another held together through this connection.

Conclusion

A comparative analysis of Torrance and Aristotle is counter-intuitive for a whole host of reasons. Despite this, our comprehension of Torrance's conception of reality is improved through such an analysis. First, the comparison allows Torrance's theologically determined conception of reality as antithetical to ontological dualism to be orientated in relation to a formal ontology. Second, the comparison enables a way to approach the important notion of the concrete universal, which is the locus of the overlap between coherence and existence statements. Third, the character of Torrance's commitment to the priority of the rationality of reality may be further understood through this connection.