

# **AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY: SPECULATIVE METAPHYSICS**

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To far too many people there is no real difference between "Occultism" (or its synonym Esotericism) and "Metaphysics". But this is an entirely specious belief, there is a tremendous difference between these things. There is a really vast chasm yawning between "Speculative metaphysics" which is a philosophical discipline, and "Occultism-Esotericism" which is probably far better defined as a religion than it is as a philosophical discipline.

Under the subject heading "Popular Occultism" we have grouped commentary on "Popular Occultism" and we will regularly add further commentary on this very important subject. But now, because it is by far the more important subject, we are adding the subject heading: "Speculative Metaphysics" to our subject index or "Table of Contents" if you will.

In this introductory essay I am not going to address my views of "Popular Occultism", for those views you need only read the series of four essays (so far) under that subject heading.

But, if "Speculative Metaphysics" has little or no connection with "Popular Occultism" (and it doesn't) what is it?

"Metaphysics", and I want to make clear immediately that the word is **NOT** a euphemism for "religion", is the intellectual and speculative synthesis of several philosophical disciplines, and in our time period: of some scientific disciplines as well, and they are distinctly "hard" sciences too!

"Metaphysics" is the methodology which intelligent human beings utilize to answer all their most basic questions regarding the "Nature of The Human Condition", their individual relationship to that condition, the place or context into which the Human Condition "fits" in the universe which is slowly being revealed to us in response to diligent scientific effort, and most important of all, to enable

human beings to understand "What it all means". In other words, metaphysics is a methodology to try to answer humankind's most urgent

existential questions.

There is a justly celebrated definition of "metaphysics" expressed by Francis Herbert Bradley (1846-1924) who was an influential British Philosopher of his time associated with the Absolute Idealist Movement. In 1893 he defined "Metaphysics" as: "Metaphysics is an attempt to comprehend the universe not simply piecemeal or by fragments, but some how as a whole".

Another famous definition is that of William James who said: "Metaphysics is nothing but an attempt to think things out clearly to their ultimate significance, to find their substantial essence in the scheme of reality and, thereby, to unify all truth and reach that highest of all generalizations which constitutes philosophy"

In our times, serious metaphysical speculation includes the following concepts:

substance, essence, accident, form, matter, actuality, and potentiality, To this must be added speculations on the perception of "beginnings" and "endings", life and death. Also, and this is only in our times, we cannot intelligently discuss these subjects without adding the input of scientific disciplines such as Quantum Theory and Scientific Cosmology which deal with precisely the same speculations from the scientific point-of-view. For instance: Werner Heisenberg's "Uncertainty Principle" is clearly metaphysical in implication while totally scientific in nature. We also, of necessity, must include the very copious "hard" information coming to us through the Hubble Telescope and other astronomical-cosmological devices.

The term "metaphysics" is a gift to us from Aristotle, but his "metaphysics" (and his "physics" too) were limited to the parameters in which his tremendous and fertile intelligence was confined. Most of his speculations, both physical and non-physical were based upon his tremendous powers of observation and synthesis, and some of it related to his botanical and zoological work. We are infinitely luckier than he, for we have the most advanced efforts of our modern quantum theorists, scientific cosmologists aided by their "super-computers" to help us in our speculations in our effort to understand "The Nature of the Human Condition" and it's relationship of the whole to which it is a part

It is my intention to use this column to present Metaphysics as a rational, reasoned, sane approach to the existential questions all humankind has, and to use it as a benign alternative to the impositions and oppressions of the purveyors of religion and "faith". "Faith" after all is a synonym for "trust me" and like that phrase, is the con artist's credo. It is my contention therefore that religion is a

scam, a fraud, and a terrible imposition on the human race. Its keynote is fear and retribution, retribution from which only the purveyors of the scam, who are the Priesthoods of this world, can save the poor person from.

People need saving alright, they need to be saved from the religions that have oppressed and imposed upon them for the whole long history of human civilization.

I will justify and validate this position of mine in this column and the one on religion.