



### ***3 A Pedagogy of Emergent Self-Cultivation; Why Students Should Have a “Sameness” and Why They Should Not<sup>1</sup>***

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*Abstract:* This article looks at the nature of individuality and potentiality through the lens of the transcendentals. To do this, it develops an interpretation of how the medieval philosophers discussed the transcendentals in the light of their causal powers. Utilizing a notion of emergent causal powers, I tentatively suggest a concept of higher education where the commonality of the transcendentals’ properties and powers so related offer a hermeneutic account of how we might create a pedagogy from the transcendentals nexus which has explanatory powers for our being.

*Keywords:* Heidegger, transcendentals, higher education, potentiality, pedagogy

#### ***Context***

The argument I want to make is indicative of the collective use of student voice, student-centered teaching, or student satisfaction which are not about a student’s individuality but about their sameness.<sup>2</sup> In this context, the use of

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<sup>1</sup> I acknowledge the considerable help provided by the Editor.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle’s *Metaphysic* book 5 for his discussion of sameness and individuality and Heidegger *Identity and Difference* 1969.

“student” is clearly not as an adjective, but it is as an attributive noun; that is, it attributes the qualities of “student” to the noun “voice” and so implies those who share the same attributes of students (in general as students) but not as a student qua student. This may seem obvious but should we care about the being of student-ness as a personal identity in the particular singularity of a student, then we need to be careful as to our use of terms, our policies and our pedagogical approaches to facilitate their flourishing. We need, as I will suggest after outlining the difference between sameness and individuality, a pedagogical approach that seeks to facilitate both sameness in terms of student potentiality to be engineers, physicians or teachers and how they might develop their own identity as Reza, Tom or Carla. It is this second task that I address in the final sections of the article.

### *Being as a Place to Start*

We are thrown into this world as we are taught it exists, yet we are able to free ourselves from the constraints of its structure by seeing the world as it might be for ourselves; not through the methodologies and calculative thinking of others, academic disciplines or professions, but through the oneness exemplified in the onto-theological nature of the transcendental. The transcendentals were established in medieval scholastic tradition by Ibn Sina, Thomas Aquinas, Eckhart Tolle, Duns Scotus and summarized by Francisco Suárez, resting on the onto-theological recognition that the *transcendentals* are rooted in the unity of being; properties of being qua being. The transcendentals are those attributes of a thing which transcend Aristotle’s ten categories of substance with being as oneness as the most fundamental of these transcendentals.<sup>3</sup> It is what is formally predicated in each being. The transcendentals emerge in the uniqueness of beings as part of being. They are the forces of being and, when nurtured authentically, they reveal being as good, beautiful and true but in ways not always clearly identifiable by others.

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<sup>3</sup> Aristotle addresses these issues in the *Metaphysics*, Book Three were, after considerable discussion he concludes that if there is to be “knowledge of the principles there must be other principles prior to them, which are universally predicated on them” (1003a 15–16). The universals or transcendentals vary in their nature with Thomas deriving the five although in some cases he follows the typical list of the transcendentals consisting of the One, the Good, and the True. Duns Scotus’ analysis of the transcendentals based on the notion univocity of being (and favoured in this paper) is that whatever is not contained under any genus is transcendental. According to Wolters (1946 10–11), the first is being, the second is co-existent transcendentals of being; unity, truth and goodness, the third the disjunctive attributes and fourth the pure perfection.

A way of realizing the potential that resides within us to do this, as a capability to become, is to perceive the potential for action in the form of the realities of the transcendentals. This potential capability is an ontological driver of the actuality of becoming what we can desire to be (or maybe able to be), cognizant of both the transdisciplinary subject and object as ways of becoming. Achievement requires activities, full of political, social and economic power, and we make our being feasible by questioning the reality of our everyday experience in the knowledge we have of ourselves, and with a preparedness and courage to create new knowledge of ourselves from the engagement. Freedom resides in our choice to act on our potential, and potentialities are aligned with the properties that determine its powers to act. Thus, not all the properties of a thing are equally important to the understanding of the specific activities, relationships, and commitments, which give meaning to an individual’s identity, yet all contribute to our potentialities to realize our potentiality to be.

The exploration of our being provides the potential for us to understand our life project and to seek it. To understand being as our becoming is not deterministic, but neither is it unencumbered; it requires a blending of knowledges and realities in order that we might have the power to reflect and deliberate about the impact to be achieved by our actions. Most importantly, blending of knowledges and realities as a time-space manifold is not static but in constant motion; it is a flow, with complexity and causation. This flow of realities is conceived of as an open system in which possible worlds emerge and realities are perceived and lost in time and space and are dependent on the location of the becoming being. It is in this primary sense of becoming as potentiality, as energy, that there is capacity to bring about change in another thing or in itself.

Aristotle discusses this extensively in Book 9 of the *Metaphysics*. In that work, Aristotle introduces a complementary notion to the identity of the being of a thing fixed in terms of categorical notion of substance, whereby the identity of being is able to be “distinguished in respect of potentiality and fulfilment, and of function.”<sup>4</sup> Further, this potentiality is evident in two forms, as “a certain motive principle”<sup>5</sup> inherent in its being, and that of being as agent to be. Aristotle then evokes the notion of fulfilment of our potential and compares it merely as an act of participation or to the full fulfilment of its potential which he considers is doing it well. In this sense the agent is

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<sup>4</sup> Aristotle. “Metaphysics,” in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1045b 33.

<sup>5</sup> Aristotle, “Metaphysics”, 1046b 22.

compelled to do it well. This completion is linked, I suggest, to the notion of oneness with being and the oneness of one's own being and defined by its motivational powers. This acknowledges that what exists potentially is ontologically dependent on what exists actually. Aristotle uses the term *Dunamis* to describe this, considering the idea of possible worlds and their realities as a way in which all sentient, material and spiritual entities – real and actual – are co-created in the process of flow from potentiality to actuality. It is where the creation of realities can emerge, not grounded in the abstraction of empirical theories but in an experience of engaging in a world reconfigured by the co-creative process of becoming as realization of potentiality through the causal powers of the transcendentals. This aspect of Aristotle might be conceived as a time-space manifold that exists at the convergence of subject and object and where, I want to suggest, causal powers creatively deploy themselves. The binary logic he is resisting reduces “difference” to disqualification and exclusion rather than inclusion and absorption.

The influence of Duns Scotus on the transcendentals and especially individuality is critical to my argument. For Scotus, transcendentals are coexistent with being and in some way properties of it. Duns Scotus introduced a theory of actuality with the conception of a non-categorical individual difference to produce an account of the individuality of an individual as of our *haecceitas*<sup>6</sup> or that which makes the entity what it is and not something else.<sup>7</sup> The distinction between the two forms of our species' potential – specific (to grow to six foot, grow hair, walk upright) and individual potential (to be an excellent editor) – is considered in what he refers to as the formal distinction. We are both one of, the same as, and yet distinct from all entities within a certain class of this and distinctive from all other things which share our commonality. Moreover, that which makes us individual cannot, by the nature of its singularity, be categorized at a higher order as in Aristotelian systems of categories whilst still being part of a species that can indeed be so. This creates an issue of description and we can only name the individuality by proper name or by indexical pronoun. This formal distinction is at the core of our educational desire to educate the whole person as an individual in ways which reveal to them their extended temporal potential to become. Succinctly, King's Scotus position is “that in each individual there is a principle that accounts for its being the very thing it is and a formally distinct principle that accounts for its

<sup>6</sup> I base here my understating of Duns Scotus' position on Question Six in his *Early Oxford Lecture on Individuation*.

<sup>7</sup> Duns Scotus, *Early Oxford Lecture on Individuation*, trans. Allan B. Wolters (New York: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2005).

being the kind of thing it is; the former is its individual differentia, the latter its common nature.”<sup>8</sup>

Enter Heidegger. Tonner<sup>9</sup> skillfully discloses Heidegger’s divergence from the Aristotelian notion of being as one built on the Scholastics and on Kantian transcendentalism. In the opening chapters of *Being and Time*, Heidegger states that “Being is the *transcendens* pure and simple,”<sup>10</sup> attributing the insight to Aquinas. As such, supporting medieval notions are used as an explication of the concept of “being” in terms of the so-called universals of the “beauty,” “truth,” and “good.” For example, beauty can help evoke wonder and delight and involves apprehending unity, harmony, proportion, and wholeness. It often manifests itself in simplicity and purity, such as in the beautiful equation. When we explore issues of goodness, we are fundamentally asking questions of how well someone or something fulfils its purpose. Truth is being in accord with reality. The transcendentals are ontologically one, thus they are convertible. Where there is truth, there is beauty and goodness also.

Strunk suggests that Heidegger provides a similar account of the history of the transcendentals and argues that the transcendentals consist of “an understanding of Being”<sup>11</sup> is already included in conceiving anything which one apprehends in entities. But the “universality” of Being is not that of a class or genus. The term “Being” does not define that realm of entities which is uppermost when these are articulated conceptually according to genus and species. The “universality” of Being “transcends” any universality of genus. In medieval ontology, “Being” is designated as a “*transcendens*.”<sup>12</sup>

The form it takes is an authentic stance on one’s being, not one determined by Others. This issue is articulated in its existence and expresses this in terms of the possibilities of itself. Dasein – the particularly human experience of being – “decides its existence, whether it does so by taking hold or by

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<sup>8</sup> Peter King, “Duns Scotus on the Common Nature and the Individual Differentia,” *Philosophical Topics* 20, no. 2 (1992): 50.

<sup>9</sup> Phillip Tonner, “Haecceitas and the Question of Being: Heidegger and Duns Scotus.” *Kritike* 2, no. 2 (2008).

<sup>10</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 62.

<sup>11</sup> Nathan Strunk, “Is the Doctrine of the Transcendentals Viable Today? Reflections on Metaphysics and the Doctrine of the Transcendentals” (paper presented at the *Metaphysical Society of America 62nd Annual Meeting*, Emory University, Atlanta, GA, March 10–12, 2011). <https://www.metaphysicalsociety.org/2011/Session%20VII>. Strunk.pdf.

<sup>12</sup> Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 34.

neglecting.”<sup>13</sup> This opens a space to discuss individuality within the rubric of a fundamental ontology.

### ***What Powers?***

What distinguishes the transcendentals from Aristotle’s categories is their unique universality, which, because of their transcendent nature, are the cause of our individuality and the form of their release is an educative matter. I will argue that the transcendentals are the causal potential of becoming individually human. I want to make this argument on the metaphysical assertion of being’s material substance of the subject and its inherent potentiality to become. In this, substance which has what one might call a potential capability to become together with that of being as energy (*energeia*) and potential (*dunamis*). It is these that comprise the transcendental nexus of causal powers within which creativity and reality emerge as actuality (*entelecheia*)<sup>14</sup> and have the potentiality to create multiple new realities in possible worlds for individuals.

Social reality has an ontological depth; it is constituted of powers, properties and things, a triad which has internal unity. Social objects are the real manifestations of the idealized types used in discourse and are the focus for any enquiry. As Fleetwood suggests, these “[T]hings–properties–powers are emergent from, but irreducible to, other things–properties–powers. Things have properties and properties ground powers.”<sup>15</sup> Thus, a power of its properties is borne by a thing and, when activated, brings about that thing’s becoming in the sense of what it is able to be. As one thing emerges from other things, so do its properties and powers. They are structured in various ways, and because of this, they possess powers. In most everyday cases, both these are incomplete, leading to a stasis, a being rather than becoming, an acceptance of the moderate rather than the courage to join the mystical which limits the presence of humanity. It prevents the seeking of perfection of what the motivating force of the transcendentals could achieve in the oneness of mortality and the divine.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>14</sup> I do not attempt to engage in the subtle debate on the intent of this term in Aristotle’s writing (see for example Olshewsky, 1997) but use the term for its explanatory power in the context of Aristotle’s work, which I subsequently define as a transcendental nexus of powers.

<sup>15</sup> Steve Fleetwood, “The Ontology of Things, Properties and Powers,” *Journal of Critical Realism* 8, no. 3 (2009): 353.

The transcendentals work as a unity but the motivation which triggered them depends on the openness of the system in which they are located: thus, the spatial-temporal context is a determinant to the new thing in the ways the actualizing of the causal powers actualize it. Closed systems are characterized by two conditions: objects operate in consistent ways, and they do not change their essential nature. Neither of these conditions pertains to open systems. In closed systems, measured regularities are synonymous with causal mechanisms. A closed system operates through deterministic rules, which govern its change processes. Closed and open systems can also be distinguished by the degree and type of determinism that each implies; closed systems are discipline-driven, open systems by the transdisciplinary nexus.

Because of the enabling effect of an open system and, as a result, the interaction with other powers of other things within their sphere of influence, new realities emerge. Powers that have been actualized are generating their effects; within the open system they are working together with other powers but in this case, they have not been suppressed or counteracted. They can generate genuine essence rather than difference within a spatio-temporal personal identity. We are left, however, with the question of what generates the exercise of the powers if this is more than fate, destiny, or luck. As a result of these generative powers, we have an undefinable wholeness to the oneness of the individual. For sure, this interpretation attributes to the powers *per se* the process of individuality, within context, and from within themselves. In this I distinguish but do not deny the potential of divine intervention, but neither do I consider it necessary for this explanation.

The proposed causal powers are emergent first in the sense they are motivated by the oneness of the transcendentals and this oneness is authentically revealed in the openness of our worldly systems. The causal powers can be shaped by thinking differently about the transcendental structure of individual becoming, through what is romantic and poetic in its first formation, rather than reifying it through the logical and calculative thinking associated with disciplines and the forms of grammatical languages they employ. These powers work within our world of experiences commonly shared yet are not constrained by them, creating a new configuration of the world as an open system within which islands of closed systems function. These closed systems function to shape our inauthenticity and lead us to deny what we might be so as to settle for the comfort of what Others require us to be. The acceptance of the dominant discourse that restrict and enframe our ability to see the openness available to us imposes a transcendental horizon where none need be.

The revelation of transcendentals as ways of being create emergent levels of reality. Realities are thus the foregrounding of entities as manifestations

in their actuality. Ontologically, several irreducibly distinct mechanisms and potentially emergent levels of reality combine to produce a novel presence. The different levels necessary to the understanding of the result may be conceived as being as the interacting or coalescing as a continuum or in a woven system of levels of reality. The essence of this thinking can be found within Aristotle when he suggests that beings are “capable of both being and of not being.”<sup>16</sup>

Established as the emergent forces of being, the transcendentals shape the nature of our individual being and give meaning to our lives. It is the organizing transcendental of *haecceitas*; or colloquially the DNA of individuality working with potentiality of the transcendentals of unity, truth and the good; not as a willed externality to being but as essence emerging from being. As we have seen, all realities move through transitions involving change and permanence as a process of self-determination which is ongoing and can only be a becoming. According to Korsgaard, there is no self before and after the activity of self-constitution; thus, the self is identical to its activity of self-constitution. There is an obvious analogy to the physical self-constitution of an organism. It is not as though an organism is born and then starts constituting itself. It is always doing so: “Your reasons express your identity, your nature; your obligations spring from what that identity forbids.”<sup>17</sup> As Korsgaard states, “we are constituting ourselves as the author of that action, and so you are deciding who to be.”<sup>18</sup> Our very being is thus constituted by our choices and our actions and thereby contingent upon the transcendental nexus. The role of education is to help this innovative self-determination, not to frustrate it in forms of images of others, but to create freedom from personal choice.

In this modality, the temporalization of experiences of entities emerge in the flow of actualities as events. The temporal events are perceptions of experience of a reality that is being co-created. This is not linear but might be considered as a spiral of learning where one reaffirms the idea of romance as a poetic way of coming to know through an existential engagement with the world. This freedom to learn, unencumbered by disciplinary boundaries, releases our potential and the implicit causal powers to think creatively and innovatively about issues that we apprehend in the world. Here, becoming as the actualization of potentiality can form a continuity of, or a disruption

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<sup>16</sup> Aristotle, “Metaphysics,” 1050b 10.

<sup>17</sup> Christine M. Korsgaard, *The Sources of Normativity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 101.

<sup>18</sup> Christine M. Korsgaard, *Self-Constitution: Agency, Identity, and Integrity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), xi.



to, the flow of the reality of one’s world. It is where the creation of realities caused by the creativity interplay of the transcendental forces that individual identity is forged, not grounded in the abstract metaphysic of empiricism but in an experience of engaging in a world reconfigured by the co-creative process of becoming.

### ***Transcendentally? Inspired Rather Than Student-Centered Education***

Can we imagine an education for the understanding in, and realization of, our potentiality through nurturing of individual identity of the transcendental nexus of emerging powers of unity, truth and beauty? Insights for such a pedagogy can be found in Heidegger’s work, based on his premise that in the teacher–student relationship, the primary role of the teacher is to let students learn from the necessarily personal engagement. In *What Is Called Thinking*, Heidegger wrote of teaching that it “is more difficult than learning because what teaching calls for is this: to let learn. The real teacher, in fact, lets nothing else be learned than-learning. His conduct, therefore, often produces the impression that we properly learn nothing from him, if by ‘learning’ we suddenly understand merely the procurement of useful information.”<sup>19</sup>

The student–teacher relationship is thus not conceived as a vehicle for the attainment of some authoritarian engagement, but as a genuinely creative encounter in which the lecturer senses the quality of the learning event, where learning to think is conceived as mystery and wonder. This strikes a sharp contrast to effective thinking in the calculative mode. For Heidegger, it is based on inceptual thinking (meditative, free-flowing thinking), where, in the essentialness of being, the transcendentals can be revealed by the unfolding of the world in wonder, rather than attempting to control it. This thinking is non-conceptual; it neither requires concepts to enable us to think but requires us to have the openness to the world to do so. To understand the question of being essentially means to let learn the mystery of man and, as suggested here, this is through acknowledging the mystery of the causal forces of the transcendentals and seeking them in forms of teaching. Teaching, for instance, that questions the anthropocentric view of the universe and secondly questioning the view that nature is a resource whose purpose is to be used and destroyed for our short-term benefit rather than looking for the beauty and wonder that is within it.

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<sup>19</sup> Martin Heidegger, *What Is Called Thinking?*, trans. Fred D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1968), 15.

This theme is taken up by Heidegger in a short lecture entitled “Introduction to Academic Studies.”<sup>20</sup> Here, he again concerns himself with the crisis in the German university education system in the early 20th century. As a system which, according to him, leaves its graduates helpless once they have completed their studies, for the university had become (and perhaps even more so today) just a storehouse of skills to be distributed. He asks if the university misses that which is essential to our understanding of our being and thus to our own flourishing. This is the missing aspect of university education: the creation of hope. The fragmentation of disciplines leads to a fragmentation of reality. This leads to distress and alienation. This loss, which is only met by the questioning of our being, is the essential being of our Being. It can only be found in the wholeness of our understanding; a wholeness that includes a notion of spirituality.

Allowing understanding to emerge, unshackled from forms of abstract, logical, rational investigation, opens up new realities and new truths. Moreover, it allows letting the nature of the Being of things to come into the context of the present, as a totality of Being. Heidegger commented that “(M)an is obviously a being. As such he belongs to the totality of Being – just like the stone, the tree, or the eagle.”<sup>21</sup> This thinking is essentially meditative and can be considered metaphorically as “the activity of walking along a path which leads to Being.”<sup>22</sup> Further, it requires a releasement (*Gelassenheit*) of that which enframes and defines the characteristic of man’s nature. Releasement seeks the equanimity to allow technology into our lives, yet also resist it. It creates the context of meditative or “inceptual” thinking<sup>23</sup> as an alternative to calculative thinking that defines and measures reality and, in education, which focuses too much on planned, analytical, calculable, tool-based and ready-to-hand modes of action.

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<sup>20</sup> Martin Heidegger, “Einführung in das Akademische Studium (Introduction to Academic Studies),” *Der Deutsche Idealismus (Fichte, Schelling, Hegel) und die Problemlage der Gegenwart*. (Summer semester 1929), ed. Claudius Strube (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann GmbH, 1929).

<sup>21</sup> Martin Heidegger, “Heidegger on the Art of Teaching,” in *Heidegger, Education, and Modernity*, ed. Michael Peters, trans. Valerie Allen and Ares D. Axiotis (Lanham, ON: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 31.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Wolin, “Only a God Can Save Us: Der Spiegel’s Interview with Martin Heidegger, 1966,” in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (Boston, MA: MIT Press, 1993), 25.

<sup>23</sup> Martin Heidegger, “Contributions to Philosophy,” in *Enowning*, trans. P. Emad and K. Maly. Bloomington: Indiana Press, 1999.

He offers a more general approach to this ontological pedagogy in his later work, especially in his discussion into thinking and willing/non-willing in *Conversation on a Country Path* with two central themes. The first is the "open-region," which is both the place of being and where beings can be with one another in a "topology of being"; the second is a critique of the willfulness of representational thinking and "a search for a way of releasement from its grip and into authentic, non-willing manner of thoughtfully dwelling within the open-space of being."<sup>24</sup> This concept, especially the discussion of awaiting rather than awakening thinking, creates a transformative way of thinking that opens up a means to understand transdisciplinary thinking. Indeed, there remains a certain spiritual feel to Heidegger's work that might lead one to consider an onto-theological stance, a requirement for a cosmological entity from which all is understandable. Allowing understanding to emerge, unshackled, from forms of abstract, logical, rational investigation opens up new realities and new truths. Heidegger foresaw danger in humanity's reliance on calculative thinking (and its manifestation in machination) that prompted his comment in his 1966 *Der Spiegel* interview, "only God can save us."<sup>25</sup>

And its relationship to the transcendentals? These are revealed in the releasement of the specific through a fundamental attunement to the transcended of the one beauty and truth of being and the creative emergent force these have to create a realization for being. This being is the essence of wisdom in practice, or phronesis. It is the goal of the educated person and can be facilitated by looking for "unconcealing," as Heidegger would put it, of the truth of beauty and oneness in cosmic realities in which we could live rather than accepting the reality in which we are led to exist.

This might be done in many ways but at its core is what Freire describes in *Pedagogy of Freedom* as the "commitment of the student, who is an adventurer in the art of learning, to the process of inventing, instigated by the teacher, [which] has nothing to do with the transfer of contents. It has to do with the challenge and the beauty of teaching and learning."<sup>26</sup> The goal, then, is to generate foundational questions for deep inquiry into the value

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<sup>24</sup> Bret Davis, "Translator's Foreword," in *Country Path Conversations*, M. Heidegger, M. (1944-45/2005), trans. Bret W. Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), xiii.

<sup>25</sup> Wolin, "Only a God Can Save Us: Der Spiegel's Interview with Martin Heidegger, 1966," 91.

<sup>26</sup> Paolo Freire, *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, And Civic Courage* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 105.

and nature of things, a sense of the intrinsic value of knowledge, and to elicit a sense of wonder. We can find this in everything we do and by making it conspicuous we make its presence at hand available to us.

If awakening us to how our being is shaped by the transcendentals in ways that nurture the potential of our individuality as educationalists, we should enhance their powers in how our being is manifest in the phenomena of our becoming. So, the task of the teacher in higher education is fourfold. First, to reveal the importance of the transcendental powers in shaping our being and enabling our flourishing in our becoming. Second, to show where the transcendentals manifest themselves in the presence of our being in the world with others and to see through this the potential to develop ways of seeing and knowing that influence the ways in which all disciplines are taught. Third, to ensure that our capabilities to perceive the ways of the potential in our realities can be recognized. The final task is that of formal education and is subject to the teaching and teaching technologies which are the mainstay of technological, pedagogical practice at all levels of education that endeavor to create sameness in skills, dispositions, and emotions.

It is the first two tasks I now address. Clearly, there is a link with Maxine Green and her work on aesthetic education<sup>27</sup> and with courses in the Classics, but here I do not want to concentrate on the created artefacts of works of art or the logic of any argument or even the unity of knowledge, but rather, how we might see beauty, unity and truth revealed in all we do in our everyday lives and how we might attune to this in our being. Such attunement is required, for we are present all too often in the media of the ugly and vile not the beautiful, good and the true and we might thus lose our capability to reflect on transcendental *in situ* so as to release their causal powers into our becoming.<sup>28</sup>

We can do this by pointing out where beauty, unity and truth exist, both in our everyday experiences of life and in the teaching disciplines which we teach. In doing so, we are consciously learning something by becoming aware of the universality of the transcendentals revealing their forces in the clearing made for our potentiality and individuality to flourish. We seek to allow wonder and curiosity in the things we notice. This encounter with the forces of our potentiality needs meditative and inceptual thoughts, not calculative thinking, and is not encountered by enframing the transcendental (as in specific works of art, poetry, music) predetermined as beautiful, good and harmonious (although these things can help) but by making room for them to present their powers in

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<sup>27</sup> See especially Green 2001 and Vandenberg 2002.

<sup>28</sup> Donald Vandenberg, "The Transcendental Phases of Learning," *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 34, no. 3 (2002).

the being of other things. This might be outside the confines of the institution in active and transdisciplinary pedagogies, or student-led playful, creative ones, where they present collaboratively and individually. Making the effects of the transcendentals conspicuous for each student in ways they apprehend them, discussing and sharing meaning whilst recognizing the mystery and wonder of experiencing beauty, unity and truth can be contextualized in all disciplinary discourses. Suspending what one has come to know from others opens up the strangeness of things and, as Vandenberg suggests, in so doing “opening to it and letting it disclose itself as one familiarises oneself with it.”<sup>29</sup> In so doing, I suggest familiarizing oneself with one’s being.

### ***Final Comments***

A way of realizing the potential that resides within us as a capability to be, is to realize the potential in action within a transcendental reality, giving full rein to creativity and innovation. This potential capability is an ontological driver of the actuality of becoming what we desire to be. Ontologically, the most important result of our analysis is the need to understand a form of determination in reality, in which several irreducibly distinct mechanisms at different and potentially emergent levels combine to produce a novel result. The different levels necessary to the understanding of the result may be conceived as an interacting or coalescing system of levels of reality.

The decision to release our potential and its implicit causal powers is to think creatively and innovatively about issues that we apprehend in the world, and this creative, new world of possibilities may be abductively explored, not through formal logic but through the process of meditative and inceptual thinking. Here, becoming as the actualization of potentiality of the transcendental nexus can form a continuity of, or a disruption to, the flow of the reality of one’s world. It is where the creation of realities can emerge, not grounded in the abstract metaphysic of empiricism but in an experience of engaging in a world reconfigured by the co-creative process of becoming. This is evident, as Whitehead highlights, when we notice that “elements which shine with immediate distinctiveness, in some circumstances, retire into penumbral shadow in other circumstances, and into the black darkness on other occasions. And yet all occasions proclaim themselves within the flux of a solid world, demanding unity of interpretation.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Vandenberg, “The Transcendental Phases of Learning,” 328.

<sup>30</sup> Alfred Whitehead, *The Aims of Education, and Other Essays* (New York: The Free Press, 1967), 15.

The conscious power of this change can be determined by thinking differently about the transcendental structure of becoming rather than being, though that is romantic and poetic in its first formation rather than logical and calculative. It recognizes the world of experiences as existing yet is not constrained by it and it leads to a new configuration of the world; a new reality, rather than a different interpretation of the world in the sense used by Nicolescu.<sup>31</sup>

When our potentialities are actualized by the positive emergent powers of the *transcendentals*, we flourish. These actualize and can manifest themselves in multi-forms, shaping the patterning of our ways of becoming, and are implicitly linked to an educative appreciation of the attitude toward the transcendentals shaping our identity. This attitude may well seem from the Other to be inconsistent, yet still careful of others, for it is not intended to mirror the reality of other people's worlds but to be an expression of one's personal stance within the wholeness of the cosmos. It is the identity of the individual, not of the sameness we share.

The exploration of the ways these causal powers bring us into becoming beings provides the potential for us to understand our life project and, through will and freedom, achieve it. This requires a blending of knowledges and realities in order that we might have the power to reflect and deliberate on the impact to be achieved by our actions. This process is captured by Nicolescu when he argues that change does not create a new person but a person reborn.<sup>32</sup>

Exploration of our being provides the potential for us to understand our life project and to seek it. It is not unencumbered: it requires a blending of knowledge, realities and the unpredictability of the causal powers of the transcendentals in order that we might have the power with which to reflect and deliberate about the good to be achieved by our actions. Recognizing the sameness and the personal identity of students and building time into curriculum for both is suggested here as a way to open the potentiality of our encounter being to the world and act authentically on what we apprehend.

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<sup>31</sup> Basarab Nicolescu, *From Modernity to Cosmodernity: Science, Culture, and Spirituality* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2016).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

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