

Four Questions can define the Transcendental ?

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Dedicated to Marie-Louise Nykamp

Abstract

Usual definitions of the *transcendental* are given by *ontological assumptions*. Typical in this regard are those in various theologies or philosophies. And needless to say, such ontological assumptions can easily be challenged, if not in fact, they actually do invite such challenges. Plato's Cave Allegory in his book "Republic" is an exception, since it can be seen as a definition of the transcendental, albeit rather indirectly and through a quite involved story. And as such, it is not at all about any ontological assumption, but only about gnoseology, epistemology and pragmatics. Here, a similar definition of the transcendental is suggested, namely, a definition which does not use any ontological assumption, and instead, it only refers to gnoseology, epistemology and pragmatics. The novelty is in the fact that the mentioned definition consists of nothing more than four successive *questions*.

Four Questions \equiv A definition of the Transcendental ?

Here are the Four Questions :

1. Do you believe that whatever in Creation which may be relevant to your life is already accessible to your awareness ?
2. And if not - which is most likely the case - then do you believe that it may become accessible during the rest of your life ?
3. And if not - which again is most likely the case - then do you believe that you should nevertheless try some sort of two way interactions with all that which may never ever become accessible to your awareness, yet may nevertheless be relevant to your life ?
4. And if yes - which most likely is the minimally wise approach - then how do you intend to get into a two way interaction with all those realms which may be relevant to your life, yet about which your only awareness can be that they shall never ever be within your awareness, no matter how long you may live ?

Now, these four questions can be seen as a definition of the *transcendental*. Namely, the transcendental is precisely that realm which, as long as we humans may exist, shall never ever come into the awareness of any individual human. More precisely, that transcendental will forever be in our awareness merely by our awareness of not being able to have it in our awareness.

And quite clearly, such a realm clearly exists, since time and again and incrementally, we become aware of certain of its aspects ...

Furthermore, as a definition of the transcendental, those four questions

have the important feature of not being a mere ontological assumption which, as usual, it is so easy to challenge.

No, these four questions are, instead of ontology, formulated in terms of gnoseology, epistemology and pragmatics. And as such, they are so clearly obvious, as not to need any testing or supporting argument. In fact, they hardly allow an opposing argument either ...

Last and not least, these four questions do clearly bring into play the self-referential ability of human awareness, namely, our awareness has the ability to be aware of what can never be aware of ...

References

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