Philosophy 125 — Day 14: Overview

- Reminder: Due Date for 1st Papers and SQ's, **October 16** (next Th!)
- Office Hours for This and Next Week
  – Me: Today 4–5:30 (after class), T 4–6, W 2–4:30
  – Vanessa: T 11–1:30, W 10–11 & 2–3, Next Th. cancelled
  – Josh: M 4-6:30, F 3–5
- Zimmerman, Hacking, Adams, French (II) papers online
- Handout on "Aristotle's Division of the World" online
- Concrete Particulars (Finalé)
  – (Retro) A New Problem for Trope Theory?
  – Summary of views, so far
  – Parting remarks on (II)
  – Aristotelian Substance — A Happy Medium?
- Time Permitting: Next Topic – Propositions and Their Neighbors

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A New Problem for Trope Theory?

- According to the trope-theoretic account of abstract reference, we have:
  (1) "Courage is a Virtue" is true only if the set of courage tropes is a subset of the set of virtue tropes (or, medieval version: all courages are virtues).
- And, on the trope-theoretic account of subject-predicate discourse, we have:
  (2) "Socrates is courageous" is true only if Socrates has a courage trope.
- *Severally*, these accounts don't seem to imply anything obviously false (and, I claim that we can also avoid Loux's "modal" objection to (1)). However, assuming that "Courage is a Virtue" is (in fact) true, (1) and (2) *jointly* entail:
  (3) "Socrates is courageous" is true only if "Socrates is virtuous" is true.
- But, since we can run this argument for *any* person, we can *generalize* to:
  (4) All courageous persons are virtuous.
- But, (4) is *false*! Remember, it is *because* (4) is false that the Austere Nominalist needs their "ceteris paribus" clauses. So, it seems that the Trope Theorist's accounts of S–P discourse and abstract reference *can't both be true*.

An Overview of the Theories of Concrete Particulars, So Far

Question/Problem	Theories (So Far)		
	Trope Bundle	Realist Bundle	Substratum
How many attributes of a particular are *necessary*?	All (Loux) Some (me)	All (Loux) Some (me)	None
What's the truth-value of the Identity of Indiscernibles (II)?	Vacuous *or* False	True *and* *non*-vacuous	False
Are particulars *complexes*?	Yes	Yes	Yes
What are the *constituents* of concrete particulars?	Tropes	Properties (Relations?)	Properties + Substratum
What *diversifies* particulars?	Tropes	Properties (Relations?)	Substratum
Do attributes require a *subject*?	No	No	Yes

Concrete Particulars XV: Aristotelian Substance 1

- It seems we're faced with a choice between extremes. We can choose a theory which says that all attributes of all particulars are *contingent* (substratum), or we can choose a theory which says that all attributes of all particulars are *necessary* (standard bundle).[a] This seems to leave us with only two options:
  – Go for Austere Nominalism, and deny that particulars are *complexes*.
  – Or, go for a (non-rigid?) trope bundle theory (avoids (II)-argument).
- But, of course, this is a false dichotomy, since "All *X*'s are *Y*'s" and "No *X*'s are *Y*'s" do not exhaust the logically possible cases. A common-sensical view might be that some attributes of particulars are necessary and some are not.
- Loux recommends an *Aristotelian* account, which is like Austere nominalism in denying that particulars are complexes, but also employs a *realism* about universals in a way that makes some attributes necessary and some contingent.

[a]Loux's second horn: a theory accepting (II), rather than a theory making all attributes necessary. Puzzle: why doesn't Loux state the dilemma in the obvious way here? Why retreat to (II)? Study Q.

Concrete Particulars XVI: Aristotelian Substance 2

- Aristotle's theory of matter and substance is subtle (it's also controversial as to what the theory is – this is covered in John MacFarlane's 25A class). We'll try to keep this as simple as possible. See my handout for a more detailed picture.

- First, I'll try to present a picture of Aristotle's conception of substance. Then, I'll mention some problems with this picture (without too much detail).

- Generally, Aristotle held concrete particulars to be *organic wholes*, without metaphysical constituents (this aspect is like Austere Nominalism). These wholes are organized (*teleologically*) into *kinds*, which tell us *what things are*.

- E.g., Socrates is an *animal*. Socrates has some properties essentially (*e.g.*, Humanhood), and others contingently (*e.g.*, Courage). Socrates *essentially* (and proximally) belongs to the kind Human (*infimum*): that's *what he is.*

- There is a hierarchy of kinds, to which things belong *essentially*. Kinds at the bottom (*infima*) of the hierarchy are the *most* determinative of what things are.

Concrete Particulars XVII: Aristotelian Substance 3
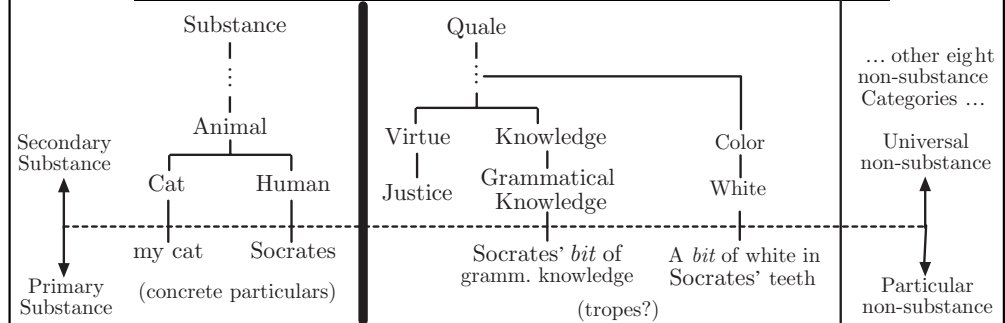
- Aristotle's Division of The World has 10 *Categories*, divided into *Substance* and *Non-Substance*. biological (and perhaps physical) *kinds* are *substantive*, but qualities (*e.g.*, colors), quantities, (*e.g.*, wavelength), and the other 8 are not.

- Particulars (*e.g.*, Socrates) *belong to* kinds in their Category (*e.g.*, Human) *essentially*, and *have* properties in other categories (*e.g.*, Virtue) *contingently*.

- Kinds at bottom of tree are *infima* — they determine what things *under them* **are**.

Concrete Particulars XVIII: Aristotelian Substance 4

- Loux's Aristotelian view of substance (concrete particular) *vs* bundle theory.
  - The bundle theorist (on Loux's reconstruction) treats *all* attributes as essential or necessary. This is "*super*essentialism", as Loux calls it.
    * Can this be avoided? [Study question at end of my "rigidity" handout.]
  - Aristotle takes some universals (kinds) to be exemplified (belonged to) *necessarily*, and others (qualities, *etc.*) to be exemplified *accidentally*.
  - Bundle theory restricts the constitutive attributes to *properties* (no kinds).
    * Can't the realist bundle theorist include *kinds*? If not, *why not*? S.Q.
  - Aristotle's distinction between *kinds* and *properties* is *crucial* for his view.
    * Aristotle's kinds demarcate *what concrete particulars are*. This is why they are essential to particulars, and properties are not. Kinds ≠ sets!

- Point of agreement: the "being" of a particular is grounded in the attributes it has (for Arsitotle, the kinds to which it belongs: the answer to "What is it?").

Concrete Particulars XIX: Aristotelian Substance 5

- Loux's Aristotelian view of substance (concrete particular) *vs* substratum Th.
  - Substratum: the subject of attribution is a *constituent* of the particular.
  - Aristotle: the subject of attribution is just *is* the (organic) particular itself.
  - Substratum: Subject must exist *independently* of *all* attributes it bears.
  - Aristotle: Subject exists independently of its *contingent* attributes *only*.
  - Substratum: Bare substratum *explains how* (II) can be false (*diversifier*).
  - Aristotle: *Multiple exemplification of kinds* explains how (II) can be false.
    * *How*? I don't see this. [Study Question.] Loux simply *asserts* that: Aristotelians deny that there is a special problem of explaining how concrete particulars can be numerically different from each other. They insist that the multiple instantiation of a kind is, by itself, sufficient to secure the existence of numerically different particulars. Each of its instantiations is a particular that is numerically different from the others.

- Points of Agreement: the attributes associated with a particular require a subject, and the Identity of Indiscernibles princ. (II) is false (Loux's version).

Concrete Particulars XX: Aristotelian Substance 6

- Loux claims that the Aristotelian theory rejects the Identity of Indiscernibles. I find this claim dubious and anachronistic (as this is really a *modern* principle).

- Be that as it may, it is unclear how this is supposed to work. Loux claims that *kinds* are what *diversify* concrete particulars, that kinds are *individuative*.

- Multiple instantiation of kinds is supposed to guarantee distinctness of the multiple exemplars of a kind. But, this just seems to push the question back one level. What makes cases of multiple instantiation *multiple* instantiation, and not *singular* instantiation? When are there *two* instances rather than *one*?

- There seems to be a primitive notion of "thisness" (see Adams' paper) required to mark this difference. I don't see how the kinds are doing the work here. Isn't it the *multiple* in multiple instantiation that's doing the work?

- This is especially puzzling in light of Loux's remarks concerning the differences between kinds and properties, and their roles in individuation.

Kinds, unlike properties, are such that their multiple instantiation results in numerically different particulars. For the kind human being to be instantiated twice is for two human beings to exist . . . . A property, by contrast, is numerically identical in its different instantiations. If two objects exemplify the property of redness, there is something, redness, that is literally the same in the two objects. . . . So, if we are metaphysical realists about attributes and hold that all the attributes relevant to our characterization of concrete particulars are properties, the numerical diversity of qualitatively indiscernible objects seems to emerge as a serious problem.

- This is mysterious. It sounds like he's saying that since the realist bundle theorist (in his view) only includes *properties* in his bundles, this leaves open the possibility that differences in *kinds* could allow the *Aristotelian* to distinguish property-indiscernible objects (objects that a bundle theorist would conflate). But, it's not the *kinds* that are different here, is it?

- If you have two humans, they are both members of *the same kind*, right? Or, is there such a thing as Socrates' humanity that is distinct from Branden's? If so, then this starts to sound like a *kind-trope* theory, but it's not supposed to be.

Concrete Particulars XXI: Aristotelian Substance 7

- There are various problems (and potential problems) with Aristotle's theory of substance. Many have claimed that Aristotle's early views (*Categories*) are inconsistent with later views (*Metaphysics*). I will not discuss these problems (but, see Michael Wedin's 2002 OUP book *Aristotle's Theory of Substance*).

- I will briefly discuss one problem that Loux does not mention. Loux points out that kinds are not reducible to properties, and that kinds are not sets. He does not try to give an account of the "belongs to" relation that obtains between a kind and those things "falling under" the kind in Aristotle's *Categories*.

- Aristotle says the following argument is valid: "Socrates is human. Human is animal. Therefore, Socrates is animal." This is problematic. The relationship between Socrates and Human seems to be different than the relation between Human and Animal (intuitively, something like the difference between $\in$ & $\subset$).

- Is there a *single* "belongs to" relation that can undergird the validity of this argument? If not, then how can the argument be valid (Ackrill on *Categories*)?

Propositions & Their Neighbors I: Introduction 1

- According a the metaphysical realist, when one utters the sentence "Socrates is courageous," one thereby picks-out both a concrete particular, and a property.

- But, realists will also say that simply uttering the sentence, and picking out (referring to) Socrates and Courage (and perhaps Exemplification) does not fully explain what happens when an *assertion* is made — *something* must *be asserted*.

- But, what could this "thing that is asserted" in the speech act in question *be*?
  - It cannot be the *sentence* itself, since (intuitively) the same thing can be asserted in other languages (or the same language!) using different sentences.
  - It can't be the things to which the speaker refers (Socrates, Courage, *etc.*). It makes no sense to "assert a person" or to "assert a property". The existence of the referents is *implied by* the assertion, but that is not *what is asserted*.

- We can use *nominalizations* (that-clauses) to identify what declarative sentences assert. *E.g.*, Branden asserted *that Socrates is courageous.* By prefixing "that" to a declarative sentence, we get something that is seems to play the role of a noun.

Propositions & Their Neighbors II: Introduction 2

- Indeed, that-clauses can even play the subject role in sentences. For instance:

    That the Red Sox beat the Yankees is what Branden said.

- As realists are wont to do, they will now insist that there must be something that such that-clauses *refer to* when they occur as subjects in S–P discourse.

- Realists will say that such clauses refer to "the things speakers assert or state in uttering declarative sentences." They are "names of the objects of acts of asserting or statement making." Realists call these things *statements*.

- According to realists, statements (*not* sentences) are the bearers of truth and falsity; and *each statement is either true or false but not both*. Three roles:
    - Statements are the objects of acts of assertion and denial (statement making).
    - Statements are the bearers of the truth values.
    - Statements are the referents of that-clauses.

- In support of their claims about statements, the realist cites more examples:

    That Socrates is courageous is true.

    Such examples show that *the very same that-clauses* that undergird acts of assertion and denial serve as the subject of the predicates 'true' and 'false'.

- Moreover, the same clauses can be the direct objects of verbs that do not express acts of saying, claiming, asserting, denying, or stating, as in the following:

    Branden believes that glass is a liquid.

- So, it appears that such clauses can refer to objects of *thought* as well as objects of assertion. Indeed, realists will use the word *thought* to denote such things.

- At this stage, realists suggest a unifying hypothesis: that statements and thoughts are really *one and the same thing*. And, the word "proposition" has been widely used to refer both to thoughts and to statements.

- So, realists about *propositions* are committed to the existence of (abstract) things that are both the objects of statement making and the objects of thought.