

METAPHYSICS 101: CHART 10 CAUSALITY

Our notion of causality comes from our EXPERIENCE of CHANGE.

And our experience that EX NIHILO NIHILO FIT—nothing comes from nothing.

CAUSE = that which positively influences the being of another (the effect), which therefore depends on it (the cause)

TYPE OF CAUSE	DIVIDED INTO	SUB-TYPES	COMMENTS
1 - INTRINSIC (Constituent)	1.1 MATERIAL CAUSE That <i>out of</i> which something is made— <i>ex qua et in qua aliquid fit</i> .	Prime Matter	1. It is a PASSIVE POTENTIAL principle. (As opposed to principles with an active potency.) 2. It remains WITHIN THE EFFECT. It is intrinsic. 3. It is INDETERMINATE.
		Secondary Matter	
	1.2 FORMAL CAUSE That <i>into</i> which something is made.	Substantial Form	Before the thing is made, the form is still in the mind of the efficient cause. As such, it is called EXEMPLARY CAUSE.
		Accidental Form	

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2 - EXTRINSIC	<p>2.1 EFFICIENT CAUSE That <i>who makes</i> something to be or to be in a certain way (in philosophical jargon, he draws or educes the form from the matter).</p> <p>The efficient cause has two kinds of activities: 1. TRANSIENT activities affect an EXTERNAL thing. These are ACTIONS in the technical sense. Aristotle: <i>poiesis</i>; Latin <i>facere</i>; English <i>to make</i>. 2. IMMANENT activities affect the AGENT ITSELF. These are OPERATIONS in the technical sense. Aristotle: <i>praxis</i>; Latin <i>agere</i>; English <i>to do</i> or <i>to act</i>.</p> <p>ESSE = ultimate root of activity ESSENCE = specific principle of operation, known as NATURE OPERATIVE POWERS or FACULTIES = proximate principles of operation</p>	PRINCIPAL - INSTRUMENTAL	Principal = acts by its own power Instrumental has a proper effect and an instrumental effect. The proper effect is what it produces by its nature. The instrumental effect is what it produces by virtue of the action of the principal cause.
		TOTAL - PARTIAL	Total = complete cause in any given order Partial = produces only a portion
		UNIVERSAL - PARTICULAR	Universal = extends to a series of specifically distinct results Particular = restricted to a single type of effect
		NECESSARY - CONTINGENT	Necessary = always and unfailingly produces its effects Contingent = does not always produce its proper effect
		DETERMINED - FREE	Determined = produces its proper effect as the result of the mere "vitality of its nature" Free = produces its effect with mastery over its own operation

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	2.2 FINAL CAUSE That <i>for which</i> something is made. 1. Causa causarum! 2. It causes through attraction. 3. It attracts insofar as it is good.	INTRINSIC-TRANSCENDENTAL	Intrinsic = the natural result of an action. In Ethics, this is called <i>finis operis</i> . Transcendent = the objective towards which an action is directed. In Ethics, this is called <i>finis operantis</i> .
		LAST/FINAL - PROXIMATE	Last/Final = that for the sake of which all the other ends are sought in a given context Proximate = an end sought with a view to a further end
		HONORABLE – PLEASURABLE - USEFUL	Honorable = desired for its own sake Pleasurable = same as honorable good insofar as it sets desire at rest and produces joy Useful = desired as a means
		PRODUCED - POSSESSED	Produced = actions <i>factivae finis</i> . Reveal the perfection of the agent. Possessed = actions <i>adeptivae finis</i> . Reveal the incompleteness of the agent.

Related terms:

PRINCIPLE = that from which some other thing arises in any way whatsoever; that from which anything in any way comes. (A cause is a subset of the set of principles.)

CONDITION = a prerequisite or necessary disposition in order to make causality take place.

OCCASION = something whose presence or occurrence favours the action of a cause.