

Amicus Plato: Philosophy as Profession of Truth¹

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Abstract

Philosophy is the search for truth. Only one dedicated to this search deserves the title of philosopher. The rest is erudition, typical of many scholars. In the search for truth, the philosopher has to dialogue with those who preceded him. This initial attitude is important as a guideline for reading philosophers, and specifically Zubiri. Far from fossilizing his texts, we must see them dynamically, as moments of a process that began, at least, with Socrates, and that will never end, because it is interminable. As a practical example, there is nothing better than a comparative reading of the two fundamental works of Zubiri, *On Essence* (1963) and *Sentient Intelligence* (1980-83). The first seeks to develop a theory of the “real thing” as “substantivity,” and the second describes “reality” as the formality with which things are actualized in the sentient intelligence. They are two approaches that in principle seem complementary, but which are in conflict on some essential points, necessitating rectifications in some of the most well-known Zubirian theses. This is something that Zubiri was unable to carry out during his lifetime, and should be seen as what it is: pending tasks or open issues for the future.

Resumen

Filosofía es la búsqueda de la verdad. Sólo quien se debe a ese menester merece el título de filósofo. Lo demás es erudición, propia de escoliastas. En la búsqueda de la verdad, el filósofo tiene que dialogar con quienes le precedieron. Esta actitud inicial es importante para hacernos con una pauta de lectura de los filósofos, y concretamente de Zubiri. Lejos de fosilizar sus textos, hay que verlos de modo dinámico, como momentos de un proceso que comenzó, cuando menos, en Sócrates, y que no terminará nunca, porque es interminable. Como ejemplo práctico de lo anterior, nada mejor que una lectura comparada de las dos obras fundamentales de Zubiri, *Sobre la esencia* (1963) e *Inteligencia sentiente* (1980-83). La primera busca elaborar la teoría de la “cosa real” como “sustantividad”, y la segunda describe la “realidad” como la formalidad con que se actualizan las cosas en la inteligencia sentiente. Son dos enfoques que en principio parecen complementarios, pero que en puntos esenciales resultan conflictivos, lo que exige introducir rectificaciones en algunas de las más conocidas tesis zubirianos. Algo que él ya no pudo hacer en vida, y que han de verse como lo que son, tareas pendientes o cuestiones abiertas al futuro.

The bold effort of the search for truth

The 5th Xavier Zubiri International Congress is held 27 years after the first

and 36 years after the death of the philosopher. During that time almost all of the 27 volumes that today constitute his collected works have been published. Many have appeared during the years separating

the first congress from the current one. Because of its volume and quality, the publication of these books is a production that is unparalleled in Spain since the time of Suárez, and that places Zubiri at the forefront of the stage of 20th century European philosophy.

The reading of this huge number of pages clarifies many doubts that before, with the shortage of available texts, were impossible to solve. But at the same time it raises new ones. Why? Because now we can follow the evolution of Zubiri's thinking over the years. Zubiri's philosophy is not a rock solid building constructed once and for all. In fact it is the opposite of thinking about hieratism or unchangeableness. That is why analysis of his work cannot just be simple scholarship. It is not about harmonizing and systematizing what he said; it is about taking the testimony that he left when he died, now 36 years ago, in order to continue what he had done up to that moment, viz. the relentless and indefatigable search for truth.

Indeed, that is philosophy: the search for truth. Only those who surrender to it deserve the title of "philosopher." The rest is philosophical, scholastic scholarship. Zubiri already warned about it as early as 1942:

Philosophy is not something done, finished, that it is there and that one can consume at his discretion. In every man, philosophy is something that must be made by personal effort. It is not that everyone has to start at zero or invent their own system. Quite the opposite. Precisely, because it is a radical and ultimate knowledge, philosophy is mounted, more than any other knowledge, on a tradition. What it is about is that—even admitting philosophies already made—this ascription is the result of a personal effort, of an authentic intellectual life. The rest is brilliant "book learning" or splendid preparation of "masterful" lectures. You can, in effect, write tons of paper and consume a long life in a

chair of philosophy, and not have touched, even from afar, the slightest vestige of philosophical life. Conversely, one can lack any "originality" and possess, in the deepest part of himself, the inner and quiet movement of the philosopher.²

The internal and quiet, yet at the same time ungrateful exercise of the philosopher—as Zubiri warned the then-young apprentice philosopher Julian Marias—"...is not an easy task or pleasant." It is not pleasant, because it demands that "intimate violence and twisting" that is essential "to surrender to the truth."

Amicus Plato, but truth is a greater friend. The splendid metaphor that John of Salisbury recounts in his *Metalogicon* and attributed to Bernard of Chartres has become a classic:

Dicebat Bernardus Carnotensis esse quasi nanos, gigantium humeris incidents, ut possimus plura eis et remotiora videre, non utique proprii visus acumine, aut eminentia corporis, sed quia in altum subvenimur et extollimur magnitudine and gigantea. Roughly translated: Bernard of Chartres said that we are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants so that we can see some things more distantly than they, not because of the sharpness of our sight or our high stature, but because we are raised above them, perched on a much higher level.³

We cannot be content to see what the giant saw; rather, our obligation is to go, with him and from him, beyond him.

And why? Because the fidelity of the philosopher is not to any giant, no matter how great, however respectable, but to the truth, however small it may be. Every reader of *Nicomachean Ethics*, already in the first pages of the book, finds a statement by Aristotle that is quite surprising. He says: "We will be content to elucidate this as far as the subject allows." And shortly afterwards he adds:

Speaking of things of this nature and with such starting points, we must be content to show the truth in a rough and schematic way; we can speak only of what usually happens and, based on such data, it is enough to reach similarly rough and schematic conclusions. In the same way it is necessary to accept as much as we say here: because it is the proper duty of the educated man to look for the precision in each kind of knowledge to the extent that the nature of the matter admits it; obviously, it would be quite absurd to demand probable reasoning from a mathematician or to demand scientific proofs from a rhetorician.⁴

Humble Aristotle. Great Aristotle. Indeed, shortly after that, at the beginning of the sixth chapter, where he analyzes and criticizes the Platonic theory of ideas, Aristotle writes:

We had perhaps better consider the universal good and discuss thoroughly what is meant by it, although such an inquiry is made an uphill one by the fact that the Forms have been introduced by friends of our own. Yet it would perhaps be thought to be better, indeed to be our duty, for the sake of maintaining the truth even to destroy what touches us closely, especially as we are philosophers or lovers of wisdom; for, while both are dear, piety requires us to honor truth above our friends.⁵

This is the origin of the proverb "*Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas*," which according to Ammonium Alexandrino in his *Vita Aristotelis*, was already current in the Platonic school, about Socrates. The text of Ammonium says: "*Platonis enim est sermo, quod magis oportet de veritate curare, quam de aliquo alio, et alibi dicit, amicus quidem Socrates, sed magis amica veritas, et in altro loco, de Socrate parum est curandum, de veritate multum.*"⁶ Plato's text, to which Ammonium alludes is found

in the *Phaedo*, where Socrates says:

And I would ask you to be thinking of the truth and not of Socrates: agree with me, if I seem to you to be speaking the truth; or if not, withstand me might and main, that I may not deceive you as well as myself in my enthusiasm, and, like the bee, leave my sting in you before I die.⁷

As it could not be otherwise, the sentence must refer back to Socrates: the philosopher must prefer truth to friendship. It should be noted that in Aristotle's phrase: "being philosophers, though both things [truth and friendship] are dear, it is right to prefer the truth", the word usually translated as "dear" is the Greek term "*hósion*" which really means "pious" or "holy." Towards our teachers we have duties that for the Greeks were not of justice, *dikaíosýne*, but of mercy, *eusébeia*, *hosiótes*. Towards teachers we have duties of respect, even reverence. But the philosopher, as Socrates has taught us, has duty first of all to the truth.

I thought it important to remember this at the beginning of this International Congress on Zubiri. Its motto could be: *Amicus Xaverius, sed magis amica veritas*. Here we are to look for the truth, supported by him, helped by him, raised on his shoulders. True masters do not cut wings, they give them. And that does not start now, but from the time of Socrates. When teachers are not like that, they do not deserve the title of such.

This initial stance is important to set a guideline for reading philosophers, and specifically Zubiri. These philosophers have been searching for truth with fidelity to their teachers but without vows of respect or obedience. That allows us to understand two things: first, their originality, and secondly, the fact that they have evolved throughout their intellectual life. The latter gives us the key to reading Zubiri's works. Far from fossilizing his texts, we must see them dynamically, as moments of a process that began, at least with Socrates, and that has not ended

with anyone, including Zubiri, because it is endless.

From *On Essence* to *Sentient Intelligence*

An example here is worthwhile. In the Seminar of text analysis we have dedicated the last year to begin reading Zubiri's *On Essence*, after having spent no less than 13 years, from 2005 to 2018, studying the *Sentient Intelligence* trilogy. And the first thing we could see in the first sessions is the difference between these two works. The objective of *On Essence* was primarily metaphysical, to carry out the study of reality "by the way of *physis*", as it expressly says, compared to the traditional "way of *logos*" so prevalent in the history of metaphysics.

This change of approach is carried out by Zubiri in dialogue with Aristotle. In contrast to the Alexandrian, the Medieval, and the Scholastic Aristotle, who canonized the "path of *logos*", Zubiri analyzes and explores the potential of a different Aristotle, in a whole new way, one of several that emerged throughout the last century. The greatest attention has been the rediscovery of the rhetorical and dialectical Aristotle, which has been so decisive in the movement of rehabilitation of practical philosophy during the second half of the 20th century. But renewal had to come not only to ethics and rhetoric, but also to metaphysics. And Zubiri's project of reinterpreting all Aristotelian metaphysics by the "*physis* pathway" rather than by the "*logos* path", has been one of the great novelties of the Aristotelian studies of the last century. This was how Pierre Aubenque (1929-), for example, saw Aristotle.

This was Zubiri's great goal in writing about the essence. It was about remaking the categories of "substance" and "essence" using the *physis* route and not through the *logos*. This forced him to rethink the classic problem of knowledge, in a *physikós*, not *logikós* sense. That is something that he summed up in a few pages of the book,⁸ but which he did not

develop extensively until the appearance of the trilogy on intelligence. In *On Essence* he distinguishes two visions or ways of understanding reality, one "from outside to inside" and another "from inside to outside".⁹ The first understands the notes as "accidents" of the "substance", *hypokeímenon*, which is inside: "Aristotle sees the notes only as a mere "welling up" from [the *hypokeímenon*]"¹⁰ Zubiri underlines the word "to well up" [*brotar*], which translates the term *phýsis*. And that has led to the "path of the Aristotelian *logos*", which is also typical of the history of metaphysics. Zubiri contrasts "welling up" with nothing more or less than "actuality." And he writes: "On the other hand, in this other vision that we are dealing with, we are not talking about a "welling up" but an "actualization" or a "projection" of the real thing in all of its notes."¹¹ This change is fundamental. Now what matters is not the *phýsis*, the reality of the "thing", but the "actuality." "The proper and formal act of intellection with respect to the intellect is to be a mere "actuality" of the thing in intelligence, and therefore, the intellect as intellect is only "actualized."¹² "To know intellectually is merely to actualize the thing."¹³ Here the theory of actualization in the sentient intelligence is already clearly formulated. What is missing, or what is left over? The word "thing", which comes out repeatedly. It is not that the thing is actualized in the intelligence, *it is that reality consists in actuality*. In *On Essence* this is still unclear. *Reality is mere actuality, prior to substantivity and essence. Substantivity is the thing, but reality is not a thing, but the formality of everything, and therefore transcends everything; it is the first transcendental*. Formality is not of the thing but of reality, and in primordial apprehension actuality is not of the thing but of reality. In primordial apprehension we apprehend reality, but not as a reality-thing, but as "being realized", that is, as "being actualized as real." That actualization is not only in sentient intelligence, since there is a "*prius*", so that reality is "*prius*" regarding its actualization in the

sentient intelligence. It is reality itself that we apprehend as actuality, that is, as being actualized as such-and-such reality. Not only is there an actuality in the sentient intelligence, but an actuality of the thing itself, which is shown to us as being actualized. *Reality is actuality*. This means that “reality” should not be taken here as a noun-thing, but as a tense, the gerund, “being actualized”; we actualize reality not “as real” (noun) but “being real” (verb), in its “being here-and-now.” It is not just that reality is dynamic, in the manner of the dichotomy constitutive-operational; it is about reality being dynamic, it is constitutively dynamic, it is being, it is reality being realized, and that is what actuality consists of. It should be said that before the “in its own right” [*de suyo*] reality is “self-giving”, a here-and-now being “giving of itself”. Recalling classic expressions, it is something similar to what Thomas Aquinas defined as *actus purus*. Actuality is pure act, *érgon*. And as this occurs in primordial apprehension, it makes sense that Zubiri coined the term “noergia” to express it. Noergia is that in which primordial apprehension consists. In it, reality is actualized to us, but not as a substantive thing but as being realized-verb, or better, as being actualized-verb. This is the last Zubiri, who thinks with a very different horizon from that of the *On Essence* era, in which his objective was the discussion with Scholasticism about what substance and essence might be—something that in the last Zubiri has no great relevance.

From “Reality-thing” to “Reality” Itself

To verify this change, we only have to see how Zubiri proceeds in the analysis of the formal moment of intellection in *On Essence* and in *Sentient Intelligence*. In *On Essence*, after what we have just seen, Zubiri orients his analysis to the description of the “dimensions” of real truth, as a way of accessing the reality of “the thing”, which is what he is looking for. Hence, he immediately begins with a distinction between “adventitious notes” and “constitu-

tional notes.” These latter comprises a system, the substantive system. Once this is achieved, he writes: “Constitutional notes, as moments of a primary unit, what constitute what we call a ‘system’. And it is this system that is formally three-dimensional.”¹⁴ The whole theme of “dimensions” has been introduced for that purpose. This explains why in *Sentient Intelligence* the issue of dimensions does not play an important role, and why Zubiri relegates it to the section “Dimensions of real truth”, at the end of the book.¹⁵

From the above we can draw a conclusion. In *On Essence*, Zubiri does not analyze “reality” but what he calls “reality-thing”, as opposed to the “meaning-thing”. The definition he gives on page 104 (“Reality is everything and only that which acts on other things or on itself by virtue, formally, of the notes it possesses”) is not the definition of “reality” but of the “reality-thing.” The reality-thing has formality and content. But reality is defined by formality, not by content. “Reality is not, therefore, a characteristic of *content already concluded*, but is *open formality*. To say ‘reality’ is always to leave in suspense a phrase that by itself is asking to be completed by ‘reality of something’. The real as such is open, not in the sense that by its properties every real thing acts on the others [it is clear that he is referring to the definition of SE 104]. It is not about actuation but about the openness of formality. The formality of reality is as such the openness itself. It is not the openness of the real but the openness of reality.”¹⁶ This distinction between “the real” and “reality” is fundamental. “The real” is the formality plus the content, that is, the “real thing.” But “reality” is pure formality, it is a transcendental, abstracted from content, and therefore from suchness. Now, primordial apprehension is only of “reality”, not of “the real”. The confusion on this point comes from Zubiri himself, because when he coined the expression “primordial apprehension”, he seemed to be saying that there are proper and specific acts of “primordial apprehension”. But there are no

acts other than “apprehension.” Hence, it would have been more appropriate to talk about the “primordial moment” of apprehension.

The above gives an idea of the change in the twenty years between *On Essence* and *Sentient Intelligence*. To carry it out, he had to create the category of “primordial apprehension of reality,” which did not exist before. The primordial apprehension does not apprehend the thing as a thing but as reality; that is, the thing as formally real, or insofar as it is actualized as real. What he now seeks is to remake or reconstruct his own idea of reality, and with it the entire edifice of philosophy from its origins.

The “Sad Night”

These changes are anything but pleasant. They are very painful, really bloody, because they force the thinker to part with girones of his own skin. And in the life of Zubiri we have been left testimonies, certainly indirect, of crises of this kind, especially one—I do not know if it was the last one—which took place, according to Ignacio Ellacuría, in the spring of 1982, and that I have baptized, properly or no, “the sad night” of Zubiri.¹⁷

To understand it we need to return to *On Essence*. This book attempts to develop a physical and nonconceptive theory of substantivity and essence. Substantivity is the closed and cyclic system of notes that provide a primary coherence unit to one thing and make it a reality different from others. And within that constitutional system, there is a constitutive subsystem, composed of the set of basic, unfounded and final notes in the note line, which support all constitutional notes, and therefore substantivity. That is the essence, now defined by the way of *physis*, and not by the way of *logos*, as the Scholastics had done, thus identifying the essence with the species, understood as the articulation of genus plus specific difference. This rectification allows Zubiri, on the other hand, to speak of “constitutive essence,” as opposed to the “quiditative

essence” that the Scholastics had conceptually defined. Hence, in Zubiri there is no point in talking about the “principle of individuation”, either through the *materia signata quantitate* (Aquinas), or through the *quidditas* (Scotus). It is not about “individuation,” since the essence is already individual, but at most “speciation” or “specification.”

This was the great achievement of *On Essence*. As there are some constitutive notes that are unfounded or last in the line of notes, Zubiri called them essential notes, and he reserves the term “substances” for them. In *On Essence* he does not say what these substantial notes or substances are. But a few months after the book appeared in December 1962, in April 1963, Zubiri published an article in *Revista de Occidente*, entitled “Man, Personal Reality”, in which he did in fact say so in the case of human reality. There he affirms that “in man there are innumerable substances: his animic substance and the substances that all make up his organism.”¹⁸ And some pages earlier, “Man is composed of a psychic substance, and millions of material substances.”¹⁹ The reason for the psychic substance he justifies in the following way: “That man has something irreducible to matter is undeniable because intelligence is essentially irreducible to sensing.”²⁰ These arguments are repeated months later, in the article “The Origin of Man,” which appeared in the same magazine in August 1964. There, he writes: “However complicated stimuli may be, and likewise their form of apprehension, they will never become stimulating realities and intellectual apprehension [...] Therefore, it can only be the effect of the first cause—as the appearance of matter was in its time—the effect of a creation *ex nihilo*.”²¹

Emergentism by elevation?

It is well known that the term “substance” disappears in Zubiri’s work after the article “Man and his Body”, published in 1974. And above all the idea disappears that the human being is composed of mil-

lions of material substances plus an animating spiritual substance. In fact, Zubiri does not speak again of “soul” as opposed to “body.” Instead, he speaks now of “psycho-organic system,” with a “psychic subsystem” and another “organic subsystem.” It is not a mere change of terminology. At the same time that happens, another term, already present in the text of “The Origin of Man”, becomes more important. In that article Zubiri had already said:

Hominization is the evolution of pre-human hominids to hominized hominids; it is a genetic process which proceeds from and can only proceed from that pre-human. This process is determined by a transformation of the basic pre-human morphological structures. And in this new transformed structure and only in it and from it, a psyche flourishes that could not have flourished in an echinoderm or a bird.²²

Zubiri assumes the evolutionary theory, and from it states that human psyche arises by “flourishing” “in” the structures of pre-human hominids and “from” them.²³ The question is what does he mean by “flourishing”. Is it “emergence”? The text similar to “The Origin of Man”, of 1963; it is “The Human Genesis” of 1983. In it he maintains the same thesis, that the matter gives the specifically human intelligence “from itself”, although it could not give it “by itself” if it were not “elevated.”²⁴ It is what I have sometimes called “elevation emergentism”, which seems to be Zubiri’s last position.²⁵ From this several consequences can be derived, both for the theory of intelligence and for metaphysics, anthropology and theology. As Zubiri could not carry out these developments during his lifetime, at least for lack of time, I want to end with his brief description, because they are all open paths for future research.

Sentient intelligence, impure intelligence

Zubiri continued to affirm throughout his life the irreducibility of intellect to pure feeling. There never any change about this in his works. But he gives the impression that he did not understand “intellective knowing” in the same way in 1963 and in 1983. On the first of those dates he saw the intellect as the ability to actualize things as realities. Recall the definition of *On Essence*: “reality is everything and only that which acts on itself and on other things by virtue of the notes that it has.”²⁶ Reality is synonymous with “real-thing”, unlike “meaning-thing”, typical of the “way of logos”. But by 1983 reality is “formality”, “actuality”, given already in primordial apprehension, and the elaboration of its contents is the result of the long march of logos and reason. What does this mean? It means that by 1980 there is no longer “pure” intelligence, because it is not an autonomous substance within the human being, of a spiritual nature and with its own dynamics, capable of elevating itself to the super-heavenly realities or of functioning as pure intelligence, in the manner of God. Neoplatonism now seems definitely superseded. Intelligence is “impure” in its contents, and it is not pure except in its formality, in its actuality. Moreover, that formality is only of “sentient” reality, so that it cannot leave the realm of the sentient, nor therefore the limits of the world. This seems not to have been seen clearly by Zubiri until the final stage of his life. And when that happened, I think it made him change his previous approach to the problem of God. Thus, the idea that God is transcendent “in” the world, rather than transcendent “to” the world, began to gain relevance.²⁷ In a note he writes: “Transcendence ‘in’ = to a God, in a way, intraworldly”.²⁸ It is understood that it was then that he extensively developed the mode of experience of God in the world, in the part of his book *Man and God*, entitled “God and Human Life: The Experience of God.”²⁹

Open issues in metaphysics

In addition to constitutive notes, and the constitutional notes derived from them, substantivity has other notes termed “systematic”, which do not derive directly from the constitutive ones, but belong to the entire system and arise from it. One wonders if these systematic notes are not as essential to substantivity as those that Zubiri calls constitutive. If so, the whole theory of essence would have to be reworked. In my view, this was the reason for his “sad night.”

Open issues in anthropology

Is the soul a constitutive note, or a systematic note? There are reasons to think that Zubiri was leaning towards the latter position at the end.³⁰ Let us bear in mind that intelligence consists of “actuality”, and that actuality does not have the characteristics of the constitutive notes, but that it is, as a pure actuality, a strict systematic note, which is achieved at a certain moment (in “The Origin of Man” Zubiri says: “The child, already a few weeks after birth, undeniably makes use of his intelligence”³¹) and can be lost by destructuring (for example, in the case of dementias). Seeing intelligence as a systematic note, rather than as a constitutive note, is very consistent with Zubirian thought. Thus, in “Man, Personal Reality”, he affirms that “soul means the ‘structural moment’ of the body. The body is not ‘coupled’ to a soul, but is structurally ‘animated’.”³²

Open issues in theology

In the course of 1967, *Philosophical Reflections on Some Problems of Theology*, Zubiri dedicated a lesson to the Eucharist.³³ When, in 1980, he was named Doctor *Honoris Causa* of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Deusto, he chose from among all the topics discussed in that course, the one related to the Eucharist. The result was the text entitled *Philosophical Reflections on the Eucharist*.³⁴ Comparing both writings, the evolu-

tion of his thinking is apparent, in the sense of giving increasing importance to the category of “actuality” over that of “substantivity.” If in the 1967 text the Eucharistic conversion was interpreted as a process of “trans-substantiation”, in the 1980 text it says that it is “trans-substantiation by trans-actualization”. As mere actuality, the presence of Christ in the bread cannot be a constitutive note but a systematic note. And what Zubiri affirms is that this note generates a change in substantivity. So it turns out that it is an essential note of that substantivity, without being a constitutive note. After the sad night, it is clear that he went in search of a satisfactory solution, and that he found it not in his previous theory of essence, but appealing to the category of actuality. He immediately sought to apply this approach to several other theological issues, as hinted in the following paragraph of his 1980 text: “Thus, taking theological examples, God is present in the Incarnation, in the just man, etc. God has a strict becoming in line of actuality. It is not only that in the Incarnate Word (which is Christ) that humanity acquires divine actuality, but it is God himself who in his divine reality freely acquires an actuality, human actuality: it is the Word itself that becomes flesh, it is he who acquires actuality.”³⁵

Conclusion

In the *On Essence* era, Zubiri seems to identify “reality” with “thing”, or with “real thing”. Hence the importance attached to the analysis of “suchness”, to the point that sometimes they seem synonymous—reality with suchness. It is true that the last part of the book is a long exposition of the transcendental order, but that it was not well integrated into it. Different is the situation at the time of *Sentient Intelligence*. Here “reality” is identified with the nonspecific moment of actualizing things, and “reality-thing” is a word that includes its such-and-suchness content. Its opposite is “meaning-thing.” Reality is not a “thing”, no matter that it only is given in

things. And this because reality transcends the suchnesses, and has a nonspecific and transcendental character. In this sense, it would be good to clearly distinguish the terms “reality” and “thing” when talking about Zubiri’s philosophy. As much as both are always united, the word “reality” should be reserved to designate the nonspecific and transcendental moment of things, and that of “thing” for the sum of reality and content. I think this could avoid many mistakes in the interpretation of his thought.

I go back to the beginning, the V International Xavier Zubiri Congress. The

textual basis we have today allows us to know Zubiri’s thinking with a precision and detail that until a few years ago was impossible. In this sense, we are truly privileged. But that, in turn, is a source of new problems in the interpretation of his work. Hence the main function of these Congresses is to disseminate news about developments in the interpretation of Zubiri’s thought. Not to repeat it monotonously, but to do philosophy, to philosophize, we must do this, even at the risk of it leading us to go beyond Zubiri’s thought, or even go against it. *Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.*

Notes

¹ Paper presented at the V Congreso Internacional Xavier Zubiri, Bari, 25 September 2019. Zubiri’s works are cited according to the *Index zubirianus*:
<https://www.zubiri.net/indexzubirianus.html>.

² NHD, 52-3.

³ John of Salisbury. *Metalogicon* IV.

⁴ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, I 3: 1094b 11-27.

⁵ *Ibid.*, I 6: 1096a 11-16, Ross translation.

⁶ Ammoniom Alexandrino, *Vita Aristotelis*, Lugduni Batavorum, Apud Ioannem Diephorst, 1621, § 49, 105. English translation: “Of Plato it was said, that it is better to care for truth than for anything else; and elsewhere he says, “Socrates is indeed a friend, but truth is a greater friend”. And in another place, “It is important to care about Socrates, but much more about truth.”

⁷ Plato, *Phaedo*, 91c, Jowett translation.

⁸ SE 112-134.

⁹ SE 116.

¹⁰ SE 126.

¹¹ SE 126.

¹² SE 113.

¹³ SE 113.

¹⁴ SE 144.

¹⁵ ISIR 239-246.

¹⁶ ISIR 119-20.

¹⁷ Cf. D. Gracia, “La noche triste”, *El poder de lo real*, Madrid, Triacastela, 2017, 462-471.

¹⁸ EMN 62.

¹⁹ EMN 59.

²⁰ EMN 57.

²¹ EMN 91-2.

²² EMN 88.

²³ EMN 89.

²⁴ SHOM 468.

²⁵ D. Gracia, *El poder de lo real: Leyendo a Zubiri*, Madrid, Triacastela, 2017, 433-472.

²⁶ SE 104. The definition is repeated in ISIR 60, but now “in its own right” [de suyo] is added. The context makes clear that this definition refers to the “reality-thing” as opposed to the “meaning thing”, not to “reality” itself.

²⁷ Cf. HD2 10-12, 166, 192-4, 478.

²⁸ HD2 194.

²⁹ HD2 521-584.

³⁰ Cf. The role of “systematization” in the final text written by Zubiri: SHOM 461-463.

³¹ EMN 83. This idea is repeated in various texts.

³² EMN 61.

³³ RFPT 221-284.

³⁴ PTH 787-813.

³⁵ PTH, 802.