REPLY TO PROFESSOR MARCISZEWSKI

Stephen Körner

Professor Marciszewski's discussion of my conception of the structure and function of categorial frameworks, as propounded in my 1970 monograph, shows a full and, I am pleased to note, sympathetic understanding of the task which I set myself. It also contains some constructive and justified criticisms. Indeed some of the modifications proposed by him will be found in a book of mine which I submitted to the Cambridge University Press, before I had the benefit of studying his comments. My aim in both these books, as Marciszewski clearly sees, is not to develop and to defend my own metaphysics or, more particularly, my own categorial framework i.e. the supreme principles governing my thinking about what I take to be the world of intersubjective experience. It is to develop the general notion of categorial frameworks, of which my own is one example among many. Any attempt at fulfilling this task is exposed to the everpresent danger of confusing features peculiar to one's own categorial framework with features characteristic of any such structure. While I do not claim to have been successful in avoiding this danger, I do claim that I have been fully aware of it. This awareness finds its probably clearest expression in the last chapter of my later book, which contains a brief synopsis of the convictions which constitute my immanent and my transcendent metaphysics as well as my morality. The purpose of the chapter is to enable the reader to judge for himself, how far I have been able to protect my metaphilosophical inquiry from involvement with my philosophical convictions.

My reply to Marciszewski's comment falls into two parts. In the first I shall briefly explain the nature of my inquiry and the status of the theses in which it should result, if correctly pursued. What I have to say in this part has either found Marciszewski's explicit approval or is, I think, implicitly approved by him. In the second part I shall deal with his charges of illegitimate philosophical involvement.
1. On the Concept of a Categorial Framework as a Tool of Metaphilosophy

The notion of a categorial framework is meant to make the notion of immanent, as opposed to transcendent, metaphysics more precise. The principles defining a person's categorial framework are supreme in the sense that any proposition which is incompatible with such a principle must be rejected by him. The principles defining a categorial framework thus remind us of Kant's synthetic principles a priori, in particular his anticipations of perception and analogies of experience, as well as of Collingwood's absolute presuppositions. They differ from the former, mainly in not implying the claim of being unique i.e. in excluding the possibility of alternative categorial frameworks. And they differ from the latter mainly in being regarded as propositions which are true or false.

While in *Categorial Frameworks* I characterized a categorial framework as the result of a categorization consisting of a list of questions asked in a certain order and requiring an affirmative or negative answer (apart from possible border-line cases), I now regard it as the result of the manner in which human beings as a matter of empirical fact organize their experience of the inter-subjective world. The organization which is explained in the later book is, I think, more adequate and less restrictive and may thus result in categorial frameworks which are more likely to find Marciszewski's approval not only in principle, but even as regards their detailed characterization. Yet, however this may be, the comments he makes are still highly instructive and worth answering.

Before trying to do so, it will be helpful to say a few words about the relation between on the one hand the concept of a categorial framework as a tool used in the inquiry into the nature of metaphysical thinking and on the other hand metaphysical thinking itself. This can for our present purpose be done by means of a fairly simple example. If we imagine a contemporary of Kant to have been engaged in trying to characterize the systems of immanent metaphysics accessible to him through conversations with his contemporaries, historical documents and his own philosophical thought experiments, one would, it seems to me, not be surprised if he characterized all systems of immanent metaphysics as containing among their supreme principles the principles of Aristotelian logic (allowing for minor modifications) and a principle of continuity to the effect that *natura non facit saltus* or - more precisely - that being a changing entity which, in