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# WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP?

The *active intellect* of Avicenna, Maimonides, Cusa, and LaRouche

By Pierre Beaudry, 4/17/18

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## INTRODUCTION

*“Let us begin, then, at once, with that merest of words, "Infinity." This, like "God," "spirit," and some other expressions of which the equivalents exist in all languages, is by no means the expression of an idea but of an effort at one. It stands for the possible attempt at an impossible conception. Man needed a term by which to point out the direction of this effort, the cloud behind which lay, forever invisible, the object of this attempt.”*

Edgar Allan Poe, [\*Eureka\*](#), p. 23

The effort at which your mind attempts to know the future is the best exercise you will ever make, because if you don't attempt the impossible, how can you discover the future? How can you discover what the next step in human progress is going to be? Are you going to make a guess among several deductive options? Are you going to wait for the future to come to you or are you going to use your mind as Lyndon LaRouche has been doing in his successful forecasting for the last five decades? The question comes down to this: “How does LaRouche do it?”

There is no simple answer to these questions, because one has to develop a sense of the directionality of mankind in order to be able to forecast what the next step of human progress should be. But, how are you going to do that? How can

anyone know what to look for in order to find the direction that humanity is going to take next? Is this sense of knowing the future even possible, or are we simply deluding ourselves like the blind leading the blind? What if you try to know what the future should have been?

LaRouche showed that the way to answer these questions is by adopting a method of causing axiomatic changes within already existing, but obsolete forms of accepted knowledge. Remember what he said: “In its application to political economy, my method focuses analysis upon the central role of the following, three-step sequence: first, axiomatically revolutionary forms of scientific and analogous discovery; second, consequent advances in machine-tool and analogous principles; finally, consequent advances in the productive powers of labor.”<sup>1</sup>

## 1. LAROCHE AND THE “SIXTH SENSE” AS THE POWER OF FORECASTING

*“As a matter of principle, to what degree, in what manner, and by what means, can man gain foreknowledge of the method by which to willfully change the current direction of his society’s destiny, for the better, in specific ways? Even to overcome, thus, the worst sort of impending, seemingly inevitable catastrophe, such as the presently onrushing one?”*  
Lyndon LaRouche<sup>2</sup>

First and foremost, what has to be discovered is the true condition of the present state of the world and we must look for measures that would improve on it. The reality is that mankind is presently in a state of intellectual poverty and the

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<sup>1</sup> Lyndon LaRouche, [On LaRouche’s Discovery](#), EIR, August 11, 2017, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Lyndon LaRouche, [Can We Change the Universe?](#) EIR, March 23, 2018, p. 30.

question is how that can be changed. Such a change, however, must be done without provoking chaos or war. What Lyn has been teaching us for years on this subject is that we must develop a “*sixth sense*” which is outside of the practicalities of the so-called five senses. That “*sixth sense*” had been identified by Percy B. Shelley in his *A Defense of Poetry* as a sense which informs us of the “*spirit of the age*.” Shelley wrote:

“The most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry. At such periods there is an accumulation of the power of communicating and receiving intense and impassioned conceptions respecting man and nature. The person in whom this power resides, may often, as far as regards many portions of their nature, have little apparent correspondence with that spirit of good of which they are the ministers. But even whilst they deny and abjure, they are yet compelled to serve, that power which is seated on the throne of their own soul. It is impossible to read the compositions of the most celebrated writers of the present day without being startled with the electric life which burns within their words. They measure the circumference and sound the depths of human nature with a comprehensive and all penetrating spirit, and they are themselves perhaps the most sincerely astonished at its manifestations; for it is less their spirit than the spirit of the age. Poets are the hierophants of an unapprehended inspiration; the mirrors of the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present; the words which express what they understand not; the trumpets which sing to battle, and feel not what they inspire; the influence which is moved not, but moves. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.”<sup>3</sup>

This view of poetry, and of Poets as being the “legislators of the world,” may surprise some because the metaphor hides an irony which involves the paradox of creation; that is, the paradox by means of which a universal discovery of principle can be made and be applied to changing the world by way of changing

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<sup>3</sup> Percy B. Shelley, *A Defense of Poetry*, in *The Norton Anthology of Literature*, Volume 2, Norton & Co., New York, p. 632.

the minds of people. In fact, metaphor of classical poetry implies a mastery of epistemology; that is, the mastery of how you think and how you can improve your thinking. And, the best time to do that is when your mind is overwhelmed by “the gigantic shadows which futurity casts upon the present.”

The best time to bring about a change in the world is not when your mind is at ease and rested, but when it is in turmoil, and when it is in a complete state of perplexity as to what the future holds for mankind. That time is now, and the way to think of it is by time reversal.

Lyn had a fascinating insight into this “*sixth sense*” when he looked at the generations of his time and, especially, at the generation which fought in World War II and the one which was born during that war in the United States. He formulated that insight in the following manner:

“The cultural pessimism which has struck down the thinking young adults of the 25-35 and somewhat later generation is a pronounced tendency to confine their sense of moral reality to a place between the book-ends of birth and expected death. Whereas, those of my generation, those of the young adults of World War II and slightly later experience, traced the meaning of our lives both to the benefits we inherited from forebears, and might hope to be extended to future generations. The emphasis on the notion of ideas as notable historical forces ranging across generations has been largely lost as a consequence of the effects of the cultural pessimism which struck down many of those of my own World War II generation under President Truman and beyond. Today’s young Americans, among other nationalities, suffer a specific effect of cultural pessimism, which a Percy Shelley, among others did not share. We have thought in terms of a debt to those who gave our own and some future generation a relatively immortal advantage, and, also, a debt to be honored to those who participated in that which we should aim to make possible.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Lyndon LaRouche, [The Sixth Sense](#), EIR, January 14, 2011, p. 7-8.

The mission is, thus, to recover the “debt to those who gave our own and some future generation a relatively immortal advantage.” One of the most precious treasures to be carried forward is what Shelley was calling upon modern man to restore: the application of the *poetic intellect* (νοῦς ποιητικός).

As LaRouche demonstrated many times, the key to his method of forecasting the next step is to bring together in coincidence two opposite tendencies which clash in the extreme, and to unite them by locking them together in such a way that their rotating contracted inversion is resolved from a higher conceptual level; that is, from a higher and more advanced manifold of consciousness. As Lyn showed, the time and effort required to master such a method presupposes a familiarization with the method of solving paradoxes in the unique manner that Nicholas of Cusa used; that is, by discovering the theological forms of *unity of opposites*.

The art of forecasting is the art of discovering the connection between Shelley's *poetic intellect* (νοῦς ποιητικός) and the Creative Intellect of God. Here, the irony of the matter is that this idea of “*poetic intellect*” was discovered more than 2,000 years ago, in the mind of the inept Aristotle, and had remained stagnant there for centuries until it was investigated by an Islamic philosopher and a Jewish philosopher who discovered in it a profound historical significance for the improvement of mankind.

First came the Islamic philosopher, Avicenna (980-1037 AD), the Persian polymath who contributed the most to the Islamic Golden Age of Harun al-Rashid. Then, a century later, came the Sephardic Jewish philosopher and polymath, Moses Maimonides (1135-1204 AD), who was born in Cordoba Spain and who became the most important Torah scholar of the Middle-Ages.

If Avicenna and Maimonides were the two most important ancient philosophers after Plato to have adopted such a road map to the truth, then, Lyndon LaRouche is definitely the most recent *alphestes* to have given us access to such a far reaching and profound domain, especially with his transfinite road map of accessing the divine by surmounting the axiomatic perplexities of human ignorance.



**Figure 1** Flammarion Woodcut. Note the change in manifold.

The two most remarkable ideas that Maimonides has identified for us, and which I will now develop with the help of Lyn's method, are the concepts of the Divine Mind conceived as a *Constant Active Intellect*, and of the human mind created in the image of God, as a *active intellect* (*νοῦς ποιητικός*), which gives man the power to endow his own soul with immortality by means of constructing it himself. Later, during the Italian Renaissance, Cusa went a step further by improving this creative idea of God as *Constant Active Intellect*, as the power of "Possibility Itself" (*Posse Ipsum*).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Nicholas of Cusa, [\*De Apice Theoria\*](#), 1464.

The important connection, here, is that Lyn's conception of forecasting and Cusa's idea of God as *Possibility Itself* (*Posse Ipsum*) are directly linked to the idea of humanity's immortality. These are the bookends that your mind requires to forecast the future. However, immortality does not refer here to a never ending afterlife of happiness, but rather to an everlasting process of creativity for mankind as a higher species than the animal. That is what Lyn called true happiness of mankind. As he wrote:

“Consider the theology of immortality of the idea of the existence of souls in that light. The human individual's self-conception is therefore ironical, to the following effect.

“Since we now know, at least from what I have written in earlier parts of this present report, that man conceived in the image of sense-certainties is only a shadow of reality, there is a certain prescience of immortality of some kind in the real person whose mind recognizes the mortal image provided by sense-perception as being “conditional” in that specific sense. Consider the Christian Apostolic Epistles in that light, as, for example, Paul in *I Corinthians 13*. It is a notion and mission of mankind which does not seek a static sort of immortality ‘in the imagination of the flesh,’ but, rather, to experience the immortality of the process of creation, to be a truly creative force in the course of the development of the universe: to become an embodiment of human creativity in and for itself, thus being ‘in the likeness’ of the nature of the Creator of the universe.

“We, too, are thus creators in the likeness of the principle which defines the meaning of Creator. It is our mission to serve that end, which is our preferred mission in life: to make the universe better, and to make ourselves better in contributing to that mission. For us, that mission is its own reward: a devotion to creativity per se. That is true happiness.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Lyndon LaRouche, [The Sixth Sense](#), EIR, January 14, 2011, p. 6.

## 2. MOSES MAIMONIDES AND THE ART OF FORECASTING

“...There is one [disease] which is widespread, and from which men rarely escape. This disease varies in degree in different men ... I refer to this: that every person thinks his mind ... more clever and more learned than it is ... I have found that this disease has attacked many an intelligent person ... They ... express themselves [not only] upon the science with which they are familiar, but upon other sciences about which they know nothing ... If met with applause ... so does the disease itself become aggravated.” Moses Maimonides.<sup>7</sup>

It is useful to start the study of the human mind by first identifying what the diseases of the soul are. This is what Maimonides looks into in Chapter IV of his book on ethics. Although translator Joseph Gorfinkle attributed Maimonides’s conception of virtues almost entirely to the Aristotelian doctrine of the Mean balance (*μεσότης*) between extremes, Maimonides’s conception of the ethical “good deed” is closer to the idea of Plato and to the Confucian idea of the centering balance in Tai Chi. Maimonides wrote in *The Eight Chapters on Ethics*:

“Good deeds are such as are equibalanced, maintaining the mean between two equally bad extremes, the *too much* and the *too little*. Virtues are psychic conditions and dispositions which are mid-way between two reprehensible extremes, one of which is characterized by an *exaggeration*, the other by a *deficiency*.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/pg/Maimonides-176045169092780/posts/>

<sup>8</sup> [\*The Eight Chapters Of Maimonides On Ethics\*](#), translated by Joseph I. Gorfinkle, Ph.D. Columbia University Press, New York, 1912, p. 55.





However, one would be wrong to consider virtue as a “status quo” or some sort of “consensus” between two extremes as Aristotle stated in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 6. Maimonides thinks more like Plato and Cusa who both understood virtue as the “*coincidence of opposites*.” In that sense, Maimonides is closer to Leibniz’s *principle of harmony between reason and power* than any other thinker.

**Figure 2** Moses Maimonides, Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon. (1135-1204 AD)

The most prominent fault of the mind, however, is when a defect passes itself for a virtue. The case in point can be exemplified by the apparent natural disposition of a man who becomes influenced in his opinions and actions by those of his associates, and, therefore, becomes dependent on what they say and do. Even if the opinions and actions of his associates are based on universal principles, the adoption of such a disposition is unacceptable. The individual must act freely and independently.

Since no one is born with innate virtues and everyone is undoubtedly influenced by relatives and one’s countrymen, the rule of thumb should be to beware of the hidden danger of such an axiomatic presumption and avoid the trap of “*going along to get along*.” The means of avoiding such a trap is to never accept the underlying assumption of being “politically correct” as a precondition for securing one’s “desire to be accepted.” As Benjamin Franklin once said: “*Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety.*”

On the contrary, the art of forecasting lies precisely in the ability to be critical of accepted opinion and to take the challenge of going to the limit, and to investigate what is on the other side. There, beyond what you thought were possible, you will only find impossible anomalies as insightfully represented in the Flammarion Woodcut. (**Figure 1**)

An example is the case of miracles. What generally passes for a miracle is actually something impossible such as an axiomatic change; what you find on the other side of the limit functions with different laws, new laws that you then have to internalize. However, the change is not such that it changes the nature of the individual, but only the underlying assumptions of that individual's axiomatic view of the world. For instance, a human being cannot be changed into a horse, but an Aristotelian can be changed into a Platonist. That's the miracle. An axiomatic change is such a change that it reflects a willful supernatural act of transformation that God somehow inserted within the developing process of the human mind.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PASSIVE INTELLECT AND THE ACTIVE INTELLECT

*“You can only cross the incommensurable gap between God and man on the back of metaphors.”*

Dehors Debonneheure

During most of the Middle Age period, the intellect (*νοῦς*) was considered to be the highest human faculty, which was generally opposed to deductive logic, or the faculty of reasoning (*ratio*). During that period, another fundamental distinction was also made between *active intellect* (*νοῦς ποιητικός*) and *passive intellect* (*νοῦς παθητικός*). The problem was: how to properly understand the difference between the two?

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<sup>9</sup> If you have never made such a change, chances are that when it happens, you will be frightened out of your wits as Panurge was when he went down the Tetradic Steps in [Lanternland](#).

Following in the footsteps of Plato, Arab philosophers were the first to make a clear distinction between a creatively active intellect and an emotionally passive intellect; and that became the bridge that European thinkers later had to cross in order to avoid the Aristotelian trap of sense perception. This is a very old and controversial tradition that the Arab Renaissance of Harun al Rashid had borrowed from Aristotle and had transported into the Middle-Eastern culture, primarily for Islamic theological purposes.<sup>10</sup>

Such a distinction was an attempt to make intelligible the difference between the mere passive apprehension of sense perceptions and the generative process of the faculty of self-conscious reflection, or creative imagination. This is, for example, how Maimonides used the idea of *Constant Active Intellect* as the best human expression for identifying the creative process of God's Mind. The irony of such an option was that it avoided the empty debates that people were tempted to make about searching for a deductive proof of the existence of God, and it brought the human mind directly into connection with the question of God's mind as the Creator.<sup>11</sup>

By attributing to the human mind the ability to be an *active intellect*, Maimonides also recognized man's ability to be creative in the image of God, as had done Saint Irenaeus of Lyon in his doctrine of Recapitulation, because through the physical coming of the Word, God had given man the power to construct his own immortality. In other words, the passive intellect is not capable of accessing the level of the divine, because such a process could never work from the bottom-up. On the other hand, since the active intellect comes from above, i.e. from God the Creator and proceeds from the top-down, the human active intellect can only be understood as a direct emanation of the *Constant Active Intellect of God*, and therefore, it has the power to work not only for its own salvation by Recapitulation, but also for its own immortality by the Grace of God. It is from such a conception

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<sup>10</sup> The distinction originates from Aristotle in *De Anima*, III, 5. However, the Arabic use of the "active intellect" and of "passive intellect" does not refer to Aristotle's view of the matter, but rather to the Avicenna and to Maimonides notion of the Creative Intellect of God.

<sup>11</sup> In [\*Guide for the Perplexed\*](#), Part I, Chapter LXIX Maimonides replies to the deductive objections that people had about his notion of God the Intellect as the First Cause in the creation of the universe.

of the *active intellect* that Maimonides was able to establish that virtue could be found by a method of discovering the complex mean between two bad extremes.

Take for example, the case of two extreme opposites such as *arrogant pride* and *self-abasement*. How can you find the balance between these two extremes? What happens to your mind when one turns into the other by inversion? Is there a possible unity between those two opposites? There doesn't appear to be one; there only appears to be a Moebius twist which contracts the two together into a sort of inversion of negative curvature, as if your mind were caught in the contraction between a weak and strong force.<sup>12</sup>

The key to figuring out such an opposition is found in the negation of what you are told is good for you. In other words, you must find a "fulcrum" which balances the two extremes and goes into an inversion process. For example, if you think that something sweet is good for you, put a portion of sourness into the mixture such that there is no overpowering of any of the extremes, neither by lacking nor by excess. This is Maimonides's method which works by both softening the hard and hardening the soft.

The point to understand is that the extreme of excess and the extreme of deficiency are both pernicious. However, how can one discover and understand the true equilibrium or balance which causes one to change into the other such that the coincidence of the two extremes gives you a third option that did not exist before? That is how the *Filioque* principle works by acting as a bridge to a higher level. However, this is not a simple mean proportional solution to all problems. It is not that simple, because this process of negative curvature does not mean that every man should strive to become moderate in everything and that the ideal man is he who takes the medium course in everything that he strives for. The middle ground of the "status quo" or the "consensus" is not a solution.

Of course not; this process is not an Aristotelian exercise in manipulating emotions into becoming neutral; this is not a form of diplomacy. What Maimonides is calling on the reader to discover, here, is the divine nature of the

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<sup>12</sup> Lyndon LaRouche, [LYNDON LAROUCHE, SEMINAR ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF NEGATIVE CURVATURE FOR PHYSICS AND BIOLOGY, 1989.](#)

*active intellect that causes change* from the top down; that is, the incommensurable proportionality which connects the human mind with God's Creative Mind, or what he called the connection to the *Constant Active Intellect*.

It is useful to see, here, why Maimonides (1135-1204) took his conception of active intellect directly from Avicenna (980-1037), because this is where both the Islamic and the Jewish philosophers were the closest to Plato's doctrine of the "divine." Both thinkers show how ideas become completely deformed when they are projected on the dimly lit wall of Plato's Cave.

In the case of Avicenna, for instance, the precondition for the human *active intellect* to know the transcendental properties of fundamental notions such as *unity, truth and goodness* lies in the ability of the mind to strip away the sensible connotations or material determinations such as time, shape, location, colors, shadows, clock-time, etc., from such primary intelligible concepts in order to apprehend their universal features only after having gone through the purgatory of Plato's cave. However, what remains of this process of purification can no longer be perceived by sense perception. This is where the mind requires a "sixth sense."

In this way, the human mind is able to access the universality of an idea, and therefore, also enable itself to discover how the essence of such ideas can exist in the mind of God as if in the *simultaneity of eternity*. It is at such a non-clock moment that the human mind becomes capable of acquiring the status of "*active intellect*." For both Avicenna and Maimonides, this purgative function is the closest that the human mind can come to the mind of God. This is also the negative theology aspect of what Cusa later called "*Learned Ignorance*." In fact, it is only when the mind succeeds in ridding itself of the misleading fallacies of sense perception and of those of deductive logic that the human mind can access the Divine Mind.

In other words, the *active intellect* is the form that the human mind takes when it participates in God's *Constant Active Intellect*, in one form or another of incommensurable proportionality. When that connection is made, then the *active intellect* of man can be illuminated by relating to what Saint-John identified as the *light of the Word*, in *Genesis 1: 1-5*. It is that illumination which corresponds to the

lighting of the pathway to the future. However, this experience takes place only when the power to know and the power to be known coincide with one another and become One. Maimonides wrote:

“Now, it has been proved, that God is an intellect which always is in action, and that – as has been stated, and as will be proved hereafter – there is in Him at no time a mere potentiality, that He does not comprehend at one time, and is without comprehension at another time, but He comprehends constantly; consequently, He and the things comprehended are one and the same thing, that is to say, His essence: and the act of comprehending because of which it is said that He comprehends, is the intellect itself, which is likewise His essence, God is therefore always the intellectus, the intelligens, and the intelligible.

“We have thus shown that the identity of the intellect, the intelligens and the intelligible, is not only a fact as regards the Creator, but as regards all intellects, when in action. There is, however, this difference, that from time to time our intellect passes over from mere potentiality to reality, and that the pure intellect, i.e., the active intellect, finds sometimes obstacles, though not in itself, but accidentally in some external cause. It is not our present intention to explain this subject, but we will merely show that God alone, and none besides Him, is an intellect constantly in action, and there is, neither in Himself nor in anything beside Him, any obstacle whereby His comprehension would be hindered. Therefore He always includes the intelligens, the intellectus, and the intelligible, and His essence is at the same time the intelligens, the intelligible, and the intellectus, as is necessarily the case with all intellect in action.”<sup>13</sup>

Thus, “all intellects, when in action” have the power to coincide with the intelligible fruits of their creation. Such is the performative function of an *active intellect*. Moreover, when chronological timing is replaced by *time reversal as a measure of change*, the problem becomes solved from the top down.

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<sup>13</sup> Maimonides, [\*The guide for the Perplexed\*](#), Volume I, Chapter LXVIII.

As Cusa later demonstrated, God is the only One whose intellect is an active “*Possibility Itself*” (*Posse Ipsum*). This is entirely in agreement with Saint-John’s *Genesis 1: 1-5*, and this is how to have foreknowledge of the future, because ideas are communicated as an illumination that comes from the future back to the past; that is, from the top-down. Thus, if you follow the lighting of this pathway, provided by Avicenna, Maimonides, and Cusa, you will know how to go beyond anywhere you have been to, or have never been to before, without getting lost.<sup>14</sup>

#### 4. CUSA, ‘[DE APICE THEORIA](#)’: CONCERNING THE LOFTIEST LEVEL OF CONTEMPLATIVE REFLECTION.’<sup>15</sup>

What is Cusa forecasting here? What is he capturing which is so lofty that it is incomprehensible to reason as well as to the intellect? The joyful discovery that Cusa made in his last written dialogue is that the discovery of the light source which projects the shadows on the dimly lit wall of Plato’s Cave is not only something that cannot be seen and grasped by the human mind, but it can only be captured the form of shadows.

This last discovery of Cusa is a vision, which is as revealing as Saint-John’s *Genesis Prologue 1: 1-5* or Saint-Paul’s *I Corinthian 13*, because it is the discovery of how the mind is capable of forecasting its own measure of accessing the descending gift of light from God the Father. This vision, however, can only take place by seeing it as Incomprehensible; that is, by seeing that the mind can have foreknowledge of how to grasp the blinding light, but is incapable of understanding it. What does it mean for the mind to be able to see more than it

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<sup>14</sup> You can construct this pathway yourself by replicating the conical construction of my report: [WHY YOU SHOULD CONSTRUCT.](#)

<sup>15</sup> Composed in 1464, [De Apice Theoria](#) is dialogue between Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa and his secretary Peter of Erkelenz, Canon at Aachen, is the last work of Nicholas of Cusa. It represents the highest and last attempt that Cusa made of conceiving God as the “Absolute Power of Possibility Itself” (*Posse Ipsum*).

comprehends? Again, think of this as the recurring image of the Flammarion Woodcut. (See **Figure 1**)

Cusa was pursuing an idea similar to that of Avicenna and Maimonides when he wrote his last dialogue in which he considered a new and different way to identify God, in comparison with what he had done before, in *De Docta Ignorantia*. In his early period, Cusa had identified God negatively as “*Non Aliud*” (*Not Other*), but by the end of his life he discovered a way to identify God in an “easier” way by attributing to Him the creative characteristic of *Possibility Itself* (*Posse Ipsum*), which is an idea that cannot be understood from deductive logic.

Composed in 1464, [\*De Apice Theoria\*](#) is a dialogue between Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa and his secretary Peter of Erkelenz, Canon at Aachen. It is the last effort that Cusa made to establish a living connection between the intellect of man and the Intellect of God. It represents the highest and most daring idea of conceiving God as the Absolute Power of “*Possibility Itself*” (*Posse Ipsum*). Cusa wrote:

“*Peter*: If up until now no one has found [quiddity], are you attempting something over and beyond all the others?”

“*Cardinal*: I think that many men have seen it to some extent and have left behind in their writings their sighting of it. For if quiddity (which always has been sought and is presently being sought, and will henceforth be sought) were altogether unknown, how could it be sought, since even if it were found it would remain unknown? And so, a certain wise man said that it is seen by all men, although from afar.

“Therefore, although for many years now I have realized that quiddity must be sought beyond all cognitive power and before all variation and opposition, I failed to notice that Quiddity which exists in and of itself is the invariable subsistent-being of all substances—and, thus, that it is neither replicable nor repeatable and, hence, that there are not different Quiddities of different beings but that there is one and the same [ultimate] Basis of all things. Subsequently, I saw that I must acknowledge that the [ultimate] Basis



of things, or [ultimate] Subsistent-being of things, is *possible* to be. And because it is possible to be, surely it cannot exist apart from *Possibility itself*. For how would it be possible apart from *Possibility*? And so, Possibility itself—without which nothing whatsoever is possible—is that which there cannot possibly be anything that is more subsistent. Therefore, it is Whatness itself, which is being sought—i.e., is Quiddity itself, without which there cannot possibly exist anything. And with enormous delight I have been engaged in this contemplative reflection during this festive season.

*Peter*: Without Possibility, as you say (and I see you to be uttering the truth), nothing whatsoever is possible; and, assuredly, there is not anything apart from Quiddity. Therefore, I will see that *Possibility itself* can be said to be Quiddity. But since you previously stated many things about Actualized-possibility, setting them forth in a dialogue, I wonder why they do not suffice.

*Cardinal*: You will see a bit later that *Possibility itself*—that which nothing can possibly be earlier or better or more powerful—far more fittingly names that without which nothing whatsoever can possibly exist or live or understand than does “Actualized-possibility” or any other name whatsoever. For if that thing can [fittingly] be named, and then surely *Possibility itself* (*Posse Ipsum*), that which nothing can possibly be more perfect, will better name it. I think that no other clearer, truer, or easier name is positable.

*Peter*: Why do you say “easier,” for it seems to me that nothing is more difficult than a thing that is ever sought and never fully found?

*Cardinal*: The clearer truth is, the easier it is. (I once thought that truth is better found amid the obscure.) Truth, in which *Possibility itself* shines forth very brightly, is of great power. For it proclaims [itself] in the streets, as you

have read in my book about the Layman. Most assuredly, truth shows that it is everywhere easy to find.”<sup>16</sup>

Cusa emphasizes that the idea of “*Possibility Itself*” (*Posse Ipsum*,) corresponds to the idea of the Absolute Transfinite One which exists beyond the limitations of the One and the Many, and represents the Power of organizing and unifying multiplicity by means of all possible coincidence of opposites. Therefore, the work of human beings is to find the unity of opposites and go beyond.

This means that Cusa considered the naming of God beyond the limiting negative names so that the potential of *possibility itself* could be identified with its power; that is, its own realization. For the human mind, this meant the ability to eliminate the difference between the *potential* and the *actual*; thus, liberating the dormant *active intellect* and giving it an opportunity to elevate itself to the loftiest level possible. It is from that vantage point that the intention of possibility itself is aimed at releasing the human potential for divinity.

As a new name for God, the idea “*self-subsisting power*” not only represents “*possibility itself*,” but also “*power itself*” which is to be understood as the causal principle of progress in the universe. This is what Lyn identified as being behind the principle of “*potential relative population density*.” Thus, *Posse Ipsum* is the *Power of Possibilities Itself*,<sup>17</sup> which is also what Cusa had identified in his dialogue on the One and the Many, under the titled [Compendium](#), and in which he demonstrated an amazing performative elevation of his spirit:

“Now, none of all the things that are not Capability itself are able either to exist or to be known apart from it. Therefore, whatever things are able either to exist or to be known are enfolded in Capability itself and are of it. Now, since Equality is unable to exist unless it is of Capability, it will be prior to all other things, even as is Capability, of which Equality is the equal. In Equality-with-Capability-itself (*Posse Ipsum*), Capability manifests itself

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<sup>16</sup> Nicholas of Cusa, [De Apice Theoria](#), (Concerning the Loftiest Level of Contemplative Reflection) , Translated by Hopkins, p. 1424-25.

<sup>17</sup> Think of Lyn’s auto-biography, [The Powers of Reason, 1988](#), in this light.

as most powerful. For it is characteristic of power to be able to beget from itself supreme equality with itself. Therefore, Capability—which stands in equal relation to contradictories, so that it is able to do one thing as much as another— stands in this equal relation by virtue of its own Equality. But from Capability and Equality-with-Capability there proceeds a most powerful Union, for a power is stronger if it is unified. Therefore, the Union of (1) That which nothing is more powerful and (2) its Equality is not less great than are those from which it proceeds. In this way, the mind sees that *Capability*, *Equality-with-Capability*, and the *Union of both* are a singular most powerful, most equal, and most united Beginning.”<sup>18</sup>

This idea does not require *explanation*, but *assimilation*; and what must be internalized through the *active intellect* is that everything that has been created is “enfolded in Capability Itself and are of it.” Now, why would this idea be so difficult to conceive?

The mistake that I used to make when I started to look at what is called the “infinite” is that I thought I could “ascend” to it from the finite location where I stood; that is, from the bottom up. I didn’t realize that this can be done only when the heaven “descends” upon us and that God informs us of His Infinite Nature from the top down. This is a very nice little problem, because like most people I did not believe I could think of something from the top down; I believed I could only know the “infinite” from the “finite” domain I was coming from. I was wrong.

The same problem comes up when one attempts to discover something new that never existed before. Most people believe they can only discover or conceive of what already exists; they don’t look for what is not there. They cannot fathom the idea that they can know something which does not exist and that their lives depend on the power they have been given to discover the unknown from the future.

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<sup>18</sup> Nicholas of Cusa, [Compendium](#), Translated by Jasper Hopkins.



usually takes place when one makes an axiomatic transformation of one's own knowledge.<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, the connection between this conical projection and Saint John's text of *Genesis 1: 1-5* had no reality until it became apparent that the relationship between them reflected the *possibility* of a similar epistemological connection between a *possibility* and an *actuality*. I know of no one who has ever paid attention explicitly to this potential relationship before, and yet, this extraordinary *Prologue* of John has been changing the world in this manner for over two thousand years. How could I have missed that?

Such an impossible proportion exists because it is God as the *power of possibilities* who creates it. It had nothing to do with me; all that is required of me is that I have a certain disposition of mind. This is why such an idea is both scary and hopeful at the same time, because it gives you a sense that *everything is possible*, provided it is associated with an appropriate state of mind. My point here is not to say that the "infinite" power of God is knowable like we know things. It is not knowable as such, and it will never be knowable. The only point I am making is that the only image which I think is possible to attribute to the *power of possibilities* of God is Cusa's image of God as an infinite sphere. Like he said: "It is fitting to reflect upon still a few more points regarding an infinite sphere. In an infinite sphere, we find that three maximum lines—of length, width, and depth—meet in a center. But the center of a maximum sphere is equal to the diameter and to the circumference."

Such an idea is obviously impossible to capture into a finite and limited thought-object because the center of the infinite sphere has been transformed from a finite point into three infinite lines corresponding to length, width, and depth, which causes the center to be everywhere and the circumference to be nowhere in particular. However, when the infinite sphere is conceived from the top down, this is what Cusa is able to establish:

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<sup>19</sup> See Lyndon LaRouche, *The Powers of Reason, 1988*, Executive Intelligence Review, Washington DC.1987.

“As a center, the Maximum precedes all width, length, and depth; it is the End and the Middle of all these; for in an infinite sphere the center, the diameter, and the circumference are the same thing. And just as an infinite sphere is most simple and exists in complete actuality, so the Maximum exists most simply in complete actuality. And just as a sphere is the actuality of a line, a triangle, and a circle, so the Maximum is the actuality of all things. Therefore, all actual existence has from the Maximum whatever actuality it possesses; and all existence exists actually insofar as it exists actually in the Infinite. Hence, the Maximum is the Form of forms and the Form of being, or maximum actual Being.”<sup>20</sup>

This is how Cusa conceives of God the Creator as the Trinity, from the top down. However, Cusa is not inferring that God is an actual infinite sphere; this is a necessary metaphor that the human mind must use in order to understand that God must be thought of as the most simple and most perfect beyond all logical proportion. This is the reason why it is impossible for the human mind to understand why such an infinite sphere would have to be eternal just as its infinite spherical surface would have to be the same as its center.

Take another example of *impossibility*. Take the case of the apparent *impossibility* of changing the past. Is that possible? It appears to be impossible to most people only because our deductive reasoning tells us that what is past cannot be changed since it no longer exists, it's gone. That is wrong. What is passed can be very much alive in our memory, because we keep going back to relive events of the past. It is our memory which keeps what is passed alive, because our mind considers that keeping it alive is very important for the immortality of mankind.

How many times have you told yourself: “I should have done this instead of that!” In fact, what you are thinking about when you say that is that you would like to have a second chance to do something differently. Indeed, what you have done in the past stays in the past and cannot be undone as a past event; however, it also stays in the memory of mankind as something that is immortal, as long as it is remembered. Thus, *what should have been done in the past can very well be done*

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<sup>20</sup> Nicholas of Cusa, [\*On Learned Ignorance\*](#), translated by Jasper Hopkins, Chapter 23, p. 38.

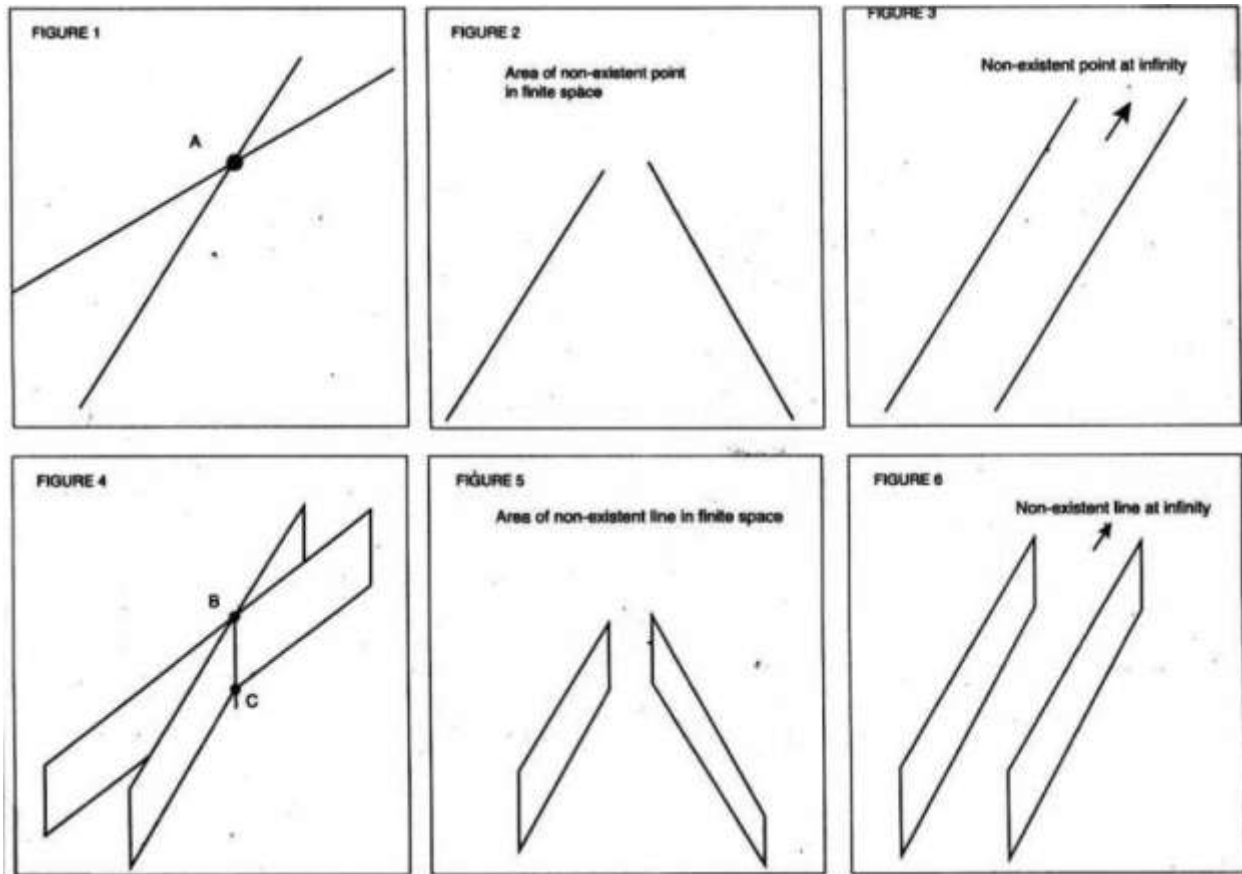
*in the future, and this is how you can change your past or some other human being's past. In other words, the power of changing what you have not done into what should be done is not only a possibility; it is a necessity.*

In that sense, the *power of possibilities* is not a power to do anything you wish to change, or wish to do; it is the power of doing what should have been done at the time when the opportunity was missed. I am not advocating the insane liberal attitude of “doing your own thing.” There are things that should not be done and there are things that are impossible to do, but there are also apparently impossible things to do which must be done if you wish mankind to survive and grow to become immortal. And it is in that way that you can participate in constructing the immortality of mankind.<sup>21</sup>

The same thing occurs when you apply the Leibniz *Principle of Continuity* to a change in a conical projection from a circle to an ellipse, from an ellipse to a parabola, and from a parabola to a hyperbola. Those points of transformation of one conic into another are *very real non-existing points*. They are very real, because change cannot occur in the Universe without them. However, they reflect different forms and degrees of non-existence, because they reflect different degrees of not being there. Take the six examples of points and lines in **Figure 4** as a metaphor of this process.

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<sup>21</sup> This is what Hanotaux said about the historical nature of Joan of Arc's intervention. “A ‘Vision’ presupposes faith and imposes it. We cannot say what the unspeakable boundary conditions are, where the supernatural and the human enter into contact with each other, and it is not for us to say. These people alone, these super-humans alone could explain to us how their eyes seized and measured, within a sudden illumination, the truths and the principles underlying the visible laws of the universe. But the terror they have experienced in the unfathomable reality of what they have seen is so unspeakable that they remain silent about it.” Gabriel Hanotaux, *Jeanne d'Arc*, Hachette, Paris, 1911, p. 145.



**Figure 4** Existing and non-existing points and lines. See [PONCELET PARADOX OF THE VANISHING POINT](#), New Federalist, October 20, 1996.

In **Figure 1**, point A exists, but if you separate the two lines as in **Figure 2** the same point A no longer exists and yet it can be located in a precise location which is not there in finite space, while in **Figure 3**, the same non-existent point A will be located in a different and indefinite non-existent place outside the figure. You will not be able to locate it precisely, but you will know that this is where the original point A has to be located, and not any closer. Do the same thing with line BC in **Figure 4**. The same line BC no longer exists in a precise location in **Figure 5**, and its non-existence will be located at infinity in some indefinite place outside of **Figure 6**.

The same thing applies to your non-existing knowledge of God. It is also very real, because your mind has been created in order to acquire and to celebrate the truth and beauty of such an impossible and non-existing knowledge, in the simultaneity of eternity. As Cusa concluded:



“With God one revolution of the eighth sphere is not smaller than [one revolution] of an infinite [sphere], because He in whom as in an end all motion finds rest is the End of all motions. For He is maximal rest, in which all motion is rest. And so, maximum rest is the measure of all motions, just as maximum straightness [is the measure] of all circumferences, and as maximum presence, or eternity, [is the measure] of all times.”<sup>22</sup>

**FIN**

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<sup>22</sup> Nicholas of Cusa, *[On Learned Ignorance](#)*, translated by Jasper Hopkins, Chapter 23, p. 39.